



Jack Anderson :: The Early Years Audio Transcript

...I wanted to be a war correspondent, and so when the Desert News agreed to send me, I contacted some papers down South to see if I could get some support, and they were delighted. What did they have to lose? And I went overseas as a war correspondent for the Desert News.

Q.:

Now why didn't the draft board pick you up when you resigned?

A.:

Because I was still in the naval reserve, because of the bureaucratic red tape, I didn't know that. Because of the bureaucratic red tape, they couldn't touch me. But when I was overseas, and I thought once I was a war correspondent they wouldn't bother you. But I should have thought better, because of the Murray draft board, which was so hostile. I guess they had a file on me, and I was a returned missionary, that's all they cared. So the minute I lost my credentials in the naval reserve, I was already overseas as a war correspondent. But when that happened, I just assumed I had just applied for, and thought I had been granted, an occupational deferment...I wanted a big story. And so I made a search for a big story, and I was, I wanted to, I flew with some guys on those bombing missions.

Q.:

Tell me why you picked China to go.

A.:

The obvious reason was that I had met these war correspondents in Calcutta and they were part of the India-China theater. And I knew enough about how it operated there, and I didn't know how it operated in Europe, so I chose that. It was just because I was familiar with it, and felt a little more comfortable going someplace that I knew something about. And might even run into some guys I knew...So I went over as a war correspondent. I hadn't been to China. I wasn't interested – I knew there was much more action in China than in India - so I flew the hump, joined the press hostel in Chungking, went out in the field looking for stories, flew with some guys who were flying with the Chinese-American composite wing, who went on some raids.

And I heard them talking about delivering supplies to guerrillas. And I thought "Oh boy." Nobody's writing, everybody- I always had the theory as a correspondent, as a reporter, I hated to go to press conferences because I figured there was enough other reporters there to cover it. I wanted to find out what they didn't tell you at press conferences. And I wanted to find out the story that the others missed. That was always my attitude. And so as a war correspondent, I wanted to get the story nobody else had. And so I never, traveled with the pack. Never, ever did. And I went off on my own. I talked these pilots into taking me.