

Arthur Lord
June 4, 1974

Tape 2, Side 1

Mr. Specht: Mr. Lord, can you recall how you felt about international affairs in the 1930's?

Mr. Lord: Yes, I'd always been interested in international affairs and while I was with the university, I was fond of history. I always liked auto-biographies and that sort of thing and biographies of famous persons. And, of course, with the wars and rumors of Hitler on the march at that time and everybody began to be a bit nervous of what was going to happen. Churchill had been warning about it for quite some time and finally the crash came. And...that's about all I can say about it. I knew...I was one of those who viewed it with alarm...what might happen.

Mr. Specht: You didn't think that appeasement was...?

Mr. Lord: No I didn't. I felt that appeasement wouldn't work. Not the way Hitler was carrying on.

Mr. Specht: Would you explain how you became involved in the C.O.T.C.?

Mr. Lord: Well that was at the invitation of Colonel Shrum. He, as soon as the C.O.T.C. was re-organized there and he was the head of it, he asked me if I'd come in. I was commissioned a Second Lieutenant, because he'd like to have some men that had been in the First War, who had a bit of maturity and could help in the training of these young people for this affair. So that's how I got started.

Mr. Specht: What year was that?

Mr. Lord: I'm not sure. I think '39 or '40.

Mr. Specht: 1940 was the year they brought in compulsory military training on campus?

Mr. Lord: Yes. It was compulsory then...well if physically fit yes.

Mr. Specht: How did you feel about becoming involved?

Mr. Lord: Oh well I felt it was a duty and I had to do something to help out. If my experience in the First War could be of any use in the Second War then...rather different type of war. The warfare I'd been used to was trench warfare and here was all the planes and the tanks and so on, it was quite a different type of war. But it was mostly, as far as the young cadets there in the corps were concerned, just to get them into proper...oh how to look at military training and what it would do if they would eventually be inducted into the army. A lot of them were there with the idea of finishing their course for the year only and then they would enlist, you see. Some of them were too young to go over at that time. I know in the First World War a lot of the boys that gave their wrong ages, lied about how old they were and when they were found out they were put in what they called a Boy's Battallion and they were given special training until they were old enough to go over to France. So...I think that they...you see at that time there was A.R.P. (what did that stand for?) you know we all had the black on our windows here so that there wouldn't be a peek of light anywhere during the night and then we would have air-raid siren warnings and you'd have to go to your posts and that sort of thing. That was being carried on all the time. Then there was this extra duty that I had with the

C.O.T.C. as well.

Mr. Specht: I see. The C.O.T.C. training was really quite fundamental wasn't it? Like, the basics?

Mr. Lord: Well...The basics yes, how to handle a rifle and getting them used to army discipline which was essential. And...but they were given a, especially when they got out to camp, we all had, we'd have the gas drills with your gas mask and then there were certain ones who liked to volunteer for the commandoes type of training. That would be done during the summer camp.

Mr. Specht: So during summer camp you could get some more specialized training?

Mr. Lord: Oh yes, yes.

Mr. Specht: What were your duties when you came in?

Mr. Lord: I was in charge of a company. I forget how many students I had in there. About a thousand I think.

Mr. Specht: In the year 1940 - 41 I believe was the highest and there were about 1800. That was the peak. Were you in charge of a company then?

Mr. Lord: Yes. No, I was in charge of a platoon first, because I was only a second lieutenant and then we had to pass exams for our lieutenancy and then captain. When I became captain I was in charge of a company.

Mr. Specht: Who'd give you your training for that?

Mr. Lord: We'd have our own officer who was in charge of training. He was Johnny McLeod, Major McLeod, he was the officer in charge of training at first when I went out. Later on Bonner was the... after McLeod left, Bonner, who had been wounded in Italy,

came back to go to the university and he was in charge full time there as a training officer. See, Shrum wasn't the training officer, he was the O.C. of the whole works, but he would give lectures as well and I would give lectures.

Mr. Specht: But you, for example, started as lieutenant and you became captain and I wondered who you got your...how you were given the rank?

Mr. Lord: You would pass exams.

Mr. Specht: Yes. Oh. I see. You would write exams? Did you just study on your own for the exams?

Mr. Lord: Yes.

Mr. Specht: I see.

Mr. Lord: That is with others having lectures, you see. It would be one of our own officers who would be giving the lectures on map reading, and then military law. You'd have to pass examinations in all of these and also, on forms of drill. You'd have to go in front of a squad and see if you could handle them. Oh we used to have, especially out on training, we'd have route marching out there, out around Chilliwack and Courtenay. It was a rough training program they put us through there, you know, strenuous I mean.

