

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Gary J. Price

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library  
*Veterans Remember* Oral History project

Interview # VRG-V-L-2014-021

Colonel Gary J. Price, a Marine aviator who helped with the evacuation of Saigon in 1975 and commanded a squadron during the Gulf War, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Veterans Remember-Gulf War* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Jul 16, 2014    Location: IIS Studio, CMS Building in Springfield, IL

Date: Sep 4, 2014    Location: IIS Studio, CMS Building in Springfield, IL

Interview Format: Digital video, HD – Wide Screen

Interviewer: Mark R. DePue, Director of Oral History

Technical Support (cameraman, etc): Mark Suszko and Greg Lipe, IL Info Service

Transcription by: \_\_\_\_\_

Edited by: \_\_\_\_\_

Transcript  
being processed

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_    Total Time: 1:40 + 1:58 / 1.67 + 1.97 = 3.64 hrs

Session 1: Gary's early life, Marine aviation training, and role in fall of Saigon

Session 2: Military career, with focus on experiences as commander during Gulf War

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on May 19, 2015.

The interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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# Abstract

Gary J. Price, *Veterans Remember*, VRG-A-L-2014-021

**Biographical Information Overview of Interview:** Gary J. Price was born on October 7, 1948 in Fresno, California, and spent his early years in Kermin, California. He entered the Marine Corps in May, 1971 with the goal of becoming a pilot, despite not having a college degree. By the following year he had been commissioned, and was progressing through flight training, while also getting married in November, 1972.

By 1974 Lieutenant Price was stationed in Okinawa, assigned to HMM 165, (a Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron) equipped with CH-46 helicopters. In late April, the unit shipped out with the Navy heading toward the Philippines and South Vietnam. For the next several weeks, Price and his unit supported the evacuation of US personnel from South Vietnam, while stationed on board the USS Dubuque LPD-8, an amphibious transport vessel. In the years following that experience, Price progressed through a series of assignments and schools, experiencing the lean years in the late 1970s and the Reagan years when the military went through a resurgence. In the mid-1980s he was stationed at Yuma, Arizona, assigned to the Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron (MAWTS-1), where he was involved with developing Marine aviation tactics. In 1989 Lieutenant Colonel Price took command of HMM-161. One year later he was leading his unit to Saudi Arabia, following Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in August, 1990. Price talks at length about the unit's involvement during Desert Shield (the defense of Saudi Arabia) and Desert Storm in early 1991, the liberation of Kuwait and defeat of Iraqi forces.

Subsequent assignments included more schooling, command of the Headquarters and Service Battalion at Quantico, Virginia, and his final assignment commanding a Naval ROTC unit at the Virginia Military Institute in Lexington, Virginia. He retired from the Marine Corps on September 1, 2001.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** Marine Corps aviation; evacuation of Saigon in 1975; Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm; CH-46 Sea Knight helicopter; command challenges during the Gulf War; Vietnamese boat people; career progression for Marine aviators; Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron-1 at Yuma, Arizona; HMM-161 during the Gulf War

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