

**Naval Historical Center
Oral Interview Summary Form**

Interviewers:

CDR Karen Loftus
CDR Richard Fahy

Interviewer's Organization:

Naval Historical Center
Naval Historical Center

Interviewee:

Mr. Patrick Yates

Current Address:

██████████
████████████████████

Date of Interview:

December 19, 2001

Place of Interview:

Crystal City (NC2)

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 and raised in ██████████, FL. Working for the Navy as a civilian for 28 years as a mechanical engineer. Homeported out of China Lake CA but here at the Pentagon working on a one year project with N81. Three year tour in the Middle East in Bahrain. Two years with the Strategic Studies Group in Newport RI. Arrived here 01 August 02. 4C449 and 4C355 spaces at the Pentagon. Spaces were still there, but they were damaged by the fire.
2. Issues prior to September 11th: works for Air Dominance team, Integrated Warfare and Architecture Shop. Specialty in cruise missile defense, to help OPNAV decide where the Navy is headed in the next few years.
3. He was in a meeting with CDR Tom Ransom and Bob Mikalski from the Applied Physics Laboratory at John Hopkins, a visitor to the shop that day. They were walking back to the conference table when they walked past a TV and saw the clips of the first plane hitting the World Trade Center. After the second plane hit the World Trade Center he told CDR Ransome that if they were smart they would get out of the Pentagon. He didn't leave because they were about to start the meeting. Suddenly the floor jumped. He believed it was a bomb. His chair came off the floor. There was a perceptible double heave; you could feel the building move; followed by two explosive sounds. Lights and air conditioning stayed on. No panic in the building. Within seconds, head of N812, CAPT Hansen, walked briskly through and told people to leave the area. He found out later that CAPT Hansen did that on his own. He grabbed his classified material and put it in an overhead storage area, then exited from 4C449. Fifty feet from the escalators. As soon as he opened the door he smelled the JP fuel and knew then it was an airplane.
4. Smoke wasn't bad yet. Fuel and fumes had come down the corridor beneath them, but the air conditioner kept the air clear in the beginning. He went to the third deck where he began to see some injured. At the second deck the smoke was building up; he knew at

that point the building was on fire. He exited with Bob Mikalski. Knew they were close to the impact site. Turned into second corridor and saw the press of people attempting to exit into South Parking. Second corridor was jammed solid. Within ten yards he was in contact with every person around him. Had visions they were going to be mashed into puree because of the mass of people behind them and inability to turn back. The PA was squawking intermittently throughout the evacuation but he could not understand a word of it. Very few people were carrying anything. A very responsible and orderly group.

5. He recommends something like freeway information signs at the corridor intersections for those who do not know the building well and since the PA system cannot be heard. Security people were herding people away from the building; they went through the tunnel under I-395 and they stood in the parking lot and finished their meeting. He walked back to his apartment in Crystal City.
6. No emergency breathing apparatus in the building; lack of evacuation plan in the building was criminal. CO2 bottles designed to fight furniture fires.
7. There was no reconstitution plan. He returned to the Pentagon; got close to the spaces before they roped off the spaces and put guards on them. He was in the building at 0530 on the 12th, and security was posted at that time. Soot and fire damage so bad that he gave up going in the spaces. Smelled burnt transformer oil and burnt plastics. Wondered if the cypher locks had been heated to the extent that they wouldn't work, and worried that he may get in the space and not be able to get out. Hung around the coffee shops hoping to reconnect with his officemates. No one had everyone's numbers. People were trading e-mail addresses and going through the Navy locator system to get in touch. It took his office a week to get reconnected. Many of the addresses in the Navy locator system are out of date.
8. The SPRINT team helped the folks that were really rattled. It was mandatory for his group. CDR Yohe or CAPT Hansen sat them all down and made them go.
9. His primary means of communication is writing papers. Through Earnest Will and Desert Storm he wrote point papers. Many of these papers over decades were about threat assessment and vulnerabilities. One of his point papers predicted the USS COLE scenario over ten years ago. In the Fifth Fleet his task had been to look for problems and how to solve them.
10. The threat has always been there, but awareness of it has increased drastically. There have been several informal working groups working for years that include FBI, CIA, commerce, transportation, and many others that have been focused on threat assessment and how to protect us from attack.
11. There are still risks to our surface Navy that have been there for a long time. In constrained water they are vulnerable and can't be protected. Naval buoys, oil platforms, merchant shipping allow you to hide a ball camera [sic] and hit a target.
12. POCs: OPNAV-00K, the CNO Executive Panel. They are the CNO's private think tank. The members are prior heads of large organizations. CDR Jim Yohe; CAPT Butch Hansen; CDR Ransom.