Mr. Specht: Could you give an example of some of the activities?

Mr. Lord: Well...going over the wall, for instance, you could... you'd be able to throw a net over a wall, a high wall, about eight or nine feet, you would have to climb with your equipment on your back up this wall on the rope net that was attached to it and get onto the other side. Did you ever know the Levey boys?

Mr. Specht: No.

Mr. Lord: They're about six feet eight or nine, six feet ten, I think. They're twins. They were both in my company and I couldn't tell them apart, so I made one of them a Lance Corporal and he had a stripe on so I could tell the difference. Ha! ha! ha! But I remember those boys going over that ladder. They were tremendous ones and they were as I say, very big boys and one of them got practically up to the top of this eight foot wall and he fell backwards onto the ground. We thought he'd have broken his back or something, but he was in the hospital for about a week, and came out again to training. And then there's a little river over there where you'd...they had a wire stretched across and you could go hand over hand over across the river that way. The rough training was good. There's not much shooting out there at those camps. We were able to get our shooting done, our training, at Blair Range out here.

Mr. Specht: The Blair Range in North Vancouver?

Mr. Lord: Yes.

Mr. Specht: Did you give lectures?

Mr. Lord: I gave lectures in Military Law.

Mr. Specht: What is Military Law?

Mr. Lord: Well, that's about dealing with disciplinary way with any soldiers who got out of line. I mean, if he was found...supposing he got into a brawl downtown or something like that, the police would deal with him, the city police would generally turn them over. Although they could be dealt with in the municipal courts, but they were generally turned over to the army and they

would^{be} dealt with by court martial. There's special procedures in that. And if a soldier is drunk on duty, for instance, or... oh, any of that type of thing, misdemeanor that was felt worthy of punishment - disobeying orders or going to sleep on sentry duty.

Mr. Specht: I was just wondering if the reason you were in charge, the reason you were giving lectures on this topic was because you had had training in law yourself?

Mr. Lord: Oh yes.

Mr. Specht: Lecturers were often chosen because of their speciality?

Mr. Lord: That's right, mm-hm.

Mr. Specht: What do you remember about having the armoury built?

Mr. Lord: I think that the armoury was built before I went out there, before I went into the army. I'm a little doubtful about that. I should remember. It might have been just about the time I joined. We had quite a problem as to what to do with...in way of...we had lecture runs of course, but I mean in the way of training. Where would all the troops be. They would come out there in their uniforms when they're going to lectures and then there'd be a parade and if there's no place like an armoury, to deal with it then that was going to be somewhat difficult. Because you didn't want to go out training in the mud, although we did a lot of that when we were at camp, but not in town. I just don't remember the date of the completion of the armoury.

Mr. Specht: I think it was in 1941. In fact I'm sure that was the year. I don't know what month. I have it down, but not here.

Mr. Lord: Yes, we had the parade ground there. The Arts centre is there now, just above the armoury, the fairly level piece of ground there, that's where we used to have the parade fall in. Each company might have a different bit to do. They'd go off with their instructors you see, apart from the senior officer, the major in charge of training, there'd be sergeants from the regular force who were there teaching musketry and the drills, gas mask business and that sort of thing.

Mr. Specht: How often would you turn out? Do you remember?

Mr. Lord: Oh...there'd be one every weekend and then also on certain nights probably once or twice during the week.

Mr. Specht: Would you turn out with your company then? Would it be scheduled that you would turn out with them at a certain time?

Mr. Lord: Oh yes. Parade was at a certain hour.

Mr. Specht: In the armoury, I believe the, there was the officer's mess constructed as part of the armoury?

Mr. Lord: In the armoury? Yes, oh yes.

Mr. Specht: What was that like?

Mr. Lord: Well that was...see there's the orderly room, there's the administration part there and then upstairs, above that and looking down on the parade floor of the armoury there's the officer's mess. It was a big, long room, oh bigger than this, the whole of this house, I guess about sixty feet long and about twenty feet wide, thirty feet wide. And that's where we could meet for mess, have dinners, dances and so on. We'd have social occasions of that kind too. And when visiting officers came,

the O.C. of the district, General Pearkes used to come in there, he was the head man in the west here, and of course, it was a place to entertain and have drinks if you could get enough permits to get some drinks. You were only allowed a quart a month or something like that.

