

**Naval Historical Center
Oral Interview Summary Form**

Interviewers:

CAPT Gary Hall
CAPT Mike McDaniel

Interviewer's Organization:

Navy Combat Documentation Det 206
Navy Combat Documentation Det 206

Interviewee:

CAPT Edward (Sonny) Masso

Current Address:

██████████ Sterling VA 20165

Date of Interview:

11 December 2001

Place of Interview:

Crystal City, Arlington VA

Number of Cassettes:

One

Security Classification:

Unclassified

Name of Project: Pentagon Terrorist Attack Incident

Subject Terms/Key Words: Pentagon; Terrorist Attack; 11 September 2001; triage; evacuation; lessons learned; Defense Protective Service; FBI; carnage; Navy Command Center; renovation.

Abstract of Interview:

1. Born in ████████ CA in 1955. Raised in the Southern CA area and was inspired to consider military service by his father, an Estonian who served on the Russian front in WWII, and by his stepfather, a retired Navy Captain. Considers San Clemente his home; grew up near Camp Pendleton on the beach. Influenced by Vietnam because his neighborhood was conservative and many were in the military. Stepfather was President of the local Interfaith Servicemen's Center, an alternative to a bar for young Marines in a non-alcohol environment. Hosted up to ten Marines every Thanksgiving. Many of these later died in Vietnam. Active in his church growing up. Nixon had a summer home in San Clemente and he saw him often. President Nixon attended their church when he was in town. Given an ROTC scholarship from his San Clemente high school. ROTC Scholarship to University of Mississippi began the summer of 1973. Summer cruise on the USS Cleveland from San Diego to Hawaii; visited American Samoa and Australia. After his junior year he worked with his church processing refugees from Vietnam after it's fall. Drill team CDR his junior year in ROTC. Midshipmen battalion CDR his first semester of his senior year in ROTC. April 29, 1977 married his wife ████████. May 15, 1977 commissioned by his stepfather. Surface Warfare officer. Served on the USS Paul F. Foster as the First Lieutenant, later Navigator and ASW officer. Detailer for Surface Warfare Junior Officers for YG 78. Left active duty. Worked for GE and then Anteon. Two children. Affiliated with Reserves. Many CO tours including CO of the Navy Command Center when the plane hit the Pentagon, destroying the NCC, on September 11th.
2. NCC Det 106 unit mission changed dramatically when he was first assigned to the unit. The head of the watch, the Navy Dept. Duty Captain, became the Navy Dept Duty officer (NDDO). It evolved into a 24/7, 365 type unit. Requested in April of 2000 to help plan the move of the NCC into the newly renovated part of the building, located in 1D457.

Put a tiger team together under LCDR Ed McDonald working with three active duty LTs who perished in the attack. The new space was a command center, IT workspace, graphic artist/laboratory, workplace for drug interdiction. Actual move slipped a couple of times. Team moved the NCC approximately the 15th of August.

3. 93 possible NDDO watches to stand in a given month. The reserve unit stood 98 watches in August 2001 because there were watch teams in place at the old and new locations.
4. Day of 11 September: He arrived at work in Crystal City at approximately 0600. Had planned a couple of meetings that morning. An 1100 appointment with Jerry DeConto who became the head of the Command Center. Also meeting with CAPT Getzfired. Jerry had CAPT Masso's change of command invitation in his office. Had his radio on and at 0849 he heard that a plane had hit one of the WTC towers. Called the Command Center and spoke with LCDR Ron Vauk who was standing the NDDO watch. Ron Vauk had switched watches with CDR Eileen Roemer. He spoke with Larry Getzfired. Discussed the attack. Asked Larry Getzfired if he should come in; was told to come in if he wanted to. Decided to go to the Pentagon early. Called his N3, Greg Marvel, who lives in Miami. Told Greg that he thought they'd have to stand up a crisis action team, a CAT. Also that there may be commitments to support the National Military Command Center (NMCC). Get people alerted. Heard about second tower being hit. Grabbed his coat. Parked in mall parking lot. Guards looked on edge. Told them to be safe. Did not anticipate an attack on the Pentagon. Parked in the visitors spot.
5. Making his way to the NCC, walking in the 4th corridor, A ring, 4th deck as the plane hit. Felt the explosion. Thought it was a bomb. Almost instantly the announcement to evacuate the Pentagon occurred. He raced down the escalator. Going to his battle station in the Command Center. At the D ring it is smashed, dark and wet. Still unsettled; things still collapsing. Trying to make his way to door into the command center. Heard some screams coming from behind him. Retreated back; lady in head was disoriented. Another lady in a stall that had collapsed. Yanked her up; she was out of control. Went back and that area near the command center had collapsed. Smoke much more intense. Glass door between C and D rings. Saw CAPT Jeff Boroff in shock. Gaping hole that was out of the command center. Smoke billowing around; chain link fence; water was rising in the alleyway. Army people in 2nd and 3rd floors that could not break the windows. Windows never broke; they came out of their frames. They shattered but stayed intact. Saw pile of rubble of 3-5' high in front of the hole. Saw flames inside that hole. Started catching people jumping out of the windows. ADM Belisle opened the chain link fence. N76 had fire extinguishers. The flames were not affected by their use.
6. Screams were at a crescendo, and then you would stop hearing them. Horror in the silence. Petty Officer Gaston came out of one of the holes. He was fighting for his breath. A LtCol in a fetal position, nothing wrong with her. A guy came out and had lost every hair on his body. Looked like a lobster; he was trying to help people. He was the one that the President visited; a Navy Petty Officer. Thought there might be a chemical/biological threat and that they would end up dying anyway.
7. Lessons learned: No more fire extinguishers. No battle lanterns. Modular partitions fell over like dominos preventing ingress and egress for everyone. Disoriented people because there was no walkway. No emergency breathing apparatus. Windows unyielding and caused death. He is not impressed by the renovation.
8. When they stopped hearing people, the flames were intense and water high. Some medical professionals came. Trying to use his cell phone and an e-mail pager. LCDR Val Eichenlaub sent him a note and said she would contact people. Told her to get people to the Pentagon Alternate Site now. LCDR Swerdoski volunteered to help. He

needed to get out and communicate with ADM Keating the status of the reserve unit. Went out to the mall entrance and Secretary Rumsfeld was there. Got a cell signal and called the unit. Leaving on the Hwy 110 side; parked his car near his office and was able to contact his people. CDRs Wetzel, Bundo and eight others were at the Alternate Site within two hours. Contacted AT/FP (N34) who said they thought the Navy would shift to the Marine Corps Command Center. Greg Marvel was on the phone with CAPT Getzfred when the phone went dead. (CAPT Getzfred died in the attack).

