

**Veteran:** **DAVIS, Robert E.**  
**Service Branch:** **AIR FORCE**  
**Interviewer:** Smith, Tabitha  
**Date of Interview:** April 20, 2002  
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**Transcriptionist:** Terry Moore  
**Highlights of Service:** **Korea & Vietnam; Radio Operator; Trained to read, recognize Russian language; Tet Offensive; Underwent VC attack on base**

Interviewer: This is Tabitha Smith, with the Lee College history department, interviewing Robert E. Davis on April 20, 2002, at the Smith residence located at 7731 Butcher Street, Baytown, Texas, at 11:15 a.m.

Are you aware that our conversation will be recorded and that the tape and transcription will be placed in the Lee College library?

Veteran: Yes.

Interviewer: Do I have your permission to do this?

Veteran: Yes, you do.

Interviewer: The purpose of this interview is because I am a student at Lee College and I am currently taking a history course. I opted to do an oral history project that includes interviewing two military veterans in order to preserve the experience from the perspective of the soldier.

Starting off, what branch of the military did you serve in?

Veteran: I was in the U.S. Air Force.

Interviewer: What was your rank?

Veteran: I retired as an E-8.

Interviewer: Were you drafted or did you enlist voluntarily?

Veteran: I enlisted.

Interviewer: What year was that?

Veteran: 1952.

Interviewer: How old were you?

Veteran: 17.

Interviewer: How long did you serve?

Veteran: Twenty-four years.

Interviewer: When you first got there, what training did you have to go through?

Veteran: Basic training, which was twelve weeks at an Air Force base in San Antonio, Texas. Immediately after that I was transferred to Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi, to take radio operator training. That was fifteen weeks. Immediately after that, I was transferred to Merced, California, to an Air Force base where I had to learn to read and recognize the Russian language.

Interviewer: What did most of your training entail? What kind of exercises were you trained to do?

Veteran: Copying classified Russian transmissions; being able to transcribe them and send it off to headquarters for encryption.

Interviewer: So, basically you were...

Veteran: A communicator.

Interviewer: I understand that you served in Korea and later in Vietnam. Where were you stationed at when you served in Korea?

Veteran: I was in Tokyo, and from Tokyo I went to Osan. I was in Osan, Korea, most of my time there.

Interviewer: How long did you stay?

Veteran: Fifteen months.

Interviewer: Where were you stationed in Vietnam, and how long did you stay?

Veteran: I was all over Vietnam—Metrane, Phan Rang, Saigon, Danang, Pleiku, and Hue. Those are a few of the cities I can remember.

Interviewer: How long did you stay?

Veteran: I had two tours in Vietnam. Had a twelve-month tour, and then I volunteered to return for a ten-month tour. I was there for a total of twenty-two months.

Interviewer: What was a typical day like for a soldier in Korea?

Veteran: Korea was very cold—extremely cold. I would get up in the morning and go to my duty assignment, which was a communications truck because it was mobile and we had to move it around. All of them were ill heated, so you had to dress very warm. I was there during the coldest months of the year, which was January, February, and March. Usually, you had twelve, thirteen, fourteen-hour days. There were no eight-hour shifts per se. You worked and once you completed your assignment, whatever time that was, that's when you got off.

Interviewer: What kind of assignment would it be for you?

Veteran: As a communicator, working in communications—telephone communications, teletype communications, and fax communications from that part of the country back to the United States. A lot of times, the information that we were gathering was troop movements of the North Koreans, equipment movements, flights, airplane assembly points, and we would gather that information from their transmissions and send it back to our headquarters in Washington, where it would be decoded and catalogue it and see if there was anything good in it.

Interviewer: How about in Vietnam?

Veteran: I did the same thing, except that in Vietnam I was subjected to a lot of hostile activity—incoming fire in the way of missiles and rockets. A typical day there was about the same. We worked out of a communication truck. Also, we were tasked with if there was going to be a major Marine operation in the area, for instance, we would have to go in and set up their communications. Once that

operation was completed, we would go back and try to salvage whatever was salvageable that wasn't damaged in the firefight. Long days...very short sleeping hours. Contrary to Korea, it was very hot and muggy and humid. During the monsoon season, which lasted about five months, it would rain almost continuously, so we had to deal with that, but again, I was doing the same communications.

Interviewer: Were you subjected to a lot of disease or anything like that?