Abstracted by:
CDR Loftus
10 January 2002

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Subject Terms/Key Words: Reconstitution; Pentagon Evacuation; Home Land Defense; Pentagon; Terrorist Attack; 11 September 2001; Defense Protective Service

Transcript of Interview:

Interviewee Information:

Born and raised in ██████████, FL. Working for the Navy as a civilian for 28 years as a mechanical engineer. Homeported out of China Lake CA but here at the Pentagon working on a one year project with N81. Three year tour in the Middle East in Bahrain. Two years with the Strategic Studies Group in Newport RI. Arrived here 2 August 01. 4C449 and 4C355 spaces at the Pentagon. Spaces were still there, but they were damaged by the fire.

Topics Discussed:

Q. (01:37) Where were your spaces located in the Pentagon?

A. On the 4th deck, off of the C ring, our main entrance door was 4C449 and our back up entrance was 4C355. Our spaces are actually still there. A little the worse for wear and bordered by plywood in a couple spots, but the hole is now one of our, one of the boundaries of our old office space.

Q. (02:08) So your office space was literally impacted by the collision, or was it, -?

A. No, impacted by the fire.

Q. (02:14) OK.

A. The initial hole, I mean there was no obvious damage at all in our space for several minutes or so, that I observed during evacuation.

Q. (02:34) OK. Could you tell us, tell us some, tell us about the issues that you were working on prior to September 11th. What was the focus of your group?

A. Well, like I mentioned, I work for the Air Dominance Team, the Integrated Warfare and Architectures shop and the, my specialty here, the reason I came here was to work on Cruise Missile Defense, trying to help OPNAV decide where the Navy's going to go in these areas over the next few years. That's actually what we were doing when, we were having a very small meeting underway at the time of the attack.

Q. (03:13) OK, tell us about that day.

A. Our meeting got underway at 0900, our CDR TOM RANSOM, my partner and I had just met our visitor, a fellow from the Applied Physics Lab at John Hopkins, by the name of BOB MIKALSKI. We just received him at the door and were walking back to the little, a conference table much like this, where we were going to meet. It's a large, was a large office space with maybe forty or fifty people in it. And the hubbub that's normal in this office just kind of went quiet and it was obvious that something was going on as we were walking back to the room, and

we walked passed a TV that someone had turned on and people were gathering around it, looking at the World Trade Center, the first impact. At that point in time there was nothing going through my mind other than it was an accident, some plane taking off from La Guardia, or Kennedy and smacked the World Trade Center.

And we sat down, I heard talking that the second plane had hit the other tower, and made it pretty clear that it wasn't an accident. And having, you know, been involved in interesting parts of the world from time to time, I thought, I was thinking during the meeting while I was talking to these people, you know I— this would probably be a good time to get the hell out of the Pentagon.

Q. (04:58) You did think that, huh?

A. I was, I was, it was going through my mind during the, you know, if I was half as smart that I think that I am, I'd get up and leave, and about that time the plane hit.

