

**Naval Historical Center
Oral Interview Summary Form**

Interviewers:

CAPT (S) Mike McDaniel
CAPT Gary Hall

Interviewer's Organization:

Navy Combat Documentation Det 206
Navy Combat Documentation Det 206

Interviewee:

CAPT David Thomas, Jr.

Current Address:

████████████████████
████████████████████

Date of Interview:

23 Jan 2002

Place of Interview:

Pentagon

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:

Interviewee Information:

1. Born in ████████ VA in 1958. His father and two uncles were career military officers. His father went to the Naval Academy and he was compelled to do the same. He has four younger brothers; four of them went to the Naval Academy and all four are still in the Navy. He had wanted to join the Navy since as long as he can remember. Went to high school in Potomac, MD. He joined the Navy the day after he turned eighteen, and intended to quit high school. His recruiter would not let him quit and told him to go back and finish. He is a SWO and graduated from the Academy in 1981. CAPT Bob Dolan, who was killed in the Pentagon, was his roommate at the Academy, best man at his wedding, and was his closest friend in life.

Topics Discussed:

1. He likes D.C. if he is not at sea because important decisions that help the fleet are made here. He was assigned to the Navy's Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) cell. He was the deputy there, and in October of 2001 moved to the N3/N5 front office as the EA to VADM Keating.
2. His office was in 4C652. They worked in a large office space with many cubicles. It was almost all military between the rank of O-4 and O-5, with one O-6 and one O-7. They were working on strategic naval planning and preparing a report that each Secretary gives to Secretary of Defense on the state of his force. The report was due to Congress on 30 September, so they were at end game after an 18-month process. Post 11 September many things changed.

3. He lives four miles from the Pentagon in an apartment in Alexandria. He may have ridden his bike in that day. Morning meeting at 0645 daily. He was to attend a meeting hosted by N7 at 0830-0845. It was located on the E-ring between the 3rd and 4th corridors, on the 4th deck. Halfway through the meeting an aide came in and told them about the WTC. They finished their business and watched it on TV in stunned disbelief. The consensus then was that it was a transportation accident. The meeting broke up; all expecting that there would be some level of military response. He went back to his spaces. He was to meet Bob at 0930 for coffee. He learned that the second tower had been hit and knew it was an attack. He called the Navy Command Center and told Bob to look at what was happening. That they would have coffee after they figured out what was going to happen, that it was going to be a busy day. That was the last he heard or saw of Bob until he saw his casket.
4. He was at his computer when he felt and heard the explosion. No immediate smoke. Someone told them they needed to evacuate. He sent his mom an e-mail and told her he'd call her later. He has a brother who works within blocks of the WTC. He locked up the office and signed out. Right across from his office was an exit that led to a breezeway between the B and C corridors. He ran from the 6th corridor towards the 5th corridor area. It was like Dante's inferno. Debris had blown out a door or two from the C-ring and debris had scattered across the breezeway and come to rest at the outermost bulkhead of the B ring. Smoke was pouring out of the holes. It was just like being on a ship. The breezeway was full of khaki uniforms, going toward the scene of the fire. People at the Pentagon did one of three things that day: went home, went to the scene, or went up the hill to help establish the Navy Command Center. His first thought was that Bob's office was in that location. There were no flashlights. One of the DPS guys found some CO2 extinguishers. The hole in the wall looked to be where the CNO's IP was located. You could see the flames inside the floor. Pieces of everything were scattered. He grabbed a fire extinguisher and went in. The extinguisher depleted immediately, and the flames did not abate. To his left was a door with voices in it. He took another fire extinguisher and hot things were dripping on him. He took off his CNT shirt and wet his t-shirt. He tried to get to this door where people were beating on and yelling. He beat on the door and the people inside were getting more frantic. He realizes that door will be locked and there has to be another way to get them out. He finds a smaller hole where he thinks Bob may be located and he goes in. He can't see; it is hot, smokey and acrid. He gets a flashlight and goes in. He yells and someone came running out of the space. He went in further and is looking for Bob. He thinks he has found where Bob's desk was, a big pile of burning stuff crushed by concrete. Looking 20 yards in, focused closer and he sees a face, like a caricature of a face that was floating in space. He focused and it was actually someone's head squashed between furniture and his computer. He yells over and he sees movement. He screams for help from the outside. Mr. Jerry Henson was trapped. He presses up with his shoulder and this hot stuff is dripping on him, it is hard to breathe. His backside is about two feet and decreasing from the fire that used to be where Bob's desk was. He was about to cook. He yells again for help. Electrical wires are popping. Dave Tarantino comes up to help. He crawls in a couple of feet deeper and his head is right next to the breakers. As CAPT Thomas pushes up with his shoulder Dave Tarantino is pushing up with his legs. Jerry Henson is able to climb out. It was a miracle. His foot got caught in a wire and they were trying to free him from it. Dave Tarantino is still holding up this ton of debris. CAPT Thomas helped him out of the space. Dave

- Tarantino came out and the space was totally unapproachable within a minute and a half. They introduced themselves to each other. CAPT Thomas was motivated by finding Bob, but was unsure what motivated LCDR Tarantino. He thought one or the other of them may not make it, and he took his nametag and told him that he would pass on what he did to his family. He carries Tarantino's nametag to this day.
5. He started to think about fate. Bob was in the job he was supposed to be in. His office had just been moved to the Command Center. Realized no one else would be coming out of there. He took a breather and spent the next 12 hours helping to fight fires. He helped to set up the temporary morgue in the center courtyard, and finally the fire department arrived. They had been working from the outside of the building, near the helipad. Medical personnel arrived in the center courtyard. Four different levels of care were set up. He was impressed with the level of organization in spite of no one being in charge. There was a period of about 45 minutes, when the FBI was just getting there; there was a sense that it changed from an emergency to a crime scene. Suddenly he thought about what had busted through into the Pentagon, and he realized that he had been walking past the hub of a wheel of an airplane. Next to it was the airplane tire, and a piece of landing gear. He also saw a foot, with toenails, squashed, but definitely a foot. What looked like a jellyfish turned out to be skin that if it were stretched out could be someone's back? He saw clothes and seaweed that turned out to be a skull with some hair on it. It was outside getting walked on. He found a tiny Arabic looking book, like a pocket bible that you'd find on an airplane. It was written in Arabic. It was a transition period so the FBI guys were scrambling to pick up human remains and put into bags. They would stop and take a picture first. Back at center court he did what he could.
 6. He hoped against hope that he was wrong about his friend. He walked back to his apartment without shirt or cover at about 0200. CAPT Dolan's wife [REDACTED] had left a bunch of messages on his phone. She said she had not heard from Bob. He still has those on his machine; he can't bring himself to erase them. He called his mother. What would it be like if you hadn't called your mom and you were okay? He is thinking that his secret is out, that Bob is dead. Here is the hard part. She doesn't know. For the next 72 hours her brother at the Naval Academy and CAPT Thomas talked a lot. He spent a lot of time coming back to the Pentagon over the next 72 hours trying to find some information about him.
 7. He was amazed at his shipmates' tenacity, how long they stayed and how they wanted to help. It was a military ad hoc unit in the center court. He met people there and formed friends from that experience. They seek each other out almost daily and share a cup of coffee or a cigarette. It is a cell of like-minded people, willing to risk their lives to make a difference.
 8. He called [REDACTED] during that 72 hours, and he cried when he hung up the phone. He was stunned at his frailty when it comes to this incident. He cried during the Pentagon memorial service. There was also a memorial service at the Naval Academy and he was a basket case for that. Bob was buried at sea. It was held onboard the USS McEneaney (FFG-8) out of Mayport FL around the middle of January. Bob and his wife [REDACTED] had just purchased the house they would like to retire in outside of Mayport FL. [REDACTED] and her brother Mark took a train down to Mayport and called to let him know that the burial at sea would be on a Friday. He flew down; they were escorted onto the base. Everyone involved did a fantastic job. He has done probably 30 burials at sea on six different ships. Burial at sea is generally cremains of a retired person. This one was a casket, a friend, with family there. Bob was Catholic. [REDACTED],