Veteran: No more than any military operation, because the military—then as now—was very adamant about inoculations, and gave you water pills to purify your drinking water—very little sickness.

Interviewer: Describe for us the mail from home. Was that highly valued?

Veteran: Very important—very important. A letter from home was like a gift from Heaven. My mother, who lived in Mississippi at the time, would write me at least three letters a week. Now, receiving letters there was a bit different than the way we receive our mail now. It might sometimes take nine, ten, twelve days to get a letter, but if you wrote them and mailed them regularly you would almost get a letter continuously every day. Mail was very important from friends, girlfriends, and especially parents. A lot of time you wouldn't have the time to answer. Hopefully, the people that were writing to you understood that and they wouldn't wait to get an answer from you before they wrote another letter.

Interviewer: How about the food and bunking quarters?

Veteran: Military food is indescribably good. It's nourishing food; you get as much as you want except when you're in the field, and then you had to eat what we called C-rations—that's out of a can, and even that's nourishing and you can sustain several days just eating that. It's wholesome food, but when you had downtime and weren't in the field your meals were just scrumptious. Breakfast would be eggs and hash browns and bacon and sausage, and as much as you want. I can remember when I first got to Vietnam in 1968 we had powdered milk, and I can very clearly remember when we started getting whole milk. People who didn't drink milk all of a sudden started drinking milk because it was really, really

welcome. But the food was as much as you could eat, well prepared, and good, wholesome food. Sleeping was in what we called hootches. It was a wood structure surrounded on the upper half by screen wire to let the wind in, because there was no air conditioning. The bottom portion was surrounded with sandbags to deter any incoming shrapnel or rounds as best as possible. You usually had two-men bunks, one individual below and one above. You learned that what little sleep you could get you always slept in your clothes, or at least the bottom portion of your clothes, which was trousers. You would unlace your boots and set them down beside your bed, but you pried them open so if you had to leave in a hurry all you had to do was stick your foot in your boot. You learned to sleep very light so just the slightest noise would wake you up. The best time to sleep was during the day; however, it was too hot to sleep in the daytime, and usually when your attacks came they were always at night—always after midnight, and they would usually last anywhere from an hour to three hours.

Interviewer: Were you all frequently attacked at night?

Veteran: When I was at Danang, about four nights a week you could expect some incoming. We called it incoming, and they used 122-millimeter rockets, and they had three different options for detonation. They could set them so that in mid-air at a certain altitude, like fifteen feet from the ground, they would detonate, and then they had those that would detonate on impact. When it hit the ground or hit a hard object it would detonate. Then they had the third option where they would land and just lay on the ground, and they could detonate them three or four days later, so we were always cautioned about them. If we were to see one, we were to avoid it and then ordnance people would come along and disarm it.

Interviewer: Was that pretty much the situation in Korea?

Veteran: In Korea I really didn't have any frontline combat duty. I was mostly back of the line dealing strictly with communications.

Interviewer: Was that because you were younger then?

Veteran: No, that was just the Air Force's role in Korea, which was different than in Vietnam.

Interviewer: Were you involved in any other combat?

Veteran: No. Now understand that when I was in Korea, the war was scaling down, so there were a lot of troops coming home—a lot of Marine and Army divisions that were disbanding and moving out. However, when I was in Vietnam I was there during probably the most critical part of that war. In fact, I was there during the 1968 Tet Offensive, when the North Vietnamese and the Vietcong mounted their major attack against all installations in South Vietnam, and that lasted twenty-one days.

Interviewer: As a part of the Air Force, did you all bomb people, or what was the primary role of the Air Force?

Veteran: Air combat, flying helicopters and fighters and bombers, dropping bombs. Fighter's scraping, where you would come in at low altitude and using 50-caliber machine guns, you would wipe out an area or attack an area, and of course the helicopter gunship was the major method of transportation delivering troops back and forth to the hospitals when they were wounded, and they were also equipped with 50-caliber machine guns, and they could mount a combat assault, also. The major aircraft used in Vietnam was the helicopter.

Interviewer: Were you a pilot?

Veteran: No.

Interviewer: What was your role?

Veteran: There again, communications and setting up communications for the Army, the Marine Corps, the Royal Combat Force out of England, and also there was a great many ROK soldiers over there, which was the Republic of Korea. They were one of our allies in the country at that time.