9. He remained in the area until 0100. Worked on the unaccounted for list. He knew everybody. The list reduced from 85-90 to about 35. He made all of the calls from his office in Crystal City. Manned the alternate site for about 24 hours. Knew that Ron Vauk and Bob Elseth had not gotten out. He contacted their families. The one thing that he had not trained for was how to deal with the families. He called the 1-800 number and was unimpressed. He was put on hold and told they did not know anything. The height of impersonal. He picked CAPT's Roemer and Mulrooney and sent them on a mission. Eileen Roemer was sent to the Elseth house and John Mulrooney was sent to the Vauk residence. Told them they were not to call the 1-800 number and not to wait for the CACO, but that those two officers were to take care of those families. He had them stay the night with the families and be the ones who called the 1-800 number. Not relying on a CACO. Get there now. [REDACTED] Elseth was not worried at first. Thought her husband would still be working. [REDACTED] Vauk was highly concerned because she was 7 1/2 months pregnant and they had plans that afternoon. Thought he was in traffic. [REDACTED] called CAPT Masso every 15 minutes until CDR Mulrooney got out there. Both the Vauk and Elseth families had parents that were on trips overseas. That night CDR Tom Dacey (an airline pilot) was the advocate of the family and ensured they got on the first plane home. Many of the reserve ADMs called to let him know that they were there. Tom Dacey got one of the families out a few days later, and the other family got out on a Navy flight a few days later. The pilots on the Navy flight took care of those families.
10. CAPT Jordan, the SWO in the NCC, set up free financial planning for any victim through his civilian employment. When the Navy lists you as officially missing, you can get SGLI benefits. Eileen Roemer brought the Elseth family in to Arlington and John Mulrooney brought [REDACTED] Vauk in so that the families could be near their missing. The organization did not know how much the NCC Det 206 supported them. They were asked to recall the entire unit and CAPT Masso did not believe it was necessary. He was willing to man the CAT with AT's. He spoke with ADM Keating about the recall and explained exactly how the reservists in the unit were supporting the Navy.
11. Tendency to get the wrong reservist to volunteer. One who doesn't have a job and is recalled. Need the right reservist. One of the challenges posed was spearheading a study on how and where to move back into the reserve center, and that reservist wasn't in his unit. Called CAPT Mike Urena, CO of a SACLANT unit to spearhead that study.
12. People suffering from profound stress and lack of sleep. CAPT Boroff worked for 48 straight hours. Many went through that routine. Many needed some time off but did not take it in the beginning. His crew set up shop in his Crystal City and at the Navy Yard. Arlington didn't want the reservists buried in the ground; wanted them to be in the calm bariam. Not what the Vauk or Elseth family wanted. Invoked the senior leadership of the Navy to get buried in the ground. Presence of flag leadership at the funerals and memorial services was tremendous and said much for the Navy family.
13. Called his relief on 12 September (CAPT Jeff Lemmons) and asked him to come over and participate in all of the major decisions that were made. The change of command

occurred on 23rd of September. On October 1st he went to Egypt and stayed for an entire month as Chief of Staff for CTF 150 for ADM Milliken.

14. The 3 star needs to have a relationship with the O-6's. Keeps them in the loop as to exactly how much the reserve units are supporting their operations. Reserve CO's need to be aggressive to keep the senior leadership in the loop on reserve issues.
15. He is now the Chief of Staff to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition Chief Engineer. They ensure the interoperability and integration of all Navy and Joint programs. Work with all the PEOs and SYSCOMs. Key front burner issues are homeland security; AT/FP. CNO creating a budget based on purchasing warfare capabilities as opposed to individual platforms, such as STRIKE, Theatre Air Missile Defense, and Undersea Warfare.

Abstracted by:
CDR Loftus
04 January 2002

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Name of Project: Pentagon Terrorist Attack Incident

Subject Terms/Key Words: Navy Command Center; Pentagon Rescue; Reconstitution; Terrorist Attack; 11 September 2001

Transcript of Interview:

Interviewee Information:

CAPT Masso was born and raised in ██████████, California, father is from Estonia and mother is from Mississippi. Father served at the Russian front during World War II. Influences were Vietnam and Camp Pendleton while growing up in Southern California. Joined the Navy through RTOC at the University of Mississippi in 1973. Surface Warfare Officer. Left active duty and remained with the Navy Reserve. Was recalled for Desert Storm. He is currently serving as the Commanding Officer of CINCEASTLANT unit out of Atlanta, Georgia. Married with two children, a daughter ██████████-20, and a son ██████████-18.

Topics Discussed:

TAPE ONE—Side One

Q. The Command Center had recently moved into the new wedge. Can you tell us your involvement with that as a unit as NCC Detachment 106?

A. Basically, the type of unit that we were when I took command changed radically early in the tenure from a -- most of the watch standers were Captains and they titled the position Navy Department Duty Captain. We changed, kind of, the designation to Navy Department Duty Officer. It really evolved into a 24/7/365 type unit. To that end, we were requested around April of, maybe, 1999 timeframe or April 2000 timeframe to help plan the move from the present command center to a new location in a newly renovated part of the building, which was located in 1 D, I think, 457, was the actual space number. So I put a tiger team together, under the leadership of a LCDR ED McDONALD and another group of people. Basically he worked collaboratively with LT MISSY WOGS and some other -- ERIC CRANFORD, the late LT ERIC CRANFORD and the late -- and a couple of the other Lieutenants who passed in the event. They created a team and it was kind of neat because they had a lot of three-star visibility, but we kind of gave them high air cover. When I say we, me and my active duty O-6 counterparts and we just said, "hey, we'll watch them operate and when we think we need to get involved we will. And if we don't need to get involved we won't." And so we just kind of watched them do this wonderful job of articulating all of the needs and IT requirements and doing all of the IT backups that were necessary and just running everything down to the most minute of details, coordinating with civil contractors, things of this nature. They came in and created kind of a let's have a trash program where we recycle a bunch of a junk we haven't looked at in the last 10 years. So they really cleaned the place up in addition to creating a -- changing everything from analog to digital in terms of taking publications and putting them on compact discs and doing that kind of thing. So they really raised the bar on how these kinds of things are done because they didn't just look at it as a task where we're going to move all of this junk from this place to this new location and it's just misplaced -- it's just changed. They actually made it a very efficient thing as well. I

really allowed for an increased footprint of other personnel to be able to move in to what had previously just been a command center. So it was actually a command center/IT workspace/Graphics Artist/Graphics Laboratory/Workplace for drug interdiction activities and things like that. The actual move slipped a couple of times, mostly due to contractor issues, but basically a team went on in place and moved the command center from the fourth deck of where it had been to the new location approximately the 15th of August. The interesting part of that was that we were real proud that we the NCC 106 unit had a set a record where there are 93 possible watches you can stand in a given month. If you think of three watches a day times 31 days in a month, which August was a 31-day month, and we actually stood, I believe, 98 watches because we had a watch team -- we had two watch teams in place at the old and new locations so that we could make sure that we would always be online, if you will. So, that was really a great month. We were very proud of the August 2001 year.

Q. Take us through your day of 11 September and walk us through your recollection of that day.

A. I am a Chief of Staff, so I'm usually at my desk by six o'clock. This particular day was no exception. In fact, I may have been here a little earlier. I was, obviously, in a civilian suit and it really -- the big plans of the 11th were -- that was a Tuesday so I had a couple of meetings with the bosses. I had an 11 o'clock appointment with a close friend JERRY DECONTO, who became my counterpart, if you will, became the head of the command center but that was not clear. It's a long story. It was JERRY DECONTO, LARRY GETZRRED, and RICH TENGA but, we were all buddies and so it didn't really matter. But anyway, JERRY DECONTO I've known since 1981. JERRY actually had my change of command invitations on his desk and I was going to roll by and pick them up because he had been away visiting his mother in