- being a non-service member, could not fly back on the SH-53. The Catholic priest did a short service. He and her son had cell phones and over the phone were Bob's parents in New Jersey. The service concluded and [REDACTED] left. The ship got underway, and outside the 100-fathom curve they conducted the burial at sea. Bob's favorite song was Danny Boy, and one of the ships crew played the bagpipes. He played Amazing Grace. It was as professional as what you would see at Arlington Cemetery. He promised [REDACTED] he would have her buried at sea as well, even if he has to paddle a canoe out there. He knows where Bob was buried and he'll take her to the same place.
9. Since September 11th life has been fine. They did a great job of encouraging them to talk to someone. He didn't think he needed to. It has been tough coming to grips with not having Bob at the other end of the phone. He gets medical treatment three times a week for smoke inhalation. He had burns on the back of his head that have healed. He lost his hair due to a flash burn. He has three children aged 10-14. Explaining this to them has been interesting. He has some personal anxiety about being in the building but is focused on the work to be done. Their office is now in some Intel spaces on the 5th deck. They began working in the Center for Naval Analysis spaces immediately after September 11th. They actually broke back into their old office with the Admiral and his admin assistant. They kicked in a fan, snuck in, and commenced to steal power from the Marine Corps side. They found some power and powered up the office. QDR was still going on. They completed their task.
 10. It was great to see people coming back in wiping things up, getting rid of the smell. It was very comforting. His most memorable character was an Army National Guard guy from the Salisbury MD unit that was recalled to active duty to provide immediate security. Twelve hours later he was back in the Pentagon and walked by this guy to thank him for helping out. After a couple of days he asked where he was from, and it was a unit from where he used to go as a kid. These guys were eighteen, nineteen years old; one a teacher, one a mechanic. This is really national defense. Chad was another guard. Some General demanded to get into his spaces. He ended up in handcuffs and supposedly had to retire.
 11. Everyone has dealt with this in his or her own way. He was back to work the next day. It was clear that SPRINT was accessible 24 hours a day. Some had real issues, usually with kids or wives who were worried. There was counseling to meet any need. He went in about 0200 on a Thursday to talk about what he was thinking. There are still people who are hurt and who will be for a very long time.
 12. It was a hell of a day.

Abstracted by:
CDR Loftus
30 January 02

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Interviewee Information:

Born in ████████ VA in 1958. His father and two uncles were career military officers. His father went to the Naval Academy and he was compelled to do the same. He has four younger brothers; four of them went to the Naval Academy and all four are still in the Navy. He had wanted to join the Navy since as long as he can remember. Went to high school in Potomac, MD. He joined the Navy the day after he turned eighteen, and intended to quit high school. His recruiter would not let him quit and told him to go back and finish. He is a SWO and graduated from the Academy in 1981. CAPT Bob Dolan, who was killed in the Pentagon, was his roommate at the Academy, best man at his wedding, and was his closest friend in life.

Topics Discussed:

Q. Take us to the day of 11 September. Walk us through the whole day from the commute in on.

A. From the commute in on. I live four miles from the Pentagon in an apartment over in Alexandria.

Q. Old Town?

A. No, this is more--I was going to say bad town. No, between Old Town and Crystal City there is a--built in the '50's, seen its hey day come and go, but it's still a nice community. I live in a high-rise 17-story apartment building right off of Glebe Road, a real quick commute. In fact, I don't recall if I rode my bike in that day. I frequently ride my bike over. My car was here. I usually drive in with my bike and then commute back and forth and then drive my car home on Friday. I don't remember if I rode my bike in on that day. I tend to think I did.

Came to work, we have a morning meeting in the QDR office at 6:45 a.m. everyday. I went to that. I got in about 6 o'clock, I'm sure, because I always do. Got ready for the morning meeting, had our morning meeting. One of my things to do that day was attend a meeting hosted by N7 ADMIRAL McKINNEY [phonetic] with a couple other Flag Officers. I couldn't even tell you what the meeting was about. I probably couldn't have told you at 10:30 that morning what it was about. Meeting started at, I think, 8:45, 8:30 or 8:45. ADMIRAL McKINNEY'S [phonetic] office, as I recall, was on the E-ring somewhere between the third and fourth corridors on the fourth deck. It was in the newly renovated spaces. Got there on time; meeting started. I couldn't tell you what time, but half way through the meeting or so, we weren't quite done, his aide or his front office moose [phonetic] came in and said, "Hey, there is something you need to see on TV. Somebody just ran an airplane into the World Trade Center." We finished up our business for a couple of minutes and then popped out and watched it on TV, in stunned, disbelief, at the aftermath from the first airplane. There is the Trade Center on fire and no one knows what's going on, very bad. Still, it was interesting, but not relevant, if you will, to the activities of the day. Here is, what appears to be or what we thought was probably some sort of transportation accident, like a ship running aground or into a bridge or a train wreck. This is terrible. It's a

tremendous tragedy. I think the consensus was that this was a transportation thing, some sort of aviation mishap. The meeting broke up. Obviously, there will be some military activity associated with this on some scale, whether it's providing some sort of humanitarian assistance or whatever. Put this meeting issue aside and go back to our offices and think about and start acting on whatever is necessary. The meeting broke up. I walked from Admiral MC KINNEY'S [phonetic] office on the fourth deck E-ring between the third and fourth corridors, as I recall.