Q. (05:12) Had you voiced that to anybody in the room?

A. Yes, CDR RANSOM.

Q. (05:19) Did he agree? We've heard several people say that and yet I think –

A. Yes, he agreed that it just, knowing something intellectually and being able to reason through it, and then acting on it are not always the same thing.

Q. (05:34) Right.

A. You know, it was a normal workday in the Pentagon. We had stuff to do.

Q. (05:39) Right.

A. Stuff that we felt was important, and this guy had driven all the way down from APL to chat with us about it and we wanted to get it done and then get him on his way.

Q. (05:53) Can you describe what happened, the, describe, just describe what you were thinking as it happened.

A. Well we were sitting there, just, I mean at this point I can't remember whether we were actually conducting the business of the meeting or we were still talking about the attack on the World Trade Center when the floor jumped. As I mentioned in the write-up I sent in, I've worked with explosives all my life and there was no doubt in my mind that was a bomb.

The concrete form, the whole Pentagon's concrete and the floor jumped hard enough that my chair came off the floor, and then there was a double, a double perceptible double heave. You could feel the building roll and then two sharp explosion type thumping sounds, bang sounds. And so in my mind I was convinced it was a bomb and I wasn't too terribly concerned about it, because A) it obviously wasn't close enough to produce immediate damage in my spaces, and B) there were lots of exit opportunities for all the people in the office, because there was no damage in our area. Lights flickered, but they stayed on. The air conditioning stayed on, and thanks to the training and the large military occupancy of the building there was no panic.

And within seconds, the head of N812, CAPT BUTCH HANSEN walked briskly through the area telling people to get out of the building. Found out later that BUTCH had done this on his own. He, I was really impressed, I thought boy our Command and Control architecture works

really well, to give him instructions to evacuate the building that quickly, because it, there was no way in hell it was more than forty or fifty seconds. WOW.

Our Command Control architecture actually did work a lot better than I ever thought it would, but BUTCH did it on his own. He didn't get any instruction from anybody. And so we, I just grabbed my classified stuff and my desk was on the way to the exit, so there was an open storage area so I just flipped in a bundle of papers in a little overhead cabinet over my desk and closed it and headed for the door.

Q. (08:39) Where did you exit? What corridor, do you recall?

A. 4C449, it's the 4th deck and we are actually, it was right on the 4th corridor and we were just maybe fifty feet from the A ring and the brand new escalators they had just put in in the new wedge. Soon as I opened the door to the corridor you could smell the JP. That erased any further notion in my mind that it had been a bomb. I, everybody has been worried for some time, I mean decades about some group pulling an eighteen wheeler into the delivery spaces in the Pentagon basement. You know, Oklahoma City scenario. When I opened the door and smelled the JP, there was no doubt what it was. It was another airplane. Smoke wasn't bad, it was just noticeable and the stench of the JP because it, the fumes that come down the corridor just beneath us, that the air conditioning system was doing, it did an incredible job keeping clean air in most of the spaces.

The escalators were still running and people were beginning to build up in the corridors, moving orderly. At this point I can't recall seeing anyone ever running from the whole scenario. So I went down the escalator to the third deck, another flight of the escalator to the second deck. On the third deck, start seeing a few people who had been hurt. You know people holding

themselves funny or bleeding, being helped along by other people and by the time we got to the second deck the smoke was billowing out, still not enough that it was a concern, but definitely the building was on fire. Then mostly because it was the route I was familiar with, and because it ran partly along the A ring where there were multiple opportunities to get out—I was with BOB MIKALSKI, TOM RANSOM had taken another route out, because he, his car was on the northside of the Pentagon and I lived on the south side.

And if you've never lived in the building, it's a maze. I wanted to stay with routes that I was familiar with if I could. In the impact event, I couldn't tell for sure where the impact was. I knew it was close. So I tried to aim away from where our spaces were and yet get to the South Parking lot entrance. So I went down the Amsus (phonetic) corridor right along the A ring, and then turned out, I think it's the 2nd corridor that runs past the coffee shop into the lobby, because I needed to get BOB MIKALSKI out of the building, because he had only been in the building a couple of times. When we turned into the 2nd corridor, I was really concerned that we may have made a major tactical error, because the press of people and the fact that every step was just a little bit slower than the previous one.