Mr. Specht: Do you remember any other visitors?

Mr. Lord: ...Not particularly during the war. Well there were a lot of them, but I don't remember who they were.

Mr. Specht: What was the atmosphere like in the mess?

Mr. Lord: Oh, well that was always a pleasant place where the officers could meet and especially also, at the odd dance that we'd have, you'd bring your wives or girl-friends and it was a very happy occasion.

Mr. Specht: Did you know most of the officers beforehand, before you went in?

Mr. Lord: I knew some of them. No I didn't know most of them. There were quite a few of them, you see, were university professors whom I had known at the university.

Mr. Specht: You mentioned earlier that one of the most important things that the cadets would get would be discipline. Why do you say that?

Mr. Lord: Because you can't run an army without discipline. I would go so far as to say you can't run a world without discipline either. The period of permissiveness that we're going through now I think, is all a mistake.

Mr. Specht: How would you impart discipline in the officer's training?

Mr. Lord: Well that's all in the drill training that they get to begin with and...well the way they conduct themselves on parade and...I don't know. Its just sort of a nebulous thing to describe, but the whole aspect of the thing is discipline. For instance, if during a war you are not trained and disciplined to do what you're told to do and you get some idea of your own, then that could lead to disaster. The idea is that they work together. Everybody is disciplined to do the same thing at the same time and to obey orders. If a soldier refused to obey orders why he's up for it, for a court martial. He could be punished by being confined to barracks for a week or something like that. Not allowed to go out on a night pass.

Mr. Specht: Would you say you had rather a strong feeling about discipline because of your experiences in World War One?

Mr. Lord: Well I guess it was first...I had my first experience of it when I was a cadet at King Edward High School in 1912. That was...discipline was very important there with a group of fellows with the average age of around fifteen and discipline is a thing that's handled by officers, certain officers, in a different way. Some can be bullies about it and others can, by their example get more out of men than some who are the bullying type. But from the cadet corps in the First War, I'd had that training in the cadet corps. I knew the rudiments of the drills and all that sort of thing so...I think its a most important thing that the world can't live without discipline.

Mr. Specht: Was there...I wonder if it would be possible if you could remember one or two things you might have got out of your

own experiences in World War One and you felt you wanted to impart this to the cadets in your charge, to the students you were training?

Mr. Lord: Well...the way...no I can't think of any particular thing that...that I could say, that one experience that I had or any more that would help them.

Mr. Specht: What do you think makes a good officer?

Mr. Lord: I think one who had a proper understanding of men and who could use that knowledge to bring out the best that there was in the men without possibly seeming to do so, you know what I mean? Rather than trying to force it down his throat, if he can by example get men to do things which he otherwise...they might not otherwise do. They'd be glad to do it, otherwise they're just sort of drumbling along. But I think the good officer is one who would be able to look after, who knows how to look after his men, their comfort. If they have any complaints any time about the food or...they can always come to him and be paraded to him and he can deal with it. That, I think, is the best idea, the best attribute that a good officer could have, is to see that... one who sees that his men are well looked after so that their natural loyalty will not be in any way impaired. You know, sometimes loyalty will disappear if you feel you're being unjustly dealt with. So I think an officer must work on that line.

End of Tape 1, Side 1

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Tape 1, Side 2

Mr. Specht: Was there a different atmosphere on campus between the First World War and the Second World War? I know its a difficult question, but I wonder if you could describe how there might have been differences - differences in attitude perhaps?

Mr. Lord: Difference in attitude of students after the First War as compared with the other war?

Mr. Specht: No. I was thinking during the war, their approach to the service.

Mr. Lord: Between the two wars you mean?

Mr. Specht: No. Say during the First World War I wonder what the attitude was of the students and in the Second World War what the attitude was? Is it possible to compare?

Mr. Lord: Oh, I don't think so...Well in the First World War, there was an eagerness of young men who wanted to go overseas. There was that tremendous spirit that had been...propaganda that had worked on the students, the young people who didn't need much propaganda. They were infused with the idea that the war couldn't be won without them and they wanted to get over. You know I felt that way myself. I think principally because most of my...some of my friends had already gone and two of my brothers had already gone. Of course I was only nineteen then. I felt that if I didn't get in soon I wouldn't get there before the war was over. I don't think there was that spirit in this war, the Second War. Well the reason I think, being because they were the sons of a lot of them who had been through the

First War and they'd cooled them down a bit and say 'don't be too anxious to get there, you'll get there in good time alright and if you want to do your duty you'll do it. Go ahead, but don't think it too much of an adventure.' I think that attitude was a little more mature, possibly than it was in the First War.