Sandwich, Massachusetts over the weekend. Actually, he had even stayed an extra day. I was actually going to meet him on Monday the 10th. I had attended a Surface Navy Association Awards committee meeting the night before. So I had some follow-up actions that I needed to accomplish on that particular day, the 11th. I think I came in even a little bit earlier so that I could take care of some of that stuff and not interfere with my day job. I had my radio on which I had just turned off, as you know. Even though my preferred listening is Rock, I keep it on mood music, the classical station, and they interrupted programming around 8:49 or so, and said that a plane had actually hit one of the World Trade Center towers. The information was very sketchy and, in my mind, I had thought that it might have been a Cessna, an errant pilot who hit it and then as somebody down the hall came by and said, “did you hear this civilian,” -- it was an airliner that actually hit this one building. This is all before 9 o’clock so when I had heard it was probably not a Cessna of some sort, I called the command center and I spoke with LCDR RON VAUK, who was on watch, and I was surprised that he was on watch because I thought RICH TENGA would be, but RICH had a dental appointment. I think that they traded or did something like that. I wasn’t sure if it was EILEEN ROEMER or who it was, but it happened to be RON VAUK. RON was real busy as – my standing orders are if you are the Navy Duty Department Officer, just because I call you have to take care of business so just pass me off, you know, if I need information. So that’s what he did. He passed me off to LARRY GETZFRED. LARRY, at the time, it was more -- I don’t want to say there was relaxation, but clearly there was a stress or a sense of purpose to find out more about what had happened, but it was really more we don’t really know and at this point there are things – there is like a mental check list if you have ever stood that watch where you know, well, if it’s a civilian plane that hits a civilian building, is there really a military involvement? Well, there might be. Did it hit a recruiting station? Were

there military on the plane? Is there more data that says this is more than just an accident? So they were watching that. They did not know. They were in a data collection mode. I asked LARRY GETZFRED if I should come in and he said, "at this point, I would say no, but I don't know. If you want to come in" -- because he knew that I was there all the time. He knew that I was really five minutes away. So, knock yourself out. The coffee is hot. That was kind of the comment. So, I wasn't feeling -- I decided I was going to go in early, because JERRY DECONTO would be there and I could kill about four birds with one stone, that kind of thing. I was also having lunch that day with two high school classmates, one of whom, JOHN CRUZ is the Marine EA to SECNAV. The other one, BRIAN PETER, is a Coast Guard Officer and we were all going to meet and have lunch at the SECNAV's mess that day. I was going to swing by anyway and pick up my invitations and go have lunch with my classmates. I called my N3 GREG MARVEL who lives in Miami and I was really glad to have gotten him, because typically most of my high achievers are real busy people in their day jobs, too, so usually you catch them on a first or second pass, but GREG answered the phone and I said, "hey GREG, did you hear what happened?" He said, "Yeah, I did." I said, "well, I'm thinking best case scenario for us is that we're going to have to stand up a CAT, a Crisis Action Team" and that he needed to get his folks thinking about participating in a CAT of some sort. Additionally, I told him that --and this is all stuff that we have trained for, so this is not like I'm directing anything, it's more, okay, you know what to do, GREG. The other is that there might have been, on a more heavy basis, commitments to support the National Military Command Center, maybe a backup watch in the command center, but stand up a CAT, these types of things. I said, "Hey, you got to be ready. Get your people alerted." To us, this was kind of ops normal because we had had -- in my previous 22 months of command I had 12 no-notice recalls where we have manned up CATs and

we have manned up at NCC. For everything from Egypt Air to Vieques a couple of times, to the *GREENVILLE* incident, to the *KERST*, to the *COLE*, all of these kinds of things occurred and we, basically, had no notice to respond to many of these requirements. So to us this was -- I have GREG poised, my N3, to do what he needed to do awaiting my word. Then I was going to roll to the command center and just get ready to push the button. I'm also helping my NDDO so he can just be focused on NDDO responsibilities. Then I can get the unit organized around that. This is how we have operated for two years. So when -- I was kind of -- I called my classmate about probable five after nine -- my high school classmate, JOHN CRUZ and I said, "JOHN, hey, I'm going to stop over if you're not too busy." And we've talked about it, you know, did you see it? He said, "yeah, we've got CNN on here and we don't know either." So, I was kind of -- I said, "well, I'll see you when I see you," kind of thing. In any event I'll see you at 12:15 o'clock, and then I heard that the second tower had been hit and I grabbed my coat and I basically—

Q. How did you hear that?

A. I had my radio on, so I heard it from that. Then I knew that this was big time doings. So I grabbed my coat and actually what I did is I called Admiral T.J. WILSON'S flag writer who is a YN1 named LAWRENCE TURNER. I said, "Hey, L.T., can you hook me up with a mall parking spot?" He said, "Yeah, give me the license number and the car" and that kind of thing because I didn't want to hit south parking and then schlep five hundred yards in this kind of sense of urgency. So he, basically, made a call that was going to allow me to park in the mall. So I, basically, hauled butt over there and I got on the phone and I called a couple of other people just to say stand-by and, again, this is in the unit. They are all busy people. They all have high ops tempo day jobs. So, I just said, "hey, just watch your TV's. Get ready to execute a recall." I

didn't know where my CSO was. I knew he was out of town, but I wasn't sure if he was back that day or it was one of those deals -- TOM GORMAN. We were trained to be able to fill other people's jobs if we needed to so this was not really an issue. Basically, I got into the mall parking lot about -- and I actually still have the piece of paper, you know, my little parking pass, which I've kept. As I checked in, the guards looked kind of on edge. A lot of these guys I know real well and I'm a real blue-collar kind of guy. I always talk to them about the Wizards. Is Michael Jordan coming back or not? So I have this relationship. They may not know my name but they know my face and we shuck and jive, is what I call it, you know, back and forth. These guys looked pretty nervous and I said, "hey, you guys be safe, okay? I know what's going." But I really didn't feel there was any threat necessarily coming to the Pentagon. I really was more just hey guys -- you know, they really looked like they were on edge and they didn't -- they were just young guys, you know. They were like, "yeah, you, too" and all that. So, I parked in the visitor's spot and where I parked at the mall if I go up one deck, I mean, you go in on the second deck so if I race up two decks of stairs it dumps right out in front of SECNAV's office, so I thought. I'm going to race up there real quick and stick my head in JOHN CRUZ'S door. I did and I was probably there, maybe, 30 seconds or so and I was making my way back to the command center. What I did was take a right out of that passageway and made the left right by the CNO's office where the Navy Command Center was, walked all the way down to the "A" corridor and it's like two corridors down so, basically, I was at the top of the escalator on the "A" ring, fourth corridor, fourth deck. As I was at the top of that three people were coming up. There was a Vice Admiral (Ret.) BILL QUAST, whom I worked with for many years and is a good friend to this day, his brother HARRY, Retired Rear Admiral, and another friend, Captain CHARLIE MARTOLIO. So they were all at the top and the QUASTS and the MASSO have gone to the US

Open together in Flushing, New York, and we did not do this year and so we had a couple of minutes on the US Open. As we were at the top of the escalator, what felt like an earthquake, a bomb explosion -- it didn't feel like an airplane. Who would know what an airplane would feel like? But, when we felt this, I don't think that any of us -- I can't read their minds, but I don't think any of us thought it was an airplane. We thought it was like a bomb or something like that. Almost instantaneously, and I'm not sure, I think they probably had known that there was a risk and they were trying to evacuate the Pentagon. You are history guys. Your research will have to tell you that. But, I believe that it was more than just a coincidence that they decided to -- almost simultaneous events, this explosion and then this announcement to evacuate the Pentagon, occurred. So I, basically, raced right down the escalator. I don't know if you know that new remodeled section, but you go down, you go down, and you just kind of race down. Well, people were kind of in a panic, obviously, mode. You know, we got to get out of here. I was heading down because that's kind of where my battle station is. It's just kind of GQ. It had nothing to do with me being brave. It was just, you know, I'm a Surface Warfare guy and we go to our GQ station. My GQ station happens to be the command center. So as I get down to the bottom escalator and people are like yelling at me to get out of their way because they were using -- even though -- by the way, the escalator stopped working, but people were using both -- any way they could to get out of where they were. So folks were like, "what are you doing going down?" Everyone was leaving. So, I get down there and I'm coming to -- and if you look at this, I have it on digital tape. I'm showing a picture of the Pentagon here. If you look -- I guess what had happened, eyewitnesses have said that the plane had kind of skipped on the pad here and it kind of smashed into this section. So I'm at the fourth deck kind of like right here as I'm going down and when I came up to -- this would be the "D" ring. As I come to the entrance "D" ring, it's all