Q. When you had left, the one plane had gone into the World Trade?

A. One plane had gone into the World Trade Center. Walked, traverse along the E-ring, stopped in, I think, at an aid's office, because that's who I worked for in the QDR, just to say "hi!" Continued down the E-ring to the sixth corridor, so I passed the fourth and the fifth to the sixth. It's not the fastest way to get there, but there were a couple of things I wanted to look at and people to stop in and say hi to. I was going to meet my friend BOB at 9:30 for coffee. I get back to my office. A couple of the guys were in my Admiral's office where the TV is. "Come here quick, look at this!" I said, "Yeah, I know the World Trade Center got hit by an airplane." "No, a second plane has went into the other tower!" "Get the heck out of here!" So, of course, I go in there. It's just a couple of guys in the office. Everybody's out doing something. Standing horrified, in horrified disbelief at this second plane flying into the second tower. Now it's something different. This is not a transportation accident. This is intentional is what I'm thinking. Went over to the phone, picked up the phone called down to the Navy Command Center, called BOB. Said, "Hey, man, there's something you ought to go look at on TV!" He said, "Right, there is something strange going on." "I'm not sure what we're going to have to do, but it's going to be something. Just so you can see it and have some SA go take a look at. I forget

what channel it was, 7, I think, or CNN. I'll meet you and we'll have coffee after we figure out what the hell is going on, but I think it's going to be a busy day." It was bizarre. That thing I told you we used to say about flashing light? "Yeah" "Are you ready?" "Aye, ready." "Okay, we're going in." There was a little chuckle and then I said, "Yeah, I'll call you in a little while."

[Inaudible] and that was the last I saw of BOB until I saw his casket. So anyway, I go back to my office and say, "Hey fellows, let's clear the decks. Something is going to happen here. We're going to be real busy here real soon so knock out this, this and this; make that phone call." I sat down just to do those five things that I've got to do today. I'm going to do them right now or at least tell people I'm not going to do them. I sat down at my computer and then there's this loud boom, audible and you could feel the shutter. I'm in the sixth corridor so I'm not real far away, but I'm far enough away so thick glass isn't breaking and there is no immediate smoke. There is this tremor and an audible boom. Somebody said, "What the hell was that?" You could guess it was something not good. Somebody poked their head in the office. It's a SCIF. It's a secure space so I don't know who it was. Somebody who works in our office poked in and said, "Hey, we've got to evacuate. Everybody's leaving." We go, "What's going on? "I don't know, but it's time to go." Switched over to the unclass side, sent my mom an email said, "Hey Mom, don't know what's going on. I'm okay. I'll call you later. Good Bye." I have a brother, the one of us who is not in the military, works in downtown New York City in the MetLife building, which is six, seven, eight blocks away from the World Trade Center. It might be further away than that, I don't know for sure. It's clear that he might be safe. As it turns out, long day for my mom waiting to hear form both of us.

But anyway back to the September 11th and my story of the Pentagon, Deputy pokes his head around the corner and said, “Hey, come on let’s go. Everybody out!” That’s Captain TRENT BARBER [phonetic]. He works at N70 now. So I was the last guy out, shoot the last AO out of the office. Walked down towards the A-ring from in the sixth corridor. I locked up the office, signed out, and spun the dial. Right across from my office is a head, as I mentioned, then a ladder that goes down to the first deck that would exit you, if you continue out, to a breezeway between the B- and the C-corridors. Are you familiar with that lay out? Thinking that where I felt this tremor from and where the noise come from was counterclockwise, I went down the first deck, out into that breezeway, looked up in the counterclockwise direction, which was to the right with my back to the C-ring, and could see the sun was blacked out in that direction. I thought whatever this was would have had to been that way so I started running down the breezeway again going counterclockwise. I was going from the sixth corridor towards the fifth corridor area. Around that corridor it was like Dante’s inferno. I could describe it to you if you like.

Q. Yes.

A. The sun was blacked out from the smoke. It looks like it was coming from about the E- or D-rings; somewhere about the fourth and the fifth corridors. There was a lot of debris scattered, coming to rest. It had busted a couple of holes and blown in a door or two, I think, from the C-ring, the innermost bulkhead of the C-ring. All this debris had come to rest scattered across this breezeway and had come to rest on the outermost bulkhead of the B-ring, if you can picture that. What I’m mostly focused on is all this smoke that’s pouring out of these holes and guys just running. It was bad! I’ll say this now and I don’t mean it to disparage anybody. It was part of the

function of the area. It was just like being on a ship. The old joke is “you don’t have to worry about fire on the ship because it will get smothered by khaki.” The breezeway was just filled with people in khaki uniforms. I’d say there were 20 people out there, looking to do something, going towards the scene of the fire. The Pentagon adage these days is people did one of three things. They say people do or people in general I think that day. They evacuated, went home, they helped out with the fire or in the Navy’s case, they went up and established the command center up in the Annex. They did one of three things. I was with the crowd that went to the scene because that was where they thought they should go. It was just an instinctive thing for me. I don’t even know why, but it was like being back on the ship. You go to where your shipmates are having a problem.

My first thought was, “Oh man, you know, I know where BOB’S office is. I was just on the phone with BOB and I told him to go watch TV. I didn’t go and have that cup of coffee in the A-ring at the concourse. So he’s in there somewhere. I hope he’s not, but that’s his office.” That’s what I was thinking. There is no firefighting alarm. The little DP, God bless them, these little, tiny DPS guys opening the fire enabilizer [phonetic] and nothing is happening. He’s cussing it and hitting it. It’s not working. There’s no flashlights. One of the DPS guys found some fire extinguishers. I think they’re dry chemical or CO2. There is this big hole in the bulkhead with smoke pouring out of it. It looked to me, at the time, like it was about where the Intelligence quad is, the N3/N5 IP, CNO’S IP. I think he’s right actually by that tube. There’s smoke, probably from about four feet up, to however high the overhead is, probably about seven feet; just this big funnel of smoke pouring out of this room. You can see deep red flames. If you can imagine somebody smacking this place with a big wrecking ball; electrical wires hanging down