By the time I got down there, and you know the escalators were running and everybody was walking down the escalators so we were moving pretty quickly, the 2nd corridor was jammed solid, and you know you start out maintaining a comfort distance with the people around you, but within ten yards or so, you're in contact with all the people around you, and I just had visions of that corridor being blocked. That it had been too close to the impact, and we were just all going to be mashed into puree, by the press of people behind us, because there was no way we could turn around and go back.

The PA system was squawking, it's got to be a WWII vintage PA system and I could hear it squawking intermittently throughout the whole evacuation, and I had yet to understand a word.

Q. (13:26) So there was no kind of a fire alarm or anything like that. It was all voice, intercom voice?

A. Yes.

Q. (13:34) You don't recall any alarms?

A. No.

Q. (13:43) Was the, did the crowd, were they carrying anything? Did people have time to pick up their belongings?

A. Very, very few people were carrying anything. I wasn't. MIKALSKI had a little folder thing he slung over his neck. No, most people were completely empty-handed, they were a very responsible and orderly group. They knew it would have been irresponsible to take anything out. We were trying to get the people out

After the, for the weeks after the event, before I was able to get back in, I had occasion to regret that I left quite a bit of stuff in my office that I really wanted, needed, but at any rate, the corridor was not blocked. They'd keep moving, although we had kept going slower and slower. The 2nd corridor runs to a control inter-point, you know it bifurcates, comes back together and they had just put in the turn styles, and that was the bottleneck just getting people through. The DPS folks were hustling people through and getting them out onto the steps of the parking lot as quickly as possible, but it was still maybe half the rate at which people were entering the corridor at the

other end. That was, that was definitely not good. And the fact that nobody could understand what was being said over the PA system. We didn't know that that corridor was open and functioning, and by the time you could figure that out, you were committed, and all of the branch corridors and stairways that you could have exited to to get into another corridor to get back to the A route were jammed solid with people trying to get into the 2nd corridor to get out.

Q. (15:45) We hadn't heard that, I had not heard that before, but I think maybe because most people we talked to went to the central corridor first, into the center courtyard and then from there at different times, exited the building, and so I don't think they –

A. Well, once you go that –

Q. (15:59) They hit that bottleneck.

A. Once you could see daylight, you could figure out where the impact was.

Q. (16:04) Right.

A. It was pretty hard to not see this huge column of thick black smoke, and then you could just pick any corridor that was not headed in that direction and have pretty good odds. Twenty-four thousand people and all of those twenty-four thousand people habitually use only two corridors.

Q. (16:23) Right.

A. So

Q. (16:27) Two and ten?

A. Yes, Two and –

Q. (16:29) Or eight, whatever it is out by North Parking.

A. I think it's 8 that goes to the North Parking.

Q. (16:33) Yes, OK, 8.

A. And so the, I recommended and a lot of our sentry folks, and have written on several times since then was that we install something like the freeway information signs at the intersections of the corridors.

There is no PA system powerful enough to be heard. People weren't yelling other than a few people occasionally yelling to shut "the funk up," so they could hear what was on the PA system. But just that many people talking at this level of conversation, and the corridor's jammed full of them.

Q. (17:18) You can't hear anything.

A. Couldn't hear anything.

Q. (17:20) I have to ask you this. When I first went in the Pentagon, and I didn't know my way around, it was a reserve weekend, and I went to use the head, and I thought I'm going to get lost in here, and it occurred to me that if a fire happened, I never thought terrorism, but if a fire happened how dangerous that would be and so one of my objectives that weekend was to figure out where the heck I was, and how to get out of there. Because it really was frightening, and it

must have been terrifying for you and for your friend. I mean I wonder if you were thinking that, like “I don’t know this building every well.”