smashed and dark and wet and it's all still falling down. I got down there and it was still unsettled. There was still things collapsing and stuff. I was trying to make my way over to the door of the command center and I was trying to remember my PIN because everyone had their own individual PIN and I had this book, wherever I put it. I had my book with me, kind of my brain book, right here. So I was trying to remember what my PIN was and I was going to hit the door with my card and then plug in my PIN and go in and I heard some screams coming from behind me. Again, it's real dark and you're stepping over all kinds of rumble and debris and I was totally immersed in water, from either broken pipes or the sprinkler system. So I went back. I retreated back from where I had originally gone. There was a lady in the head who was very disoriented. She didn't really know where to get out or anything because ceiling tiles and everything kind of disoriented her in the transition from bright light to dark. So it surprised her. When she actually saw me she regained some sort of situational awareness. It was like a fish you release into a stream. She just hit it. There was another lady in there, screaming, and she was actually in a stall that had kind of collapsed. So I went and grabbed her and kind of did a Heimlich. I kind of yanked her up and then -- she was totally, absolutely freaked out. I mean, she was absolutely not there, you know. There was no -- she had just totally lost control. She was screaming and crying, just the whole thing. She was so out of it that I didn't even bother to say, "you're okay." I mean, I was trying to talk her down, but it wasn't like "hey, get a grip." I just said, "Everything is okay. We're fine. We're fine." I kind of helped her to where she could finally actually see the door and daylight. I actually kind of walked her back toward the "B" ring and I think once we got to that point she was on her own. She just started hauling butt. So when I came back to -- you know, I'm still wanting to get into the command center. When I came back, that whole area where I was, was totally collapsed. It was now even more dark and the smoke

was many times more intense. So there is a glass door that goes out into the rings between the “C” and “D” ring right over here. So this would be the command center like right here.

Q. Looking at between Corridors 4 and 5?

A. Yes, exactly. So I was kind of down here. I was—

Q. Looking toward Corridors 4 and 3?

A. Right. So I was between the “C” and “D” corridors in that gap between there. I actually went out and I saw Captain JEFF BOROFF and JEFF was walking out and I said, “JEFF, what’s going on in there?” He kind of just stared at me. He was just, like, walking around like -- he didn’t know who I was. He was very much so in shock. There was probably a 10-foot high by 20-foot wide gaping hole that had pushed out of the command center. He didn’t actually come out from that way. There was, like, a back door area where he had actually come out. The smoke was billowing around so going back the way I came wasn’t really an option and there was this big chain link fence between the two corridors because the command center is actual a skiff. So we were trying to, maybe, rescue some people, but there was no place to take them because the water is starting to rise in that center area between the two corridors. The other thing was that you could see the Army people on the second and third floors and they were just banging on these brand new blowout windows that are bulletproof. They couldn’t get out and they couldn’t break the windows. You could actually see smoke and, in some cases, see flames touching the windows as these guys were trying to get out of that space. So you see my coat rack there. I saw some of those and I saw chairs and people were like beating these windows down and the windows never broke. They never broke when they actually pushed them out by their frames.

They only way they came out was by their frames and when they did come out and fell to the ground, they didn't break then. They just shattered. They didn't shatter and burst, but they just stayed kind of attached. That's how strong they were.

Q. These were the new windows?

A. The new windows, yes. So, in this hole, if you were looking at it, you could see this big pile of rubble that was about three to five feet high in places of just junk all over, the overhead and these partitions and all that. There's no battle lanterns. People are screaming. They were screaming horribly. Above, the first three to five feet coming from that hole was a smoke and then flames. You could look inside and see flames. So several of us -- and JEFF BOROFF, I don't remember where he was after that, because it got surreal for everybody. But there were people who had come from that hole, people who had come from other doors, who were all, if you will, in the Navy Command Center Family of OPNAV N3/5, but we were kind of going into this space to see if we could take things off of people and drag them out. Then as these windows were blowing out, we started catching people jumping out of the windows. The issue is, you get these people out and there's this big chain link fence with a big lock on it and chains wrapped around it about six times and this is where, although I had great criticism from Admiral BALISLE for mentioning his name in the article, but he basically, and I don't really care about that criticism because we really appreciated if he hadn't opened that gate and if they hadn't came down. The N76 guys came down and they had fire extinguishers and they had stuff. I don't really know how much the fire extinguishers helped because there was no appreciable difference and, in fact, you could make the case that it was worse, you know, the flames were worse, but if you think about the JP-5 and things and the force of the hit. They came and they started organizing

some things and I think that their participation probably saved numerous Army personnel's lives. Actually, the people we were able to really rescue from the Navy Command Center was minute. I some saw things, like, your senses -- when you're making microwave popcorn, at the peek of its popping you hear all of this noise and what tells you it's time to take the popcorn out is the lack of popping, you know, they say if you count to three between pops -- and there was a period where the screams were like at this crescendo. Then you stopped hearing them. So there was kind of a horror in the sound but then there was even more of a horror in the silence. In looking in the command center itself and you think about the miracle of how some people made it out or not, we had thought we had gone as far as we could go and we had pulled out everyone we could pull out and there were still people finding there ways out. Petty Officer GASTON was one. He came out. He was one of my shipmates, DM1 GASTON. He came out and we were kind of hugging each other. You know, we were both soaking wet and I said, "listen." He was kind of freaking out and I said, "you have got to be strong," and I grabbed his face and I just looked at him and I said, "You have got to promise me that you're going to be strong here. You've got to get out of here. Okay?" He was fighting for his breath and everything, but I said, "you've got to be strong," and so I said, "you've got to help these other people." You know, just kind of steer him in the direction because he knew that place like the back of his hand and some of these people that I'm talking about were the Army survivors who were kind of freaked out. Some of the sights and sounds -- there was, like, a Lieutenant Colonel in the fetal position totally freaked out, not a thing wrong with her. Then another person would come out -- a guy came out and he had lost every hair on his head and there was not a hair on his body. He looked like a lobster. He was totally burned and his shirt was burned off his back and he was trying to help people. He kind of comes and joins one of these circles and I was like, "what are you doing?" And he says,

“I’m trying to help” and, I’m like, “you know, you’re hurt man. You’ve got some burns.” He was like operating on adrenaline.

Q. Who was that? Do you know?

A. I don’t remember his name, but he was the one that the President visited.

Q. Army?

A. No. No. No. Navy guy. Navy Petty Officer.

Q. Lieutenant Schaefer?

A. No. He was a Petty Officer. The other kinds of things -- people were finding pieces of bulkhead and they were carrying people out using them as a stretchers. There were some Army people that had some profound bone breakage and there were burns and smoke inhalation. Then there were people, some of the Army guys -- and this is not disparagement to anybody or any service, it was who they were. They were saying they heard that there is a second plane coming and all of this kind of thing and one guy was just like going off saying, “we got to get out of here. We’re going to die,” and this kind of thing. I kept telling myself because I was very afraid -- I mean, ‘very afraid’ doesn’t describe it, but I kept saying to myself, “this is show time. You’ve been doing this for 26 years, or whatever, 24 years, 25 years. This is show time.” I had actually considered that there might have been a chem/bio issue, so I was kind of already writing it off. I thought most of us were toast anyway. So we were just doing that, but, as I said, the silence was clearly indicative of the fact that people were either unconscious or dead and kind of at that point, you know, there’s no more fire extinguishers, we’re having to run -- I mean, lessons