and sparks and pieces of everything from pictures to desks to concrete to these little false overhead panels just falling down and already had fallen down. Grabbed a fire extinguisher, went as fast as I could as low as I could get to keep below the heat and used this fire extinguisher. It seemed like it was gone in no time. Just pointed at the base of the flames I could see and had no effect on the smoke. Obviously, more stuff deeper burning and it's got suction so it's coming out. I looked to my left and there's a door and I'm thinking I can hear voices. I can hear people yelling. I grabbed another fire extinguisher. At this point, my stuff started to drip. The overhead is hot. All the metal conduit--I don't know what it's made of, but it started to drip and the plastic is starting to melt. I'm thinking man I got a CNT uniform on that's going to melt. At least I'll take the shirt off and go down to my t-shirt. Took the shirt off, tossed it out, took my t-shirt and laid on my side just for a second to get it wet and there was a green polo shirt, I don't know who it belonged to, somebody in the room that got blown out. I got that wet and put it on top of my pretty bald head so I didn't get burnt up there so I could stay in a little longer and wrapped the sleeve around my face and went back in with the fire extinguisher, the second one. I was trying to get to this door that I think I can hear people beating on and yelling. It was pretty horrible. I found this--it was right about at arm--was this metal pipe or expansion. It may have been part of the partitions or false bulkhead. I grabbed this other guy and we start wailing on this door; hope to make noise so people know we're over there trying to bust this door down so we can get these people out. I'm hearing the yells are getting more frantic, "Get us out! Get us out!" Wailed on this door and it occurred to me that, you know, one of those that you step back from what you're doing and you keep doing it but the other side, the little smart guy that sits on my shoulder's saying, "You know if you are inside the IP, the Intel Plot, and this is a door that leads into the Intel Plot, A) It's reinforced steel and B) It's locked and you're not going to break it open. It's an

electrical lock and there is no power so you're wasting your time. If there is a way to get these folks out, this is not it. More fire extinguishers in this space on the way out and making noise and actually a couple people heard us making noise and came out that way, which was great. Jesus there's some bodies that might have been dead and they're still alive. I'm thinking other side of the IP, closer to BOB'S office; it's more towards the fifth corridor BOB'S office was off of. I've got to go find BOB. This is a big hole. Next to it, a little further down towards the fifth corridor, is a smaller hole. I'm thinking, shit this is the [Inaudible] that is in BOB'S office. Grabbed another fire extinguisher to soak that shirt one more time and put it back on my head. All this is happening in a span of maybe five or ten minutes max ten, but probably closer to five. I get through this hole and I'm yelling, "Somebody have a flashlight?" I put my head back out, "Anybody got a flashlight? Anybody? Flashlight? I need a flashlight!" I can't see. It's hot as shit and smoky and accrete. All I've got to do is be able to see and maybe I can find BOB or whatever. Nobody's got a flashlight. "Anybody got a flashlight? Anybody got a flashlight?" I looked down and there is this guy and he's got a flashlight in his pocket and it's on, but he doesn't have a flashlight. I said, "Give me your flashlight!" So he gave me his flashlight. I duck-walked into the space because there was all kinds of stuff that's falling down into the slant and it's not a whole lot of room. Get in and I'm maybe in five feet and the [Inaudible] lays over to the right and there's nothing. Again, it's just smashed stuff on fire, dark with smoke. The only light is from the fire. There is a bunch of furniture that's been blown this way. I'm yelling and screaming and somebody comes running out of this space, though I couldn't tell you who it was. I had this flashlight and they saw the light. "Come on this way!" and the guy comes running out. It was great. Again, Jesus, how close was that guy to being cooked. Getting a little further and I'm looking for BOB and I'm trying to visualize the layout of the space. I'm thinking that's

where BOB'S desk was. I'm thinking and I'm pointing at this in my mind; there is this big pile of burning stuff squashed by concrete. That's pretty much where I figured BOB was if he was in the space, which is where I knew he was because I had just talked to him and told him to go watch this thing on TV, that he didn't make it. As I'm looking 20 yards in, low, below the smoke and seeing this fire and squashed stuff, I focused a little closer in and there is this face and it was just like this, almost like a caricature of a face. It appeared to be floating in space, just this face at an angle, cut up. It looked like a Halloween-thing. Does this make any sense? It was just sitting there. It looks like it's floating because of the heat. Then I focused a little further in and it's actually a guy's head squashed between furniture and his desk, actually his computer. It's a guy. I'm looking trying to correlate this with the voices I thought I heard from the other side. It's not somebody who's beating on the wall, but maybe it was just somebody trying to break in somewhere else. I yell over at him, I'm yelling as loud as I can. It's noisy because people are yelling outside and stuff is falling down inside. I see some movement. I think holy shit this guy's alive. I start yelling back over my shoulder, "Help, there's a guy in here! I think he's alive! Come on give me a hand!" The way it turns out, the blast--you have to remember where we are. We're at the C-ring. The stuff, in some parts, had enough momentum to bust through the wall. It was just a couple of big chunks that managed to do that. We were at the furthest part of the blast. So at this point, stuff is just moving laterally, parallel to the Earth. With whatever momentum this thing had left, has just piled up a lot of stuff this way and toppled-over furniture, in this case, and knocked this stuff on top of, what turned out to be, MR. JERRY HENSON who worked in N3/N5 Counter Drug Policy. He had some big furniture. The blast just toppled it over and trapped him. Actually, as I recall, he was sitting his desk. The chair was a pretty substantial chair with big arms. The stuff had smashed his desk down splitting the legs out. The chair itself had

caught it. It had pinned him between the stuff, a couple tons of stuff probably, and his chair and knocked his head over his upper body and pinned him against his computer. I'm looking at this stuff trying to figure out if I can pull the stuff off the pile. Part of the thing that I'm recalling that I was pushing up against was one of those false bulkheads, little partitions between pookas. It could have been a table, could have been anything, could have been a bookcase. I got up on it. I'm a 43-year-old guy who has sat at a desk for the last 18 months working 18-hour days. I'm not in the best of shape; got a little skinny gut. I'm pushing up and trying to leg-press up against this thing with my shoulder behind it. This stuff that I mentioned dripping down on my head and my back. It's real uncomfortable plus you can't breathe. It's hot as hell. We've expired two extinguishers trying to beat back flames. I didn't mention this but, his backside is about two feet and decreasing from the fire that was where BOB'S desk use to be. He's about to cook. I can't breath and he's not as low as I can get. He's about a foot and a half higher than I am. So there is, not panic, but a little bit of urgency in my voice I'm sure as I'm yelling out over my shoulder. I'm picking up on this thing and I'm yelling at this guy, "Hey, you okay? You okay?" He can move. He's saying something. I can't hear him. His eyes are opening up. Holy shit, this guy's going to die and I'm going to go with him. It's time to get moving. I yell out again in there a pretty tiny space and I got electrical breakers and stuff that are popping because someone's figured out the fire main system's conductivity issue and all of a sudden you got water coming down with these electrical wires so these things are, 'POW!' Up along my right side in this little tiny space comes crawling this guy DAVE TARANTINO, who I've never even seen before in my life let alone even met. He goes, "What do you got? What do you got?" I said, "There's a guy under there, man. I think he's alright. I think he's going to make it if we can get him the hell out of here, but I can't lift this stuff." He says, "Here, let me try." So he crawls in a little deeper than