Mr. Specht: When did you take your discharge?

Mr. Lord: In March of 1918.

Mr. Specht: I'm sorry. I was referring to the Second World War. What were the circumstances?

Mr. Lord: Oh. I think that war was declared and...at least the armistice was signed and that was the end of it. I think the C.O.T.C. was kept on for a few weeks, but gradually that petered out. I wanted to get back to my duties at city hall and spend more time than I was able to do during the war.

Mr. Specht: You had been with the C.O.T.C. then for approximately five years?

Mr. Lord: Yes, approximately that.

Mr. Specht: Did you have a...what were your feelings towards your experience?

Mr. Lord: Toward the C.O.T.C.?

Mr. Specht: Yes, in the Second World War.

Mr. Lord: Oh none in particular except there was a job to be done, the younger ones and my attitude was if the experience I had in the First World War could be of any help to them, well then I was very pleased to do it. Because everybody was doing their bit in the war.

Mr. Specht: After the war, after the First World War the C.O.T.C. was disbanded at U.B.C. after the First World War. You talked about that in our previous interview. I wonder though, after the Second World War there doesn't seem to have been the anti-military feeling.

Mr. Lord: I couldn't say. Because I don't know what the...I wasn't on the campus. The cadet corps, at least the C.O.T.C. kept going for a while but purely voluntary basis and they had their Navy group and the Army group and the Air Force group and they kept on for quite a while. I know they all paraded. Quite a few of them did parade on the annual armistice day, Remembrance Day Parade at the Memorial Gymnasium. They were represented by the three services, three branches and they kept up like that for quite a while, but its no longer in existence.

Mr. Specht: It lasted until 1968, but right after World War Two they had a very large contingent. The C.O.T.C. alone had over a hundred members and they don't seem to have encountered the opposition that occurred after the First World War. Did you have any subsequent involvement with the units on campus after you were out?

Mr. Lord: With any of the activities?

Mr. Specht: Yes.

Mr. Lord: No. Except I was on the Senate and the Board of Governors. I was on the Senate for thirty-six years and on the Board for twelve years.

Mr. Specht: Did you attend any functions though?

Mr. Lord: Oh yes. The re-union functions. Is that what you meant by functions? I attended all the re-unions that took place every five years. Each class you see...there were a lot of them that took place every...there were a lot of functions that took place every year, but our class of 1921 would be there at the same time as others who were having a five year re-union and they'd take place in different parts of the university. Our group now is too small, fifty of them a little while ago. A lot of... you'd be surprised how many came from different parts of the United States and Canada for this.

Mr. Specht: Did you - were you ever invited to C.O.T.C. affairs?

Mr. Lord: Yes, oh yes. I would get an invitation as a former officer.

Mr. Specht: To what for example?

Mr. Lord: Oh social functions, but that's about all they'd be doing. No other reason to go out except that they were having a social function and being a member of the officer's mess they'd send me a notice of it.

Mr. Specht: What do you think of the idea of the university as a place for military training?

Mr. Lord: Oh I think its a good idea. Particularly on a volunteer basis... For those who feel they'd like to have a bit of background in military training why yes the university would be a good spot for them. But whether it would go over very well now or not I don't know.

Mr. Specht: Well it was disbanded eventually in 1968.

Mr. Lord: Yes that's what I say it wouldn't go over now. Well the interest in it had waned hadn't it?

Mr. Specht: Yes. Although also the government wanted to cut down the costs. Why do you think the university would be a good place though? For people who wanted training, what do you think the university offers?

Mr. Lord: Training for what?

Mr. Specht: Offers, that would be a good setting for military training.

Mr. Lord: It doesn't offer anything at the moment.

Mr. Specht: No, I mean in the past. Like I'm speaking more of theoretically.

Mr. Lord: Well its just another activity and there are certain ones who...liked it, for instance, why would I join the cadet corps at King Edward High School when I was a kid? There are those who belong to a different reserve battalion, the 6th D.C. o R. and the ^{72nd} Highlanders are still going as reserve battalions and there are those who like to have that type of training.

Mr. Specht: Yes. On campus you would have the opportunity to produce officers who have a university education. At U.B.C. not presently but in the past, a lot of the faculty members also had some military background.

Mr. Lord: Yes, a lot of them.

End of Tape 1, Side 2