learned, no battle lanterns. All of this modular furniture, you know -- all of these people that tell you that they really thought that -- boy, how survivable that new wing was. I would really like to have a chat with them in real life and tell them that they are full of shit, okay. Because all these little modular partitions just fell over like dominoes, preventing egress and ingress for anybody. I mean, we couldn't go in and they couldn't come out and a lot of this stuff fell on people. It also disorientated them because there was no known walkway. You wouldn't have known it anyway because there wasn't any battle lanterns. There was no emergency breathing apparatus. I mean, it would have been nice even if there were people inside where we could have gone in there or we might have been able to save more people if we had had emergency breathing apparatus to be able to go in and do some things. The windows were unyielding. I don't know how many deaths we can attribute to the windows. I'm not in the camp who is impressed by the renovation, okay? Just to let you know. Basically, when we stopped hearing people and the flames were getting so hot and the water level was getting really high, I never -- then finally some medical professionals came, but leaving -- I had to go take care of business with my command center, so, I'm trying to use my cell phone and I wasn't getting through nor was anyone else, but I have this device that I'm holding up and it's an IM Singular e-mail pager and I just pretty much sent a generic e-mail out to anybody in the unit to get this. And VAL EIKENLAUB was on line, if you will, and she was able to send me a quick note saying, "hey, I got it. I'll get a hold of everybody." What I told her from this device, on the scene, in the fire, was get guys to Site "R" right now. Get them to Site "R" now. Just have them deploy -- get as many people as you can get who are trained. Get them out there. We had trained for that and we had had 4 or 5 exercises and visits and things to be able to go to Site "R." So, VAL and BARB SWETARSKI called up and said, "hey, CSO is not here." She got a hold of me and she said, "I'll be him until we can find him." So I was able to

communicate a couple or three messages through that on the scene. And then actually a former employee of the company that I work for, TONY LADOTO, now works for NEXTEL and MARK MENITOLO, who was my EA. He works for NEXTEL. I thought MARK was in there. MARK was supposed to be in the command center. I was actually going to sort of run into him later that day when I picked up my invitations. But TONY LADOTO actually called me on kind of the walkie-talkie piece of the NEXTEL capability. You can have a direct dial or they have, it when you're in their network, like a walkie-talkie thing. He said, "Hey, I'm here. I don't know how I can help, but what can I do?" And so I said, "I need you to find MARK. I need this, that, and the other." So he basically was my voice piece. This is some civilian who works in Chantilly some place and he was just to help the team. He worked for NEXTEL and he knew he could a hold of me. So, any way, I needed to get out and I needed to go where I could have command and control which was going to be right here. Because the command center was toast. I knew that and I needed to let Admiral KEATING know and other people know that who's the N3/5, that our guys are standing by, that they're inbound to Site "R", we report in when they got to Site "R", that kind of thing. I was parked at the mall and it was very difficult to even leave the Pentagon because they had things locked up. So, I had to go up and down and over and through and it probably took me -- a direct walks is, maybe, three minutes. It probably took me 12 or 15, and if I didn't know my way I'm not how I'd still gotten out. Anyway, I went out to the mall entrance and Secretary RUMSFELD and some of those guys were closing the door to not allow anybody in or out of that particular entrance and so when they looked at me and saw how trashed I was and stuff they just -- nobody said anything, but they let me through. So I hit the steps and I got a cell signal, so I called some folks from the unit and then one of my Old Miss classmates, ROTC classmate, ROSS POPLAR -- he was actually a year ahead of me. He is an EA to one of

the Under SECDEFs, or whatever, so that guy wanted to use my phone. A lot of the senior leadership was jumping over the fence going into Arlington Cemetery and they were getting out and guards were coming over saying that there was another plane inbound and were expected in about 10 minutes and we all had to get out of there or do whatever we were going to do. Of course, the smoke was kind of billowing around and that. So this guy, this Under--whoever he was, I don't even want to know. He was trying to call his wife. I'm interested in calling my command center guys. He's trying to call his wife. I was like, man. So, anyway, I was leaving on the 110 side of the mall. I'd entered at the opposite side. The VCNO was walking by and I asked him if he needed a ride and he didn't so I basically was going against traffic and I drove on the shoulder and I got back to 23rd Street and kind of cut across traffic and everybody's evacuating and getting out. I basically went in the exit and parked my car right just exactly the closest place I could put it, not even a spot, and I went up to my office to start getting a hold of people, which I was then able to do via the land line and everything else. So I sent out a couple of e-mails. But MARVEL, GREG MARVEL -- and this is what's great about it and so many things I was so proud of -- one is, we'd already always had trained from the first day of my tenure and I always that it'd be like a chem/bio threat as opposed to an actual casualty or an emergency. I'd always thought that someone would say, "Hey, there is a jar of something that we placed in this passageway" and then that would require us to go and switch to Site "R". Never really thought it would be--so, our goal was to be able to know how to get there without directions; to be able to get there within 90 minutes; to absolutely know that your clearance is there and the only way that you know because it's so hard to check in and out is to go out there and to exercise that; and we slept there. I slept there two nights. I have a strong relationship with the government service professional who runs it out there, BILL VALANGA. GEORGE LEWIS is the CO of the Site

“R” unit. We adopted each other. We were like a team and we did a couple of COREXs where we actually shifted colors. I think January had been our most recent where we had simulated some sort of chem/bio shut down of the command center and we actually deployed out there. We tried to break the system. We trained for it. We had stopwatches running on guys getting there. We evaluated ourselves on did you really know the way. We did all of that stuff so by 12:30 JIM WESTAL may have been the first guy out there. NEIL BUNDO was out there. I got the list of guys, but we had 10 people out there by two hours, standing tall with gear ready to stay for the duration. They left their day jobs and MARVEL just said, “Hey, I need guys to go.” VAL EICHENLAUB sent off a note and said, “If you’re trained, get yourself out there.” People just dropped what they were doing and some of them didn’t even call their families. Some of them didn’t even have uniforms. They just went out there and drove to Pennsylvania to Site “R”. They checked in. They had the creds and everything--credentials, and just were waiting for their tasking. So when I got back here I needed to tell somebody in the N3/5 world that we were here. We were ready. Site “R” was going to be manned shortly. So I got a hold of the ATFP people, the N34 people out at the Navy Yard and they had said, “Well, we haven’t been in contact, but we think that they’re going to shift to the Marine Corps Command Center. General NASH, who is the Marine Corps equivalent to the N3/5, had graciously offered that space. So basically within about three hours or so we had our guys at Site R. We sort of knew that the existing watch team wasn’t going to be available. We had already contacted the people who were going to relieve these different watches and people were standing by. And then we also got some people who got four people ready to go to the NMCC without being asked just in case they were going to be needed. With GREG MARVEL in parallel I mean he’s got a great story to tell. He got my call.

He got started to make calls. He was actually on the phone with GETZFRED when the phone went dead. You know at 9:30 or whatever. He was the last guy to talk to LARRY GETZFRED.