that, another couple of feet and with his head right next to these damn breakers. Gets on his back; he's a tall guy. He must be about 6'4" or 6'5", younger than me, real cool and confident. He's just a great guy. He goes, "I'm a doctor. Let me see if I can get over." He gets over there and looks the guy over and quick and says, "Hey, he's okay. We got to get him the hell out of here. He's alive." He has a wet rag and put it over this guy's face. He gets over on his back and I'm pushing up with my shoulder; he's on his back leg lifting this stuff up and we're both yelling. DAVE is real close to him. He's yelling, "Get your ass out, man! We got no time! You got to get out! Get out! Get out! Get out! Come on! Come on! Come on!" It was like watching a wildebeest on the Animal Planet give birth. This guy's crawling out of this little tiny hole and he's all covered with blood and goo and it's painful for everybody. He gets out. He manages to extricate himself from between his desk and his chair. Holy shit this is great. Wow! It's a flipping miracle that someone's alive in this space and now we got the guy out, almost. He starts sliding down his desk and he's all--He was as great as anybody would just to have laid there without giving it up and then to have the energy to pull himself out of there. He was pinned for quite a while with God knows what going on behind him, with no notice. It's not like he heard it coming or anything. He comes sliding down his desk. It's only three or four feet and his damn foot gets caught in a wire from his computer or a plug or something, some kind of cable. I'm there trying to pull his shoe off, pull his foot out, break wire and it was one of those "damn, we're so close." TARANTINO'S still got this thing up--

TAPE ONE/SIDE TWO

So then TARANTINO'S still holding up what had to be tons of stuff with his legs, yelling, "Come on, man! We got to go!" I'm saying, "His foot's caught. Hold on one second. Don't drop it!" Pulled his shoe off, tossed his shoe, and then put JERRY'S arm around my shoulder. He's a big man. I'm not. Dragged him the rest of the way out of the hole. He could move okay. Between the two of us we got out of there and rolled him over on a stretcher somebody had put out there and something fell on top of him, which was not too healthy. DAVE comes scampering out. There's some guys who want to go back in there and did some yelling. "Don't anybody else come in. I'm going to lower this thing and then I'm getting out and it's going to go." We heard a couple of propane tanks or compress tanks, some kind tanks cooking off earlier. We just don't want to stay here. Sure as hell, it just got totally inapproachable about a minute and a half later. The smoke just increased. You couldn't even go back in. I go out with JERRY, carry the stretcher about to the breezeway to the sixth corridor p'way on the first deck that goes out towards the courtyard where they set up triage. Come back because we're both just dusting ourselves off and wiping the crap off our faces and tears from our eyes from the smoke and stuff and go up and introduce ourselves to each other just for a couple of seconds, taking a breather. I'm thinking this guy's---I was motivated looking for my friend, I don't know what the hell is motivating this guy, but he's just as insane as I am. He might not make it and I don't even know who the hell he is. I won't remember so I grabbed his name tag and ripped it off his shirt and said in case one of us doesn't make it, at least if I do, I'll know who you were and I'll tell your parents.

Q. Did you actually say that to each other?

A. Yeah, I said that to him.

Q. You said that to TARANTINO?

A. Yeah, hell of a guy. He really is. Still got the nametag, carry it with me everyday. That's a fact. Hell of a guy.

Q. Was that the first time you were really able to get a good breath of air or two since this thing started?

A. Yeah, it all happened so fast. From hitting "send" on that email to my mom to that moment, I'm thinking about my friend BOB. I'm thinking I got to go find this guy. You second-guess life and fait. BOB was in a job that I was supposed to have been in before I got to go to QDR.

BOB'S office had just moved in the newly renovated Command Center. I told BOB, "Hey, you got to go see this thing on TV. We'll have coffee a little later." There was a little bit of--damn.

Yeah, that was the first breather of the day. At that point, there probably wasn't anybody else coming out, at least not from where I was. It was pretty red in there. You always want to think that maybe there's a pocket of air or some wall that's collapsed at an angle where there's guys hiding inside but none of that was there. None of that stuff happened. The air was pretty nasty.

We took a breather. Then spent about, I don't know what time the hell it was, maybe 10:30 a.m., spent the next--until they kicked us out. I don't know how long that was maybe another 12 hours just helping out with the firefighters. Set up a temporary morgue out in the center court. It's funny some of the things you remember. The firefighter out there, they finally showed up. Nothing bad about them, they were great when they got here but they had a hard time getting into the center court. I think most of the activity was going on out in the helipad area. When the

fire guys finally got in there, vivid memory of one of them wailed away with an ax on the Coke machine trying to get some soda and water because it was hot and we had no supplies in there. The poor guy is smacking against the side of the machine until somebody taps him on the shoulder and says, "Why don't you just bust the lock?"

The center court was an interesting event of people trying to do whatever they could for any eventuality. A whole bunch of medical folks came out there. It was really impressive. One Air Force guy set up a triage, a field hospital, almost if you will; four different levels of care. He was looking for medical experience. We separated ourselves into EMTs, which I am, and doctors and physicians, and nurses, to just the stretcher-bearer kind of helper guys. Then had everybody count off in those groups by fours and he set up four different levels of care: the going to die; the very severe, need treatment now, now, now; then the third--He did a great job. There was a whole notion of a temporary morgue in case bodies came out; where you put them. It was incredible to watch the organization develop when no one was in charge. We're all from different services, although they were all assigned to the Pentagon, very different approaches to disaster. With nobody really in charge, how this organization formed and molded to the changing circumstances and the changing level of possible support requirements as more and more professionals arrived.