A. No, I have been visiting the Pentagon for thirty years and I certainly don’t claim to know it well, but I did know two or three exits and I, you know, it was a fairly logical diagram.

Q. (18:10) So you knew.

A. If I had just known where the problem was it would have been no challenge at all to take a better route out. There are other exits, but they’re not the high volume exits into the South Parking lot, or the North Parking lot or the Metro tunnel.

Q. (18:32) Right.

Q. (another) How long did it take you to get out from the impact ‘til when you finally cleared out of there?

A. I don’t really know. I wish I had looked at my watch a couple of times, but it was probably, probably around ten minutes, give or take -

Q. (18:50) Wow.

A. -Three or four.

Q. (18:53) That’s a long time for something of that nature, I would imagine.

Q. (another) What did you do then?

A. Oh, the security, DSP folks were getting people away from the building, because we had no idea if there were other attacks planned, or even a lot of detail about the nature of that attack.

Q. (19:20) And this is which parking lot did you go out of?

A. South Parking.

Q. (19:22) South Parking, because that's closer to home.

A. Eastern most entrance to the South Parking lot, and so I took BOB across that parking lot and into the tunnel under 395 to his car so we were well away from the building, and then we, we actually stood there and finished our meeting. (chuckle) Engineers are like that.

(laughter)

And BOB got in his car and headed home and I walked back to my apartment and started to try and get in touch with my girlfriend who works downtown in the mall.

The lack of a battle plan for a building that size to my mind, it's criminal. There were no emergency breathing apparatus anywhere in the building. Aboard a ship everybody would have had an EBA to evacuate with.

Q. (20:35) And even an EEBD or something like that to get the –

A. Right there really was nothing. No fire extinguishers.

Q. (20:44) (Unintelligible)

A. Don't take any big bets on whether we're buying any now.

Q. (20:47) You got any inside information.

A. No, I don't.

Q. (20:51) Well one of the things we recommended –

A. (20:53) I'm comfortable enough with my knowledge of the system that I, I still take a bet.

Q. (20:59) One of the things we recommended, I really think they should do this, is park a fire truck inside one of the alleyways and keep it there, because they couldn't fight the fire from the inside where it was really happening.

A. That's right.

Q. (21:08) And all they did was give out little CO₂ bottles.

A. All the automatic systems were useless and possibly even counter-productive. They were designed to fight furniture fires. Fires, you know, from the polyurethane foam in these chairs and the carpets and the wooden desks. They didn't help at all with a few thousand gallons of JP.

Q. (21:33) Right. It will be interesting to see how they fix that problem. They're going to have to. So can you tell us how you, what happened immediately afterwards as far as when you went to work, and what spaces you went to and how difficult was that for reconstructive reasons.

A. It's not being too (Unintelligible) to say it was a total goat rope. We had no reconstitution plan. I came back to the Pentagon trying to—the first morning I got close to our spaces, before they figured out that people would be doing this, and roped off and barricaded all the corridors and put guards on them.

Q. (22:18) What time was this on Wednesday morning?

A. I was there about five-thirty. I'm a real early bird. I'm usually in here between five and six. One way to get to go home early, too. And –

Q. (22:34) So at that point you almost got close enough and -

A. I could get to where I could see the door into 4C449. I could see down our corridor.

Q. (22:43) And at that point they were just posting security and –

A. Yes, and the fire damage in the corridor and the soot was such that, and the stench was so bad I gave it up.

Q. (22:56) When you came back it still smelled like JP fire, or JP?

A. That was present, but there was a, there was a sharp tang of burned plastics and it smelled like burned transformer oil, too. It was not a healthy environment. Let me see, I also had hung around there in the coffee shops and the cafeterias hoping to connect with some of the people from our office, because we had no reconstitution plan, and nobody had everybody else's home phone numbers or emails.