Interviewer: And that was in Korea?

Veteran: No, no. That was in Vietnam. Understand, in Korea it was the North Koreans against the South Koreans. In Vietnam, pretty much the same thing—the

Vietcong and the North Vietnamese were against the South Vietnamese and the Americans.

Interviewer: So the Vietcong were actually communists in South Vietnam.

Veteran: They were civilians. Vietcongs were civilians—they were not soldiers. The North Vietnamese army was the military. That's the reason why it was so hard to distinguish who was what, because you could very easily see a Vietnamese civilian and work with them doing many types of jobs on base, and at night they would become Vietcong and fight against you.

Interviewer: So there was a lot of guerilla warfare?

Veteran: Yeah—you could call it guerilla warfare. It was just sympathizers, and plus those who would dare to resist the northern territory's philosophies; they sometimes were made to do it. One example, women and children were used to transport and carry ammunition and food to the soldiers in the field, and so everybody was used even though your family maybe didn't want to—a lot of times you didn't have a choice...they would make you.

Interviewer: Do you know what the consequence of resisting was?

Veteran: Probably death, because they had a very liberal execution policy over there. You either did it or they wiped your family out, and many families were lost that way.

Interviewer: Did you ever witness any examples of that?

Veteran: No, not personally I did not.

Interviewer: Would you call the group that you were with a unit?

Veteran: Yes, it could be classified as a unit. Most of the time we were attached to an Army outfit at the Danang Air Force base, but I was actually attached to the outer perimeter with the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division of the U.S. Army. They flew what they called the Black Hawk helicopters, and we handled all their communications.

Interviewer: Could you describe what the morale of your unit was in Korea and Vietnam?

Veteran: During Korea, most of us were very enthusiastic about why we were there and what we were doing. In Vietnam there were reasons for dissention. Many of the troops couldn't understand why they were there, couldn't understand the purpose of the war. It appeared many, many times that we were losing, and in some eyes even today we did, and I'm probably one of those that think along those lines. I don't see that we won anything, but we didn't have the enthusiasm, we didn't have the camaraderie, we didn't have the patriotism in Vietnam that we had in Korea—much, much different.

Interviewer: Why was that?

Veteran: I think mostly because there were so many restrictions in Vietnam with it being a political war. For example, we could stop fighting on Christmas Day, and we wouldn't hear a gunshot in all of Vietnam, and then we'd start up the day after, and it was always my philosophy that if could stop for one day we could stop for the rest of them.

Interviewer: Did you have any contact with local civilians or any POWs during any of your tours?

Veteran: Not direct contact. Had some contact with civilians, but mostly they were USO representatives—the United Service Organization that would send USO shows over. Bob Hope would come over every year with his entourage. We would have access to them; however, when they would hopscotch around the country doing their shows, they were very heavily guarded, but you could get to them. But understand, after you were there for six months, you always got a week out of country to go to another country for what we called Rest and Relaxation—R&R, so you'd pull your six months, you'd get a week off, you'd come back and pull six more, and then you were ready to go home.

Interviewer: What year did your tour in Vietnam end?

Veteran: 1969.

Interviewer: And that was a total of twenty-two months?



Veteran: Twenty-two months. Understand, I went in '67, I stayed twelve months and came back to the States, stayed two months and went back again—went back to the same outfit that I had left before. The first time I went I was sent, but the second time I went, I volunteered.

Interviewer: When your tours were over, is that when you retired from the military?

Veteran: No, when my tour was over I returned to the States and stayed in the United States for about fifteen months, and I spent my last four and a half years on the island of Guam in the South Pacific.

Interviewer: What were you doing there?

Veteran: Same thing—communications. Doing primarily the same thing. I had top secret crypto clearance, and throughout my career in my communication I had coded and encrypted, and it was all very, very secretive. When I retired, I had to sign a seven-year waver stating that I would not discuss anything that I had done during my career for seven years. I'm assuming that after seven years technology would have changed what we were doing then, and it wouldn't have mattered to them anymore.

Interviewer: When you finished and you actually retired, was the anti movement against the Vietnam War still climaxing or had it...