One thing I neglected to mention was the time between--it's obvious nobody's coming out alive, and catching that moment with DAVE TARANTINO, there was a period of about 45 minutes as the FBI was just getting there, I assume they were FBI, some of them definitely were. You could sense a sudden shift from this is an emergency situation where you've got to find people now,

now, now or they're going to burn up to the emotion of this is a crime scene and we've got to find evidence. Suddenly, at least suddenly for me, I started looking at what it was that has busted this hole in the side of the Pentagon, and there was this thing I had been walking past is really the hub of a wheel of an airplane. The shit right next to it is this big rubber thing that must have been, it is--look at that, it's the tire, an airplane tire. Look at that. That must be a piece of the landing gear and all this yellow stuff must be fiberglass insulation from the walls of the airplane. Holy shit, look at that. That looks like, yep, it's a foot! Those are toenails and that's a foot and it's squashed, but it's definitely a foot. What's this thing floating that looks like a jellyfish, no that's a big chunk of skin. I bet if you stretched that thing out it's probably somebody's back. Here's some clothes. There's some underwear. What's this thing down here that looks like seaweed? Yep, that's a piece of skull with some hair on it. It's just sitting out there getting walked on. It was surreal. I found a little, tiny Arabic-looking book. I guess it was Arabic. It was a book, small like one of those little pocket Bibles they give you when you deploy, which with what appeared to be Arabic writing. Again, this was a transition period, so the FBI guys are scrambling and we're trying to find any more help as opposed to being out there out there picking up pieces of people putting them in bags. Then they stopped and said, "Well, let's start taking pictures. If you find anything else, we'll take a picture of it."

Q. It's bizarre!

A. Yeah, it was bizarre! Like I said, went back out to the center court and just helped out. I did what I could.

Q. When did you find out what happened to BOB?

A. When did I find out what really happened? Well, see, maybe it's just some psychological thing, I always hoped against hope that I was wrong. I got back to my apartment. As I mentioned, I live about four miles from here. Walked back because my car was in South Parking and you couldn't get out. I walked back, no shirt, no coat just khaki trou and a wet filthy t-shirt but I was wet and pretty filthy, too. Got back there and his wife [REDACTED] had left a message for me. It must have been 2 o'clock in the morning when I got back. She had left a bunch of messages on my machine saying, "Hey, have you heard from BOB? I haven't heard from BOB yet. Have you heard from BOB? Can you call me? I haven't heard from BOB?" I still have them on my machine. I just can't bring myself to erase them. "Have you heard from BOB? We haven't heard from BOB. Have you heard from BOB?" I'm thinking, I called my mom--I didn't tell you about that, what would it be like for my mom if I hadn't called and I was okay? It's like when you can't find your kid for a couple of hours, when you find them you're overjoyed and you spank them because you're so mad. I'm thinking my secret's out. It's not just my secret anymore, BOB'S dead. BOB got whacked by those red bastards. Here's the real hard part, it's not hard for me. I'll get over it. I'll never forget him, but he's not my husband. He's not my dad. BOB'S got two little kids. He's not my son. He's my friend. There's [REDACTED] left. I know already so I'm already--I don't have any uncertainty in my mind but she doesn't know. For the next 72 hours I came down here--she has a brother who's on active duty. He's a Captain over at the Naval Academy. He and I talk a lot. I spent a lot of time walking back from my apartment or riding my bike down to the Pentagon trying to get back in. At that point, it was a crime scene and you couldn't get back in. Couldn't get back in, trying to find some information like: they found BOB'S remains or they found BOB trapped in that leaning little piece of wall I talked about;

miracle of miracles or something. We did that for about three days of me coming down and just hanging out.

I mentioned I called my mom. That was a pretty interesting aspect of this whole thing. As I said, the Pentagon pretty much evacuated in this area. If you were in on the inside you couldn't get out and, obviously, if you were on the outside you couldn't get back in. There was this whole area that is unaffected, except by smoke but evacuated. I've heard you couldn't use phones and everything was dead. I just walked into somebody's E-ring office; actually it was close to the E-ring on the first deck, sixth corridor. It was as if all these people had been beamed somewhere. The Coke was still sitting there and the phone was on the hook. I just picked up the phone to call my mom and said, "I'm okay," and went back to helping out. Surreal, the whole thing was bizarre.

I was amazed at the tenacity of people who just wanted to do something to help. People just didn't want to go home. People who had stayed to help, they just didn't want to admit, I think, that there was nothing more that we could do. It became like a little unit and like a military ad hoc unit out there in the center court. People were bringing food. People would go out and scour the area for food; came back with some MRE'S. Again people were divided up into the morgue people or the triage people and the stretcher-bearer people. It was hard to describe. I met people there and formed what have turned out to be, if you can have a lasting friendship, it's only lasted thus far for a handful of months. There are people that I still see, routinely, almost daily. Intentionally, they seek me out or I seek them out just to have a cup of coffee or a cigarette and just talk, not about 11 September. It's like a high school reunion or more of an adult reunion.

Q. Is this a mix of people, military and civilian?

A. Military and civilian; officer and enlisted, all services. There's probably half a dozen people that I really look forward to seeing. I look forward to seeing the handful of guys I really liked a lot at the Naval Academy. Does that make any sense? It's almost as if you've discovered this cell of like-minded, knowing that you'd not only risk your life, but do whatever it takes to make things as right as you can make them folks. I suppose it's the same way for people who discover fellow stamp collectors or antique car aficionados in their lives, people that I never would have met anywhere else.

Q. During the 72 hours with ██████ DOLAN, were you able to talk with her?

A. Yeah.

Q. Can you describe that for us?

A. No. I cried like a damn baby as soon as I hung up the phone. I'm 43 years old. I don't cry at anything. It's not because of lack of emotion. I feel bad about a lot of stuff, but I've been stunned at my own frailty when it comes to this. They had that SECNAV Memorial Service on the Pentagon steps. I cried through the whole damn thing. I don't mean just like tears rolling down my face; I sobbed the whole damn time. The memorial service for BOB at the Naval Academy, I was a basket case through most of that. Buried BOB at sea.

Q. Can you tell us about that?

A. Absolutely. You asked me about the phone calls with [REDACTED]. There is a little bit of guilt there because I knew I was lying about hope that BOB was possibly alive. I had seen where the desk was. I had seen what was further in the office where he would have been. So if BOB wasn't out of that space in five or ten minutes, he wasn't coming out and I knew that. I spent basically 72 hours making up the possibility of hope. I don't feel bad about that. I think it gave her a chance to ease into the idea that her husband, the father of her children, was gone forever.