Q. (23:44) Was there anybody in the building at that time that, was a Pentagon worker, no security or fire fighting or anything like that?

A. Yes, yes, more than a few, you know, I would meet people. Obviously they're bent on doing the same thing I was doing. Trying to get into their space to retrieve stuff. We didn't have anyplace to work. If I could have gotten my hand on a couple of zip disks, I could have worked out of my apartment for a couple of days. It was pretty clear we were going to be without an

office for, I figured at least a couple of weeks, turns out it was like four days, work days, and I would see other, other officers and civilians in there trying to do the exact same thing. And we'd trade info about, "Well, I got this far down this corridor." You know we'd stop at one of the big diagrams on the wall, "Well I got to here, but there was just a hole there."

No, there was no, no official or accurate complete information through the next weekend.

Q. (24:52) What, was there, was it possible had there not, had they not posted security for you to physically go down to your office?

A. Yes.

Q. (25:02) And you didn't have a hundred-dollar bill on you to bribe (laugh) the security guard or anything? Were they pretty, what was their attitude when you encountered them?

A. Well, first the, that Wednesday morning there was a young tech sergeant there, Air Force, and he would have let me through, but just as, I'm because it was just like from here to the door we walked in, where he was sitting with his M-16 to the door I wanted to get in, so he could see me, but he's sitting there, you know, in an Air Pack, breathing filtered air and I'm (makes coughing sound) and I wasn't sure the door, or the locks would work, you know, where they were these electrical silent locks, and I wasn't sure how, if they'd been heated enough to lose their memory. Turned out they hadn't. They worked fine.

Q. (25:54) But you weren't entirely sure, if you got in that you could get out or something like that, right?

A. Yeah, and the stuff I wanted was classified. There were other classified storage area I could have gotten to, but I hadn't arranged with them ahead of time to hold stuff for me. You know, being a China Laker, I, you have a liaison office clear the north end of the strip with safes that I can use, and so I didn't, I didn't push it, and I didn't want to get this young tech sergeant in trouble. And it was pretty nasty environment and I figured I'd just let the system work and so I just kept coming back. And Monday, well, the only thing that worked, that came close to working in the way of reconstitution plan was the local TV stations and radio stations broadcast a number. A number for the Air Force, and a number for the Navy and a number for the Army to call to find out about what to do. And eventually I got through and I've forgotten, it was a Commander, he had some information and we, that there was going to be a meeting, I think that Tuesday down in the courtyard, and where you eventually got together not any of my team, but I was able to give him the information, just what you have, my emails and phone numbers and then slowly over the next day or two people would trade email addresses until we had pretty much the entire group back in communication.

Q. (27:51) That's amazing. Now the active duty folks that were in that office, they obviously were connected and knew each other, but they didn't have any way to contact you, right?

A. (28:00) They didn't have any way to contact each other with only a few exceptions.

Q. (28:02) They didn't? Did it take them that long? Did it take them a week?

A. It took them that long to go through the Navy locator system, because most of the addresses in the Navy locator system were out of date.

Q. (28:16) I'm sure they are. Yes. That will take quite a while. Who was in charge of the reconstitution?

A. There was a, there was a Pentagon OSD Team with representatives. A small number of representatives from each of the services. I've got this, this Commander's name. It's on my, it's on my notes upstairs.

Q. (28:43) That would be great if we could get that, because it's in a case like this where there is, there is no precedent, I wonder how in one day they all of a sudden said, "OK, we've got to put a billion different staffs in different offices and we've got to figure out how to do that, and we've got to have the authority to do that," and I haven't heard of anybody that was actually identified and talked about it.