Q. He was on the phone with him?

A. He was on the phone, talking and the phone went dead. That was it. We had some other calls. I had talked to RON VAUK just prior to him, just a few short minutes. I met upstairs on my way down kind of thing. We're okay right now. So there was some very interesting things. Now, I stayed there until about maybe 1:00 o'clock in the morning and one of the things that I kind of inherited from the front office was we needed to find--we wanted to deconflict the uncounted for list. And so the list itself was a pretty huge list of names and that was because there's really no-- the Pentagon is not like a ship where you can abandon ship bill or any of that stuff. There's no muster. You don't go to the parking lot and stand by spot 17 that's your life jacket or that's your lifeboat and then you call into some central place and so people went home. So when I saw this list, I mean this list was huge, and of course if you know me, you know that I know everybody in the place. So I'm like calling--these are people we have known for a long long time and in a lot of cases—RICK SANDELLI survived, but we didn't know it right away. He was actually taken to a hospital and he called in and then there was a couple of other people that that had occurred with and then there were some people that had said that GASTON was still trapped in there because they saw him with Petty Officer KNOWETH. And I had actually seen him. There were contractors in there and stuff. So basically TONY VELUCCI is a Captain in the N3/5 unit and he was missing and the protocol as you call the family and you say hey--if it's a guy and you think it's Tony and it might not be. So you ask to talk to the wife and then I said, "Hey, I'm Captain SONNY MASSO. Have you heard from your husband?" She said, "Yeah, he just answered the

phone.” So I got back on with Tony and I said, “Hey dude, I’m glad you’re here.” If there was any glory or any thing good about that day was that this list rapidly went down to 34/35 people from the 80 or 90 that it originally was. I made almost all of the calls from right here. And then we were trying to get a hold of some folks--what does any one need for Site R? I think it was determined that Site R wasn’t going to be sufficient. I think that we knew that, but we didn’t know if there was more fun to come. More potential terrorists acts or anything like that. So we manned that for about 24-hours. I went home and the other thing was that I knew it was clear that RON VAUK hadn’t gotten out and I knew that BOB ELSETH hadn’t gotten. There were people that I knew hadn’t gotten out. And so I had contacted their families and there’s like two parts to this whole evolution. You know the one part is there’s this plane that hits our command center and destroyed, but we train for this and we knew how to do that and knew what to do and nothing that we faced, not a single thing, not one thing was nothing we hadn’t trained for. And I mean trained to the bone. I mean we had it down to where it was instinct. And even people that I couldn’t reach necessarily were trained to have the right instincts and all the decisions they made were the right decisions. I’m at work. I haven’t heard from anybody. I’m going to Site R. I was very proud of that. But the part that you’re never trained for or I would never train for was when you have casualties. How do you deal with these families? So in my mind it was almost like what are you going to do? I knew that some of these calls, like when were trying to deconflict this missing list, some of these calls you knew there was maybe a chance that they would be home. Some you knew there was no chance they were going to be home. And there were other people closer to the scene that I was talking to that I would be able to determine. But I knew that there was going to be these calls that I’d have to confront the fact that I knew that husband was unaccounted for. And the only thing that I could think of was how would I want [REDACTED], my

wife, and my mother to be treated if this was me. Somebody announced this 800 number and I called it myself just to see what it would be like and I said, "Buddy, I don't want any of my shipmate's families calling that number." Because it's, "We're going to put you on hold and we don't really know anything." I'm not criticizing it and I'm not saying it was a non-compassionate or uncompassionate voice mail, but it was just the height of being impersonal. So I kind of took a pause for the cause and I went to my recall bill and I went right down the line and I picked EILEEN ROEMER and I picked JOHN MULROONEY and I said, "Guys this is your mission. EILEEN, you're not on watch anymore." She was going to have the next watch. I said, "You're going to the ELSETH house" because she lives out in Spotsylvania somewhere and the ELSETH's live in Burke. And I sent MULROONEY who lives in D.C. to Maryland to Mount Airy Maryland. I said here's the deal, I don't want them calling the 1-800 number. I don't want them waiting for the CACO. I don't want them waiting. We are a command family. You get out to their house and you're either sleeping there put on your whites, but you're either going to sleep there or sleep in their garage or the car out front of their house. But this is going to be a long, long night for them and there going be trying to call that 800 number and you're going to be the one who calls it. You're going to be in touch with me regularly. We're going to speak every, you know, half hour or so, and you guys are the ones that are going to be the middle person between any naval services that are provided for unaccounted people. And we are not relying on CACO and we're not going to delegate these duties to impersonal people who don't know who they are. And that decision I made was based just on how I would want my mother and my wife to be treated if it were me. I also said I want you there now. I want you to set the land speed record to get to these homes. So [REDACTED] ELSETH, when I talked to her, she was worried sick because--at first she wasn't too concerned because BOB had his own company and

I'm not trying to put words in her mouth, but he if he was on duty it wouldn't be like him to do the "FRED FLINTSTONE" and do the "Yabba dabba do" it's time to go home, because he could be doing work still there in the Pentagon or he could be doing any number of things. And RON VAULK, [REDACTED] VAULK, though was highly concerned when he didn't come home because she was seven-and-a-half months pregnant and they had plans for that afternoon. You know she had an expectation and the only thing that she was thinking is maybe he's in traffic, but I don't know for sure. So [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] called me several times. [REDACTED] maybe every 15 minutes that kind of thing. Asking me if I had heard anything and what was going on and so fortunately when JOHN MULROONEY got there out there, CDR MULROONEY, he was able to help her a little bit and then as family members heard what was going on, they were able to do some things. But we had situations with both families where the VAULKS and ELSETH had family--parents overseas on vacation or on trips. I think one was in Ireland and another one was in Germany or France. And so the night of the 11th we had TOM DASEY, CDR TOM DASEY who is an airline pilot, I believe he is a United pilot, he was actually advocating--he was the advocate of the family to make sure that these people would get on the very first available plane. I believe we were able to through TOM DASEY, the other thing that I kind of underscore was Admiral TOTUSHEK, Admiral PRESTON, Admiral COTTON, just a whole host of people contacted me. It was very, "Hey, tell me what you need. When you need it. Know that I'm here. Don't hold back" message that I received, and maybe it wasn't delivered in this precise way, but how I received it was not trying to bother you, you're the CO, but if you need anything there is no scenario that you cannot ask and we won't do are best. So one other question is there a NALO flight out? Can we get them on government even though they aren't government people. There was all these kinds of issues. So fortunately TOM DASEY

was able to get one of the families out on the very first flight a few days later. And the other family we were able to get on a NALO flight and the pilots on this NALO flight had them up in the cockpit, they came back and checked on them every five minutes. You know they just absolutely--the commitment, the professionalism, the compassion was the highest standards of the American capability to be able to pull that off. And these families were treated so well.

CARL JORDAN who is my Senior Watch Officer and is a Captain, he is a financial planner by day and behind the scenes he had a deal with his company where he was going to have free financial planning for any victim from the N3/5 organization. Obviously we're holding some of this back because we're still hoping we'd find some folks. As the days went on, we learned a lot about Navy and military nomenclatures. To the civilian whose husband didn't come home, your husband is what would you say is missing. But actually that's in the Navy or the military that's unaccounted for and when they change status to missing, that's when you're eligible for your SGLI benefits. I think that having our guys there were able to explain some things where as the CACO would come in and say your husband is unaccounted for, well "dahh." The next visit as well, now your husband is now missing. To them it's what's the difference. So our guys were kind of able to help transition that. EILEEN stayed almost the entire time. JOHN MULROONEY never left. I don't believe he went home and I know that he didn't sleep for at least three-and-a-half days. He never left the VAULK's side. EILEEN brought the ELSETH family here to get as close proximity to the Pentagon as possible to kind of have some sort of spiritual conductivity between [REDACTED] and BOB. JOHN MULROONEY brought [REDACTED] VAULK with her brother-in-law with her. I know her brother and a co-worker of RON's and we were able to get right down to nearly the opening of the Pentagon and we just stayed there and stood there and watched and prayed and stuff for about 90 minutes. And tried to do you know some of the extra