You asked me about the burial at sea. Sailed aboard the *USS McInerney* (FFG-8) out of Mayport, Florida, about ten days ago. BOB loved Mayport. He and his wife [REDACTED] had just purchased the house that they would like to retire in down in Sawgrass, which is just outside of Mayport, Florida. BOB had done his command tour on the *USS John Hancock* out of Mayport. That's where he came from. He came from that job at sea to this job at the Pentagon. [REDACTED] and her brother [REDACTED] took a train down to Mayport. I flew. [REDACTED] called me Wednesday and said, just so you know and I know you want to know; we're going to do the burial at sea on Friday. I said, "Well, I'm coming." He said, "I knew you would." I flew down. They stayed out on Mayport Road. I got there about 1 o'clock in the morning, Friday morning. We met up at the Comfort Inn on Mayport Road. Got escorted into the base. The base CO and RSG down there and the CO of the ship and the squadron. They did a fantastic job. This, obviously, was the final goodbye to BOB for [REDACTED], so you can imagine how important it was to everybody to make it right, as perfect as they could. They did a fantastic job. I've done probably 30 burials at sea over the course of the years on six different ships. Burials at sea are, generally, the cremains of a retired person. If you ask me what the generic burial at sea involved; it would involve definitely cremains. Everyone I've ever done is cremains and always someone who served in the Navy or

military in some remote past that has no connection to today, for me. Grateful to have the opportunity to do it, to put to final rest someone who has served our country, but again, it's someone disassociated. It's not someone that meant something other than the symbolism of honor to me. To do one that involved A) A casket; B). A friend; C) Have family there; to call it unique would be an understatement. This was as unique an event as I could imagine for a Navy ceremony, for me personally. BOB was Catholic. They accommodated--having [REDACTED] who couldn't fly back, the drill was, take the ship out to sea, pass on the [Inaudible], have the ceremony, fly myself, the Chaplain, the Commodore, and [REDACTED] [REDACTED] brother, back off the ship by SH-60 helicopters. [REDACTED] can't fly on a helicopter. There is no provision for a non-service member flying back so that was the issue. They had service on board the ship and again the ship had done a fantastic job. Set up the helo-hanger with this huge American flag as a backdrop and also, a partition, to make it a smaller space. It was gorgeous. They did a fantastic job. The casket was wonderful. They set up some chairs and the Catholic Priest did a very short service so [REDACTED] could attend. We had two cell phones. I had her son, [REDACTED] on the cell phone. On the other phone, was BOB'S parents in New Jersey. It was great. It was going to say it was almost as if they were there, but it was as accommodating as you could possibly make it. Then the service concluded and [REDACTED] left. The ship got underway. About three hours later when you're outside the [Inaudible] and conducted what was the best burial at sea ceremony I ever heard. BOB'S favorite song was *Danny Boy*. They actually had a guy on the ship's crew who played the bagpipes. He couldn't play *Danny Boy*. He played *Amazing Grace* on the bagpipes, close enough. It was just fantastic. Again, it was a casket, which was unique. I think it was unique for the burial at sea crew, too. Normally, it's just a small box and it slides over the side. The casket, weighted down so it sinks with holes in it so it would sink, banded so it doesn't open at some

distant future date, wouldn't slide. The burial at sea detail themselves, the pallbearers--it was something you would expect to see as professional and as polished as the guys you would expect to see at Arlington Cemetery. I can't talk too much about it, but it was fantastic. I promised [REDACTED] I'd have her buried at sea as well. I'm not sure she rates it by the military, but if I have to paddle a canoe out there, I got the chart, I know where BOB'S buried, I'll take her out there someday if she predeceases me. So that was the burial at sea. It was great, very well done.

What else should we talk about?

Q. Let's take a few minutes about life since.

Q. What's life been since then?

A. For me, personally? It's been [pause] fine. They did a great job advertising and encouraging you talk to somebody. I didn't think I needed to. I think everybody needs to just to reaffirm that they don't need to, if that makes sense. It's been tough coming to grips with not having BOB at the other end of the phone or email. It probably will be for a while but that's all right. You expect that. Get medical treatment three times a week or I did for a couple of months a little Breathalyzer and they put you on a machine for smoke inhalation. Had a lot of burns on the back of my head because that was the only part I couldn't find something to wrap around. All the hair was gone from my left arm from flash burn, but those things go away. Got three little kids. I tried to explain it and they're all--they are from 10-14, so there is a spread.

Q. Boy or girl?

A. Boy, girl, boy. They are close in age, but you figure the 10 year old and a 14 year old and what they need to have explained to them and what concerns them. It's been interesting talking to them about this. My daughter, my middle child was the one that the DOLAN'S were Godparents for so it's been a little tough on her; a little tougher on her, I think. In general, I think, like most people in the Pentagon, the thought is we do important stuff and we try and separate the personal pain. Also on a different level, the personal anxiety about going back to work in what was a target, at least one day, separate that from the need to get back to work and do the nation's business, especially. It's ironic, isn't it, that when you need to work the hardest to fight this war on terrorism, is when it's most difficult to do something. The Navy Command Center, for example, and the OPNAV staff had to go work out of the Annex when they were as busy as they've ever been in coordinating for the CNO information from recommended course of action from the very event to prevent the recurrence of the very event that made them have to move up to the Annex. It's been tough in that respect. Our office is stuffed into some old Intel spaces up on the fifth deck. More than that, it took it a long time to get it that way. For the first couple of days right after, it was just me and the QDR was still going on, as you recall. OSB was still moving on with the process and that's important, I think, not to just put everything on pause and worry. We were working out of the Center for Naval Analysis. We scrounged up some office space over there and they were more than gracious, more than accommodating; did that for a couple of weeks. This is no JAG, no nothing on this?

Okay, we actually broke back into our old office, which was just far enough away from the damage area, inside the crime scene, but far enough away that it was just smoky and filthy as opposed to burned up. We kicked in a fan, couldn't open the cipher lock. We could get the dial

lock open because it's electromagnetic [Inaudible] if you get power to it. The actual cipher lock was electric so it was closed in the lock position and we couldn't open it from the outside. We kicked in a fan and I crawled and snuck back in like something from some movie, with my Admiral and his Admin. Assistant. We found the one guard who was distracted by another guard of the opposite sex one guard post down. We literally tried all four decks and both sides of the fence until we found the one guy who was out chatting up another guard and just walked on by and made it to our office. Kicked in the fan, I mentioned that three times, I think. I'm very proud of that, snuck in and I slithered in and went over the front door and we could open the lock manually from the other side. We commenced to stealing power from the Marine Corps side. Got a bunch of halogen lights because there was no power in our space. We found some outlets further down and got a couple of 100 foot extension cords and put them together and found some power and powered up the office. Again, QDR was still going on and the business of making this Navy and Pentagon was as important as ever and more so. So we got up. That was, I hate to say, therapeutic but it was a good distraction, I think, for all of us to A) To have something important to do and, B) To have a little bit of a diversion of challenge with the extra degree of difficulty and making this thing more--