Veteran: No, the Vietnam War was. Yes, it was very much prevalent in the United States. Back then, all the guys I knew refused to wear their uniforms when they were off duty because of the animosity from groups and civilians. The ideology at the time was that during the war the Americans were killing civilians, and of course that did happen—there's no way to get around it. But the general feeling of the American people during the waning years of the Vietnam War, which was '68 and '69, was that we should never have been there. It was a no-win situation when we entered it, and there was no reason for us to even be in country. Understand, we went to Vietnam after the French had given up and left, and that should have told us something. That's my own personal feeling, that we should not have gone there.

Interviewer: Did you ever experience anybody ever expressing their anti-Vietnam War sentiments towards you?

Veteran: No, because again we had top secret clearances. What we did was very hush-hush, and it was always a good idea to just keep those thoughts to yourself. Of course guys wanted to come home—they wanted it to be over, of course just like any combat condition. But then you've also got to understand that there are regulations that prevent the military from doing that. I'm sure there were those whose feelings were strong enough to voice them if they were in a position where they could, and I'm sure a lot of them did when they got out when they were discharged, but not in the military. You wouldn't dare do that.

Interviewer: But anybody who did not agree with what the war represented, did they ever direct it at you?

Veteran: Not personally, other than the way you were treated when you can back to the States. Again, most of the guys wouldn't wear their uniforms—they just wanted to remain anonymous. You would see the picket signs and the poster boards, and especially around the Air Force bases where you landed when you came back from Vietnam because you were in uniform, but as soon as you could and as quick as you could, you removed your uniform and tried to just blend in with the other civilians, and nobody would know you were in the military.

Interviewer: Almost like a criminal?

Veteran: Yes, yes—as if you were the perpetrator and you were fight a war and killing people that didn't deserve to die, and I'm sure a lot of them did. A lot of civilians were killed; a lot of people that would have just rather leave the country and not be involved in the war, but they thought that was their homeland, and they just didn't have any choice. Many, many Vietnamese people were killed—massacred, if you want to use the word—simply because they were where they were and they couldn't leave.

Interviewer: Were you married when you returned home?

Veteran: Yes, I was. When I volunteered to go back to Vietnam the second time my wife and my mother both thought I was out of my mind. Again, I was a very patriotic

military individual. That was why I went it—it was the life I chose, and I gave it my all, and I did my best, but they just didn't want me there. Not because of the cause I was in, but being away from home and being in a combat zone.

Interviewer: Now that was the attitude of civilians after the Vietnam War. What was it like when you came home from Korea?

Veteran: Not near as much. We had the backing of the American people during the Korean War, and saw a reason for us being there, which was not a lot different than the Vietnam War, but people's ideology was different then. I can remember coming home from Korea, if you wore a uniform into a restaurant, your meals were free. You could get free taxi rides. You could even get free bus rides. If you were going from the East to the West Coast, all you had to do was wear your uniform, get on a major freeway, and you wouldn't be there five minutes before somebody would pick you up, unlike the Vietnam War when people didn't want to wear their uniforms because they were afraid of what might happen to them. Back then in the early 50s or middle 50s, people thought that there was a purpose to the Korean War, and the American attitude was much, much different.

Interviewer: You said they were pretty much the same purposes—why they were being fought. Do you think that the American people responded differently to the Vietnam War because there was more media attached to that war as opposed to the war in Korea?

Veteran: Of course, that had a definite effect on it. It was a television war. Things would happen there, and the next fifteen minutes you'd look and it was in the United States. It was a media war and then it was a political war. Most of the decisions, I felt, rather than the generals in the field making the combat decisions, I think most of them came out of Washington, which is why during the war military people, and I mean military people that had more experience than I had in the service—had been there much longer—they had negative feelings about it, because it's like being sent out to fight and both of your hands are tied.

Interviewer: How long do you think it took you to readjust to civilian life once you were back?

Veteran: Year—year and a half. I never had a problem with relapses or thinking back. I didn't let it happen to me. Within a week after I got back from Vietnam I saw fit to put away all my medals and ribbons and things that would remind me of Vietnam, and I adjusted very quickly. Many of us didn't, and some of us did.

Interviewer: Do you think that is partially attributed to your being a communicator?

Veteran: Could very well have been, but understand again, I was a noncombatant in Vietnam just like I was in Korea. I didn't fight every day. We were backup to the other branches of the service. I am certain that the guys that were in the field every day, day and night, had greater problems trying to readjust to a noncombatant life than I did.

{END OF SIDE A} {INTERVIEW RESUMES ON SIDE B}

Interviewer: Did you ever contact any of the other guys from your unit after the war ended?