things. But on the military side, the one thing that I noticed as a Reservist was that I was surprised in a disappointing way that the organization didn't know more about how we actually supported them. I was constantly being barraged with, "We need to have the whole unit recalled in the next couple of hours. Well what would it take if we did do that?" and I'm like, "Why would you do that now?" We're already standing 7/24/365 okay. Say we lost one or two watch officers, we just replace them with one or two people. We've got four people in the NMCC. You've got 10 people in the Site R and so who else do you need. I mean if you want 10 people for CAT, we'll put them on AT. I don't think we need knee jerk. I mean we are trained for this. I was having to explain this to people that I would have thought knew better. It's kind of a lesson learned as opposed to criticism, but I was like why do we need to recall everybody. One of the days, I think it was Friday, Admiral KEATING came over and he said, "Hey, Sonny, I'm getting a lot of questions about stuff. Tell me what's going on?" I said, "If you give me 10 minutes, I'll explain exactly what's going on." And I said sir, I just told him that his NMCC is covered with four people. I got them on duty for 180 days, you don't have to worry about that. If you want a couple of more I can cough them up. I said the watches are already being stood. If you want them doubled up just tell us. I don't think we need to recall anybody. And from the CAT standpoint there is no room to have a CAT, but you want to have one, we'll have one. But you still don't need to recall anybody. I felt like that was the first time he understood that how good he had it in terms that we support. They had all this organizational attrition and I don't think he was exactly sure of what he had or what we were doing. The new N3/5B, Admiral KROL comes over and says he wanted to introduce himself. "Tell me exactly what you guys do and who are you again? So what do you do here for us?" This was like four days after 9/11. I was disappointed about that. Also the tendency to get, what I call the wrong reservist to volunteer. The wrong reservist

calls up because he doesn't have a real job and he says, "Hey, I want to come on active duty" and then there's this tendency to say sure. We don't know how we'll use you, but we'll bring you in. We don't need the wrong reservist. We need the right reservist. We need the one that's trained. We need the one that knows the job. And one of the challenges they posed to us was, "Hey, we need somebody to spearhead a study on how we move back into the Pentagon? Where we ought to move? What we need? And to create the ultimate mother of all command centers." And that reservist wasn't in my unit. It wasn't ED MCDONALD and the team that schlepped equipment and planned the move over a four-month period. You know you needed a fire fighter. So I was able to call for Captain MIKE URNIA from the local area that by day is a NAVSEA GS-15. He is a Navy Reserve Captain, submariner. He's a CO of a SACLANT unit. He's a "Pro from Dover." They said, "Well, we want him on duty for 180 days." You don't need him on duty for 180 days. This is the right reservist. The right reservist will tell you if he needs to be on duty for 180 days. He doesn't need it. So there was a lot of education that I think we had to have with some of the people. Additionally, there seemed to be some strife amongst the active N3/5 staff over who was who in the zoo, who is the Senior Watch Officer. Well, we had been doing that all along. And how they would fill their holes in their attrition and things like that. I think that there was folks that were bumping into each other a little bit. But the other thing that I observed was that there was some people who were suffering from profound stress and lack of sleep. And I go back to JEFF BOROFF. JEFF BOROFF has commanded two new nuclear submarines. He is a warfare fighter and this is a guy that is a stud. In all aspects is a tremendous naval officer. The guy some how escaped the building and then he worked for the next for the next 48 hours. I mean the guy didn't even--he had come from this place emotionally where he looked like he was in a complete state of shock and 48 hours later the guy's still working, still at his desk. A lot of

us did that. I slept about an hour-and-a-half the first night. I didn't even go to bed the second night. I finally did I think it was Thursday night, but a lot of us--there were no days off for anybody. There were people that--we lost all of those Lieutenants. You know RICK TENGA coming back from the Dental he watched the plane hit the building. Some of us that seen that experience and seen some very bad things and I guess it's a tribute to stamina of our people, but some of those folks probably could have used some time off, especially the ones who were actually skipping over the rubble to get out of the building.

Q. Have they since had the opportunity to do that?

A. Well, when not operating, yes, sure.

Q. Have time off or even have?

A. I'm you can read from my SITREPS of what I thought was important to communicate to the crew. My crew was great because they we set up shop over here. When TOM GORMAN was actually able to come back, we had PHIL FLORIST, we had MIKE MENOTOLLO, TOM GORMAN. We had an office over here. BARB SWERDOSKI.

Q. Over here being?

A. Here, right in this very spot. We had a couple of offices over here and my company just moved folks out and had telephones, they had power, they had computers, they had whatever they needed. We had a crew over at the Navy Yard working with ELMER NELSON'S unit, which is a partner unit of ours. We supported the Purple Hearts, the end of tours. We had a role liaisioning with Dover. There is a whole host of issues that we learned about that. First of all, I

want to say that the CNO, VCNO—the VCNO personally came to see me. Admiral KEATING personally did. They treated us with very generously and stuff. There was some disappointing differences in treatment. We can bleed together, but you know we can't--Arlington didn't want us to be buried in the ground. They said, "Well, we'll put in the column burial or whatever." It wasn't what the VAUK or the ELSEPH family wanted. But we had to invoke the senior leadership of the Navy to get relief on just about everything like that. To get buried in the ground and then there were issues of releasing remains if they didn't have complete remains. They had issues-- none of these issues were not worked out and no one was rude or impersonal or unprofessional. But these were just things that you're tired, you're worried about the next threat, you're trying do you job. There wasn't anything easy about any of this on an emotional level or just in the way to work things out. JOHN MULROONEY, he's a lawyer and he was able to draft some language and create a letter where the families could sign pretty much saying that we understand that if there are other remains that you'll dispose of those in a way that's in a matter that's dignified and actually they have headstones in Arlington that are kind of a collected gathering place for those types of remains. There's one for the *Stark*, I believe their going to have one for the *Cole*, if it's not already there. They'll have one here, but you know the Dover position is absolutely the correct position. Just because they have remains does not mean they were going to release them. So you have blue-collar families who have come from all over the United States and now have been here eight or nine days and they don't really have the ways and means to go home and come back for a funeral and stuff. And I was very very proud of the manner in which our CNO supported all of these efforts. The other thing that I was proud of was the presence of flag leadership at our funerals and memorial services. I mean people that they barely knew and they treated us like we were like their shipmates. Admiral TOTUSHEK, I got

nearly an e-mail a day from him just checking in. He asked me to come by and see him I walked over and sat and talked to him a couple of times. GREG MACDONALD the EA over there N095. We were a family. We came together as a family in this thing and we responded to this in a manner that I will always be very proud.

Q. Have you put together or have others put together lessons learned from some of those issues, particularly the reserve related?

A. I haven't no. You'll read in my SITREP where I talk about there was a lot of--the N3/5 guys were saying you may want to stay in command for 90 more days or definitely another year and I thought that sent the wrong signal if I did that. It sent the signal that we were second teamers that couldn't stand on our own two feet without the leadership of one significant person. My successor, JEFF LEMMONS, I didn't want to see him on the 11th because everything was in real time. It's kind of like the midshipman first class that follows you around on the ship or whatever. They mean well and they're good guys, but you're just really busy. I couldn't deal with that on the 11th but on the 12th I said, "Hey, come over here. I want you to see and do everything that I'm doing. Everything that I'm participating in, I want you to participate in. Any decisions I make I want you to know. This is not collaborative. I don't want your input necessarily, but I want you to at least know where I'm coming from when I do the things that I do because that will help your transition." Throughout that process he was with me. I mean he never left me, I never left he never left. I don't think he went home--one night--I'm not sure. But he was with me the entire time from the 12th on and it was clear to me that he was very capable. He was very sharp. He had it. Now, whether he agreed with everything that I did, I don't know, but it didn't matter. He knew I was the CO and that he would have his chance to do whatever he was going to do. The

signal that it would send, I thought, if Admiral ZORTMAN could leave on October 1st to go to his Battle Group why can't SONNY MASSO leave on October 1st. I thought that as much as I wanted to stay and I really did want to stay. I mean you have no idea how hard that was for me to turn down, because I get real close to my people and I get real attached and I didn't ever want to leave. I mean not 10 years from now. But the signal I felt needed to be sent that we can transition because we're bigger and better. We're not second class, second rate. So I dropped the ball--I mean I didn't drop the ball, I mean the day of the 23rd or whatever it was of September, I changed command. And the 21st I think Admiral KEATING said, "Okay. You can do that." But if I was going to stay, it was going to because I was ordered to stay. Kind of a real weird juxtaposition because on one hand I love it and I don't want to leave it, but on the other hand I feel that I needed to as a Naval Reservist to underscore that we really are no different. So if the questions really was if there are lessons learned applied and all that, you will have to ask JEFF. Guess is my question. Because when I turned over, I turned over and actually on October 1st I went to Egypt and stayed the entire month. I was the Chief of Staff for CTF-150 and out there for Admiral MILLIGAN. So I split and went out of town and did different Navy business.