A. The Navy had, I'm sure you'd get pretty much the same story in the Air Force and the Army, just decided what they had to do and went and did it. And it was Navy people that went over to the Annex, because it is after all the Navy Annex, and we knew there were some, a very small number of vacant spaces there, and we moved the department heads into those spaces, and they, it turned out, they were there, oh, like Thursday. Nobody knew where they were because of communications work was totally FUBAR. But they were, they were working the problem and trying to set up temporary spaces, and of course NAVSEA having just moved out of this building it was an obvious target.

Q. (29:53) I have to, it must have been awfully strange. What did you do everyday, wondering, did you go over to the Pentagon everyday hoping maybe you might see somebody and –

A. No, I went to the Pentagon three, four, five times everyday.

Q. (30:06) To try to establish that contact.

A. To try to you know, A) to spot someone I knew, and establish some lines of communication. And you'll get the same story, at least from the other people in my office. They were coming back trying to get in touch, to find how and where we're going to reconstitute. Now, we have a reconstitution plan. I've got a piece of paper in my pocket with a name, home phone numbers and emails for all of our members, our team members, and I have it on my hard drive in my apartment. I've got it on zip in my briefcase. You know, we are certainly better prepared than we were on September 10th. It could still stand some improvement.

Q. (31:05) Do you know any, did you know anybody that died in the blast?

A. I knew one, there was one Navy yeoman that I didn't know he was here, but I knew him slightly from Newport.

Q. (31:17) What was his name?

A. His name was SCOTT, but I can't remember his last name now. That was just scanning the list of known fatalities and spotted him. That was the only way I happened to know.

Q. (31:34) Did it effect you, did you have to do anything like a SPRINT Team or a was there any kind of counseling?

A. Yes, I've never been in the military, but I've been in, I've been in combat as an advisor, and I wasn't much concerned and I wasn't much affected by it, but there were people, some senior

people, officers with combat experience who were really rattled. So that the SPRINT Teams, I think they helped.

Q. (32:22) Was it mandatory, or was it optional?

A. No, it was mandatory.

Q. (32:27) Who actually told you that you have to go? Who's your boss?

A. CAPTAIN, well, we have kind of an informal relationship. My Admiral is ADMIRAL LOU CRENSHAW, two-star. Our group leader for N812 is CAPTAIN BUTCH HANSEN, and our Team Leader is COMMANDER JIM YOHE, and I think it was either YOHE or HANSEN, who got us all together and said, "OK, now you're going to sit down and listen to the SPRINT Team."

Q. (32:56) Whether you like it or not.

A. Right.

Q. (33:00) Yes, because we've heard that a lot. It really seems like it, because they didn't do it during the Gulf War to speak of, and it's really only the last five or six years that they've really pushed this, which is interesting from my point of view, because the last thing in the Navy that they ever, they never wanted any touchy/feely or psychobabble stuff for the longest time.

A. That's right. It's not a guy thing.

(laugh)

Q. (33:27) Which is why they ordered you to do it, right? That's the only way to get some people in there.

Q. (another) That's one thing I've really learned doing these Pentagon interviews, is boy that SPRINT Team is absolutely essential for anybody, I was just reading in the *Washington Post* today that one of the, one of the wives of somebody that died in the World Trade Center committed suicide and –

(other interviewer gasps)

Q. Did you see that on the front page.

Q. (gasping person) No.

Q. And it's just, it's heart breaking because she really was just at a loss, and she didn't want to do any kind of counseling or anything like that and as a result, she just didn't, it wasn't forced on her and sometimes that's just necessary. It's like eating or sleeping or physical activity.

Sometimes you just need to force it on somebody.

But I gather from your, from the standpoint of your job has, you've reorient – is there been a reorientation of focus? I mean, are we building things.