Veteran: No, I didn't, and it was impressed upon us during duty in Vietnam that it was best that you didn't make close friends. It was best that you didn't talk about your personal life, your home life to anybody, because in doing that they became close to you, and if anything should happen to you, it wouldn't hurt so bad. It wouldn't bother you so much if you didn't know the individual that well. So it was kind of drilled into us not to make close friends. However, I made the mistake of doing that and I had a very good friend of mine, and I can remember exactly where he was from—he was from Crevasville, Missouri. He was killed one morning about 2 a.m. with the onslaught of enemy air attack, and I got my commander's permission to export his body back to his family in Missouri, and that was very memorable to me, being able to bring his remains back to his family. In fact, he was engaged, and he had bought his intended wife an engagement ring, and he gave it to me to safe-keep for him, and this was unknown to his fiancé or his family. When I brought his remains back to his family in Missouri, I told his mother that I had the ring, and asked her if she wanted it, and she refused to accept it, and she told me to give it to his intended bride, and it was fairly expensive.

Interviewer: Was that pretty emotional having to bring that body back?

Veteran: Yes, it was, because we were such good friends. In fact, we slept in the same bunk ensemble—he was underneath me on the lower level and I slept above him on the top level. It just so happened that the night of the attack I was at work, and I was not in my bunk. Unfortunately, he was asleep when the first couple of incoming rounds hit right down beside where he was sleeping—just completely annihilated him. There was enough left of him to even find his dog tags or any personal effects. We didn't find any of his clothing that was identifiable.

Interviewer: So you just escorted back an empty coffin?

Veteran: They had records to show what you weighed, and they were sacked with a substance something like sand and they would approximate your weight, and it would of course be a closed coffin, and that's what you got back.

Interviewer: Was the family aware?

Veteran: No. We had to sign a grievance, an affidavit stating that we would not divulge that. Of course, knowing how he perished anybody with any kind of common sense would know that he the coffin didn't contain a body.

Interviewer: When you talk about your friend that died and the body parts being annihilated, did you experience {rest of question drowned out by veteran's quick answer}

Veteran: Yes, on several occasions. You learn to count people by body parts. You may have a leg of one color, you may have an arm of another gender, you may have a torso, but if you got all the parts together that became one person. That's how we did body counts. They didn't necessarily have to match...

Interviewer: ...to one person's body?

Veteran: Yes. We just needed two legs, two arms, a torso, and a head, and we had a body.

Interviewer: How did that kind of experience affect your psyche?

Veteran: You learn to not let it bother you, especially if you didn't know the individual. Again, the reason for not striking up close relationships and acquaintances over there. It was just one of your comrades, you didn't know where they were from,

you didn't know anything about their past, and it was best that it stayed that way. What would bother you more than anything else was when you would find the remains of someone very young. You could tell maybe a kid that's eighteen, nineteen, twenty years old—that seemed to bother me more than anything else, because they were so young.

Interviewer: Overall, how has your military experience and being involved in what could be considered pretty gory combat affected you as a person? Did you have any deep-seated resentment for certain nationalities?

Veteran: For a period of time immediately after the Vietnam War I did—maybe not deep, but I when I would meet a Vietnamese individual, especially a man, I would keep them at a distance. I didn't let myself get close to them, and that lasted for several years. In fact, even today I work with a Vietnamese gentleman who's an engineer, and believe it or not, whenever I'm in his company I usually have fleeting thoughts of where he's from, and of course he's South Vietnamese not North, but you couldn't tell the southerner from the northerner. So, I do have those thoughts, and I really work at trying not to, because he's a very bright, very astute young man, but you just can't help it.

Interviewer: How about towards the government?

Veteran: My government?

Interviewer: The government in general. When you first got back, did you hold any ill feelings toward them, because you mentioned it was a political war?

Veteran: My government never did. I felt that I was a Korean military man, and I was conditioned to be patriotic, and because at times I couldn't understand why we did certain things, I always got back to the fact that whoever was making the decisions was making them for the best of the country, and I felt that I was doing my part. No, I never had any resentment. In fact, I have a lot of sympathy for President Johnson because he inherited a war that he couldn't do anything about—he couldn't stop it. But I was always very patriotic towards my country. I still love my flag.

Interviewer: How about towards civilians, especially after Vietnam?