Q. On the bigger issue of educating perhaps the active duty to really what we're doing. What do you think is the fix with that?

A. The real fix to that is I don't think that it's appropriate to bother the three star and the relationship between the O-6 CO and the three star. But the three star needs to have a relationship with the O6 on a more frequent basis than once every six months for two minutes. When I first came to the command Admiral BYRD was kind of the acting N3/5. What he wanted was he wanted his active duty Captains who had been standing NDDC back in the organization.

So hypothetically he posed the question, "What would it take for you to cover the duties of these six individuals or seven individuals at a time?" So we did some research on it and it was no small task. We determined that seven of us equal to one of them. Just because their working that many hours a day and we're working under the constraints of title 10 U.S. Code and their not going to give us--we asked questions back. "Are you going to give us extra drills? Are you going to give us more ADT?" Whenever you say "Drills or ADT" they get the deer in the headlights, the thousand yard gaze. So I'm explaining why seven of my guys equal one of his, I'm also having to sell our program why if you don't fund us more maybe that number could be four for one, but it's got to seven for one. If that's the case then what are we doing know that we have to shed. I remember him saying specifically and he called me a liar, "Admiral BYRD," I said, "You have recalled us six times on no notice" and he said, "That's a damn lie!" That was a direct quote. And Captain JUET now Admiral JUET said, "No, sir I think that you'll find--and he said give me an example and so I rattled them off and he was like, "I'll be damn, you're right" because he had no idea, the CAT and the NMCC requirements and stuff. The good news story about attrition that they had was that they felt like they had lost their Senior Watch Officer. Well they did and LARRY GETZFRED is gone. But the Senior Watch Officer was CARL JORDAN and the Senior Watch Officer before CARL JORDAN was WARREN ZANDER. Where WARREN and GEORGE COVINGTON and others had a little bit-- it was more collaborative because there is a more active watch standing involvement. When it was a reserve watch standing involvement, we did all the watch bill stuff. So they really didn't know. The flag officers need to know. They really need to have a relationship with that CO. I will tell you that JERRY RONCOLOTO--first of all BUDD JUIET is my hero. He was just absolutely a true gentleman the whole time of my tenure when I served with him. JERRY RONCOLOTO, he was a big time gatekeeper. He was

Zulu, the gatekeeper. But I knew him. I was his detailer in 1980, so I had a relationship. But your basic reservists, if they don't know these guys, sometimes they get stood up and there like, "Hey, we'll call you if you if we need you. Get the hell out of here. No, the Admiral Boss cannot see you today." They intellectually decide that what you have is not important enough for their boss because they know all the other nine million other things that they are doing. I think that the test of a good reservist CO is to not be turned off by that and continue to do what you think you need to do. Even as close a situation as we had, I was profoundly disappointed that my gaining command didn't know just a little bit more about what we were doing for them.

Q. Can you tell us what role you're in now, I mean as far as your civilian role?

A. I'm the Chief of Staff to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, Acquisition Chief Engineer. We are an organization stood up to ensure the interoperability and integration of all Navy and joint programs. So we work with all the PEOs, Program Executive Offices, the SYSCOMS, Naval and Marine Corps and we that's what we do.

Q. Have things shifted for you since 9/11?

A. Oh, absolutely sure.

Q. What to you see as some of the key issues, front burner issues? We may want to come back to talk with you again later because we're going to be doing the Homeland security aspect as well.

A. Homeland security and you can come back and talk to me about that. But Homeland security and anti-terrorist force protection. The CNO has three books that I urge everybody and in fact I even bought them for my ACOS's. It's called The Power of Alignment, Leading Change and

Powerful Conversations. If you read those books you know where he is coming from. Basically in the alignment sense, the CNO is looking to create a budget based around purchasing warfare capabilities as oppose to individual platforms. So instead of buying a ship, or an airplane or a radio system or a submarine, we are buying warfare capabilities like Strike or Theater Air Missile Defense or Undersea Warfare. And instead of just saying well you know a ship gives you this capability, it's so much more. It's the sensors. It's the queuing. It's the network centric connectivity between that and other aspects. So if you're saying that you're going to buy a Theater Air Missile Defense capability that is a submarine that is an airplane. It may be more than one. It may be an aircraft. It's the whole family of product interoperability of capability and you put a price tag on that. So you define it and put a price tag on this and you do that by looking at the mission need statements, the operational requirements documents, the CAPSTONE documents, the concepts of operations, the threat and then you marry that to engineering architectures. You create an architectural construct that says, "We put these men, these orgs, these CAPSTONE requirements, we put these in as CONOPS. We put those in place and create hooks and handles from which they can interact with other enablers which gives you that capability. Then you put a circle around and say how much does it cost and that's how we're trying to buy things. Since 9/11 we're looking at Homeland security. What is that going to cost? What is the Navy's play? What is the Navy's play when given there maybe a law enforcement situation in that something looks like it may be military, but you have to get involved and then may be then it's not. Those are the things that we're thinking about right now. It's been quite interesting.

Q. This is obviously a pivotal time, historical?

A. It is.

Q. We might want to talk to you about that that whole focus.

A. Sure.

Q. Anything else that you want to add about 9/11? There's a whole lot more we want to talk to you about, post 9/11 and we'll do that in a subsequent interview that fits your schedule. Can you think of any other questions? Anything else you want to add to the historical record?

A. I'm really proud to have been in a position that I was in because it was an opportunity to demonstrate the finest sides of our collective souls as seamless members of the armed forces, but also as a reserve component. I truly believe that you can put under the deepest hypnosis and I would tell you the same thing, that there was nothing we did that we hadn't trained for. That the instincts that were shown, the unselfishness, the demonstration of people who were going to the IRR because they were in Law school or they were having family issues or whatever and they called immediately to pulled those requests to go IRR. I think that the leadership of the first hand, the Marine Corps/Navy team, General GORDON NASH, instantaneously offers the Marine Corps Command Center as the Navy Command Center. Basically this place is not even as big as this office, but the Marine Corps just went open kimono with us. In General NASH'S office, the CNO, VCNO and N3/5 all live together. They were totally involved. They treated our people very well. I'm talking about the whole command family. The other thing I want to say on the record was that I will never get over the profound sense of loss I feel at losing so many fine people, like Petty Officer PYCIOR and Petty Officer NOETH and LT CRANFORD and JACK PUNCHES, Captain JACK PUNCHES, LARRY GETZFRED, JERRY DECONTO, and BOB

ELSETH, RON VAUK. These people were just marvelous human beings. I mean they made me laugh. These were guys you could work with over a 20-hour stretch and still be smiling or someone would come and flame spray. That spirit that they exuded, particular the Lieutenants, they're gone. I will never forget them. I'll never forget their place in my life. I'm just profoundly thankful that I was able in just some small way to cross paths with just fine people. I'll never forget how our team came together. I always felt like we were a team, but to actually see it in operation was something that was beautiful. You know more than anything I'm just very proud.

Q. Thank you for taking the time, Sonny.

A. Thank you.

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