

ET3 [REDACTED] was interviewed via telephone by [REDACTED] Riker, JAGC, USN, on 16 November 2000. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] A summary of his interview is provided below.

ET3 [REDACTED] was standing AFT Phone Talker during Sea and Anchor detail; however, he was inside the skin of the ship at the time of the explosion.

1. What was your interaction with the small boat? Exactly what did you see?
2. What were the men in the boat doing?
3. Did they attempt to throw you a line?

Just prior to the end of Sea and Anchor Detail, ET3 [REDACTED] saw a line had been thrown over by three males in a small boat on port side AFT. ET3 [REDACTED] looked over the side and he saw three Yemeni-looking males in a small white boat approx 15-20 ft in size. Two were men (one with a black/gray beard, between 40-50 years old; and one dark haired male approx. 30 years old; and one was a child between the ages 12-13 years old).

ET3 [REDACTED] indicated that he thought this was a garbage barge of some sorts because the men in the small boat yelled in English "garbage garbage." He also observed that the boat looked dirty and smelly, and the deck of the boat appeared to be covered by a tarp. When this occurred, ET3 [REDACTED] called OS2 [REDACTED] on the bridge and asked why the small boat threw over its line and whether or not the ship was sending off garbage?

As ET3 [REDACTED] was waiting for the bridge to respond, it appeared that the two men in the small boat tried to climb up the Jacobs ladder, which had been extended earlier for the harbor pilot. When this happened, ET3 [REDACTED] saw GM2 [REDACTED] "show her gun" to the two men and chased them off the ladder back onto the small boat. The men only tried to climb up the ladder and never set foot onboard the USS COLE.

Immediately after that, the bridge responded that the ship was not sending off any garbage. ET3 [REDACTED] directed FC3 [REDACTED] to throw back the line. FC3 [REDACTED] threw back the line to the small boat and the boat pulled away from the USS COLE.

ET3 [REDACTED] did watch the small boat "puddle around" the harbor for a short while. He does remember watching the small boat pull alongside a yellow and red boat (similar to the small boats that were assisting the USS COLE to moor) and watched the child in the small boat board the yellow and red boat. After that,

Sea and Anchor Detailed secured and ET3 [redacted] secured his watch. ET3 [redacted] clearly indicated that it was approximately 1 - 1 1/4 hours after Sea and Anchor Detailed secured when the explosion occurred. ET3 [redacted] did not see where the small boat went after the 12-13 year-old child boarded the yellow and red boat. ET3 [redacted] was inside the skin of the ship at the time of the explosion. The explosion did not occur until approximately 1 - 1-1/4 hours after ET3 [redacted] contact with the small boat.

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