Veteran: They had a reason for feeling the way they did. They had a reason for their boycotting and the signs and their spitting upon you and the different attitudes that they took. I didn't like it, but I accepted it because in some respects they were more aware of what was going on over there than we were, and we were there, simply because of the media coverage. A lot of things we weren't told, and we didn't experience them first hand. We would have to read about it in papers from America, and so the people back here were very much informed. In fact, my mother used to try to keep up with me as I moved around the country of Vietnam, and she could tell when there were heated battles—firefights, we used to call them—that were near the area that I had last told her I would be, and I would witness some things that were happening first hand, and then she would send me newspaper clippings of that same encounter, and they would be totally different.

Interviewer: Would they really? How would they be different?

Veteran: In Danang, we were in a mobile communication vehicle that used to sit right across the main highway from a big Navy hospital. The hospital was in the shape of a horseshoe, and on the inside of the horseshoe there was anywhere from twelve to fifteen doors that led into the hospital itself. All the doors were painted red. The inner circle of the horseshoe configuration was actually a helicopter landing pad, whereas a helicopter would bring the wounded in, set down, and the first door you went in was the operating room. I set in Danang one weekend from about 4:00 Friday evening until mid-afternoon Sunday—not continuously, but you could hear the choppers coming in and out. It would be a helicopter on the ground unloading, and one helicopter could carry from six to eight wounded. It would unload American wounded and South Vietnamese and there would be one hovering, and you would see one coming in the distance and one leaving. And when my mother sent me clippings from the newspaper about that encounter, the newspaper listed the American casualties as light, and it was just hard for me to perceive that two and a half days that kind of air traffic bringing wounded in, and the casualties would be light. I never could understand. What would it take for it

to be heavy? So those kinds of things kind of soured your stomach against Vietnam and the war we were involved in.

Interviewer: Did you acquire any medals?

Veteran: Other than the normal medals. I was injured once in an attack at Danang, and I injured both knees—not debilitating injuries, but enough to where it brought about some bleeding—and I was given the Purple Heart. When I retired in 1975, I was awarded the Military Service Award for my two tours in Vietnam.

Interviewer: Do you keep your awards and any memorabilia around?

Veteran: Sure, I keep paperwork and some documents. I've got the medal that I was given. I've got the Purple Heart that I was presented. Paperwork, you have to because even today there are times when I need to reach back and pull out some military records for some reason another.

Interviewer: Do you still have your uniform?

Veteran: No, I discarded my uniform within a couple of weeks after I retired. At times I wish now that I had kept them. It probably wouldn't fit, but there are certain days when you are a retiree that you are permitted to wear your uniform. Veterans Day, you can wear them. Sometimes now I wish I had kept them, but within a month after I retired I had gotten rid of my uniforms. I was through with that. I wanted to move on with my life. I had some memories that I didn't want to think about, and I didn't want to have these flashbacks that some people did and some people still are. I just wanted to rid myself of that twenty-four years of my life and move on to something else, and I didn't feel I needed any reminders around. So, no, I don't have any uniforms around, and have no plans to acquire any.

Interviewer: Did your military training stick with you?

Veteran: Oh, yes, I use it every day. I pride myself in being organized, and that was taught to me in the military. Personal grooming, personal cleanliness—that was taught to me in the military to the point to where you've got to stay clean because you're living in such close proximity with your comrades. Being able to accept an individual for what they are other than what they appear to be. Giving an



individual an opportunity to either prove or disprove themselves to you before you start making drastic decisions about them. That's another thing the military taught me, because you're meeting new people every day. You're in a location for a year, and people are just coming and going all the time. You learn to accept an individual for what they are and what they prove to be rather than passing judgment before you know anything about them.

Interviewer: So, basically after your military career you were through with it?

Veteran: I was finished by then. Originally, I went into the military to stay thirty years. I was going to be a thirty-year career man from the day I enlisted. Again, Vietnam soured my stomach a bit. My philosophies changed. My feelings didn't change about my country. My feelings were that people were getting us into wars that they themselves didn't have to fight, and that's the reason I cut my career short. Rather than stay for thirty, I just stayed twenty-four.

Interviewer: This is Tabitha signing off, concluding the interview with the first interviewee—Robert E. Davis. It is 12:25 p.m., April 20, 2002.

{END OF INTERVIEW}