The place stunk forever. Service Master, I don't know if it matters, but it almost made me weep in gratitude to see the people who came out of the woodwork to bring this place back to life. I don't know where they got them all from. They were all contract laborers and I'm sure we paid a premium price for it, but it was just great to see people. I'm sure they're high school students or drop outs or whatever they are. God bless them. They were back in here wiping down the wall. Just the simple act of having someone come in and sweep down and start wiping things up,

making it smell normal in here or not smell bad. It just--somehow on a really, really deep level, comforting. People moving furniture, it was like ants at a picnic just moving stuff around making things better. If I had a most memorable character of the post-9/11 stuff it was a Army National Guard guy from the Salisbury, Maryland unit that was recalled to active to duty or called up to provide immediate security. I guess they scrounged these guys up the next day. Twelve hours later, I'm back here and I was doing some stuff and I'm walking by these guys saying, "Hey, how's it going? Thanks for helping out." Then after a couple of days it turns into, "So, where are you guys from?" Turns out this was a unit, Army National Guard Unit from over in Maryland, Salisbury, Maryland on the Eastern Shore where I used to go a lot as a kid en route to Ocean City. So we got to talking and these guys are--one's a school teacher, one's a mechanic. They're just 18-19 year old kids, most of them. Some of them were a little older and they were just fantastic. There was nothing, in retrospect, nothing particularly special about them or unique or extraordinary, which made it all the more special. This is really national defense. These are Mr. and Mrs. or "young guy America" who signed up to do this stuff and here he is doing it, waiting for the bad guys to climb over the fence so they can say, "Halt, who goes there! Pow! You're not going to do this again!" There was one kid named CHAD who was a really good guy. Another Pentagon urban legend, I don't know how much truth there is to it. He was telling me when they were on one of their shifts, some God knows what rank of General or something, tried to buffalo his way in. "I've got to get back to my office!" I'm not sure if you heard this story. "You don't understand who I am. I'm going back. See that door, I'm going to walk over there and go through there." "No sir, you can't. This is a crime scene. Blah, blah, blah." He's a real young guy. Supposedly, there was a takedown and handcuffs and "You guys will be sorry for this!" "Oh, no we won't. You'll be sorry" Supposedly he had to retire.

So, what else?

Q. We may want to get back together with you sometime a month down the road and talk more N3/N5 perspective, particularly, in your position, but in anticipation of that, take just a quick snippet on what were some of the unique challenges an organization like N3/N5 in the roll they're playing particularly after having lost so many personnel in the incident itself. From an EA's perspective, what do you see as the most unique challenge of that?

A. I think you introduced that thought right off the bat. Guys died. You expect that, I think, even on a ship, that it's possible that something will happen. Certainly you expect it if you're a Marine and you're off on a patrol somewhere, but to be sitting at a desk in the Pentagon and get killed. It probably wasn't on anybody's mind when they got up that day. I don't know if you talked to JERRY HENSON. That's one of the things he mentioned. "You know I survived all those combat tours in Vietnam, those strike flights. I'm going to get burned alive at my desk, how ironic." So it has affected everybody a little different, in different ways. I'm sure there are people who didn't want to come back to work and there are others who just couldn't wait to get back to work. I think the physical absence of people who had important functions and the emotional impact of having those friends and really close comrades, gone forever.

Q. Have they had a chance to deal with that yet or have they--because they went to action right away, obviously, and they sort of dealt with that while they were fighting the war they were laying their shipmates to rest?

A. Couldn't have. I think everybody's dealt with it or not dealt with it in their own way. I was back to work the next day.

Q. Maybe for some that helps, right? Do you think there are resources available for folks to go get help?

A. Absolutely, yeah.

Q. With no stigma attached it?

A. Zero. Certainly, that's a concern. Everybody's got a security clearance at some level. They made it real clear that it's 24 hours a day and nobody's going to even ask your name. Come down and talk or just sit here and not talk, but get some help. We, in our office, ADMIRAL SUSTANK [phonetic] was great about it. We had some guys who had some real issues, not to the extent that they needed to be locked up or anything--guys whose kids were worried about them coming back to work or whose wives swore that if you go back to work, I'm not sure how I'm going to handle it and guys themselves who were involved in varying degrees. There was counseling to meet any need, extremely flexible, literally 24-hours-a-day. I went down. I finally got tired of wondering what I was thinking and needed to bounce it off of somebody else. I think I went in about 2 o'clock in the morning on Thursday and just said to myself, "Self, it's time." So I went down to deal with it and there was a whole bunch of them sitting there. I talked to this real nice guy. Never saw him again, didn't need to. If you wanted it, it was there. If you didn't want it, but people thought you might want it, it was suggested and highly recommended. In our office, as I mentioned, Admiral SUSTANK [phonetic] said, "Why don't we just get one of these guys to come up here in case somebody just doesn't want to go down there. We should talk." We

did that; they came up to him and stayed about an hour shooting the breeze. It was, obviously, a focused conversation. It was very helpful. A couple of guys came up to me weeks later, one guy, it's been longer than that and said, "I can't tell you how much that helped." So there you go, more than enough support. There wasn't a pull. It was pushed, not pushed to the extent that "you will go down" but "what do you think about talking about this?" There are some people that are hurt and some people, I'm sure, will hurt for a very long time. There's events that trigger or alerts them [Inaudible]. For example, the string of memorial services has pretty much petered out, burials and stuff. People will grieve; people will hurt; some to different degrees than others. I guess it's just natural.

Q. Anything else you'd like to add for the historical record?

A. It was a hell of a day. I could not have imagined beforehand it could have ever have happened. In retrospect, unlike the World Trade Center, I think this was a legitimate target in one aspect. I guess you could say that. It's certainly a fucked-up way to do it with a bunch of civilians on an airplane, but they're terrorists.

Q. Anything else you need to add for the record?

A. No, it was a hell of a day.

Q. We'll be asking you to come back several months down the road and look at the perspective particularly with your birds-eye view from N3 and N5, as well as the perspective that you offer. It's obviously a very introspective part of the story.

A. Yeah, you see them out there every now and then. You'd be real proud of them, I think. I certainly am, real proud. I mentioned people just carried on because you have to. They talk about heroes this and heroes that. The real heroes are the folks who just pulled it up and got out, got back to work despite all the reasons not to. Here inside the building and frankly the families despite their anxiety about Dads and Moms off to work again and the [REDACTED] DOLANS of this event, still got those two little kids to raise. Those are the real fucking heroes. So that's it for me. It's a fact.

Q. Thank you for your time.

A. You're welcome.

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