A. As you ask the question, no. Do I see refocusing around me?

Q. (34:38) That's what I'm really, do I, do you, are you thinking “OK, we need to do, we need to build?”

A. Oh yes, I am.

Q. (34:44) Differently. Or even what you see on TV on how were –

A. It's been –

Q. (34:51) Fighting the different war.

A. For quite a long time, my primary enduring means of communication has been writing papers, like the one, I'm, the historical center, but all through Ernest Will and Desert Storm I found that putting out a short punchy point paper had more durability and got wider play than any kind of verbal communication by itself, and so I've done a lot of those papers over the, over decades have been focused, because it's been obvious that there were areas where we were seriously vulnerable, and still are. I have worked to make people aware of these vulnerabilities and have had some limited success. So yes, I have continued that after the attack, but my particular job, evaluating how the Navy's going to defend itself against cruise missiles can change.

Our team has been pretty thoroughly disrupted by people being ripped out of it to go to Homeland Defense. People being ripped out of it to go to the Navy Command Center to replace dead people.

Q. (36:30) Civilians, or ?

A. Officers.

Q. (36:34) OK. Are any of the, boy you made me think about three different questions. But the one that I was going to ask in the middle of it is were any of your, this is probably a "no" answer but were any of your point papers pressioned (phonetic) of what's going on now? Is there anything that you wrote prior to September 11th that all of a sudden you see and you say, "Well I wrote that ten years ago, or a year ago?"

A. I didn't predict airliners being used as kamikaze vehicles against buildings, no. A lot of those papers though have surfaced that did predict the *Cole* scenario with some precision, over ten years ago.

Q. (37:29) Really?

A. Yes.

Q. (37:31) Can you go into that in –

A. No.

Q. (37:35) No, OK.

A. But I got a call from Fifth Fleet, they had some of my old point papers, hard copies and they wanted to know if I had any of the digital copies I could re-send them. I didn't, so they ended up retyping them.

But over there, that was my job. To look for problems and find ways to solve them.

Q. (38:06) One of the things that we're working on is, not only at the Pentagon, but as a result of the Pentagon, and the things that happened on that day is where we're taking a snapshot on this point in time the next three to six months, where are we going, because it's really interesting from a historical perspective to see which way we're orienting now and then ten, twenty years, where we end up. Is there anybody, are there any names that you can give us about people that you're talking about that have actually shifted their focus toward homeland defense that could give us some insight into what they're –

A. Yes, but you'll have to do it through the chain. There's a group called the CNO Executive Panel, OPNAV 00K, I don't know any of the officers, they have all rotated out since I left the

PSS Tree in 2000, but some of the, they have picked up some additional emphasis on homeland defense and force protection.

Q. (39:17) Huh, that's a good idea.

A. And some of the people there, actually all of the people there are very, very bright. Some of them are even rational. (laugh) But touching base with the OOK would be useful.

Q. (39:36) OK, any, any, who runs that?

A. CNO.

Q. (39:42) He has the, he actually has the Navy –

A. They are his private think tank. The members are retired heads of large corporations, but a prior head of, the founding head of DARACON (phonetic), a retired head of Lincoln Lambs, retired head of one of the divisions of Lockheed Martin, those kinds of people.

Q. (40:12) Would it be, would we have to have classified capabilities or would, do you think this would be an unclassified interview?

A. Well, they could, it'll probably limit, but they can talk about, they certainly will have things they can talk about.

Q. OK.

Q. (Another) Has your job become more or less relevant since September 11th.

A. Oh, I think it's stayed about the same. I mean this, this threat has always been here. The awareness of it is certainly jumped up a few notches, but there have been people and groups in the Navy working asymmetrical force protection issues, anti-terrorism issues long before the *Cole*. They'd been doing it on a shoestring and often illegally, but they've been trying to make people aware of it and getting things done.

Q. (41:06) Are they getting, are you getting significantly more resources, or do you predict that you will, or is it going to be pretty much the same?

A. No, the more resources in terms of doing studies, analysis and figuring out whether it makes sense to do, yes, we probably do have a little bit more slack there noticeably. More resources in terms of eventually buying stuff, aircraft, weapons, sensors, you know. I think that will probably change if any of the services or OSD put together a coherent plan to show Congress that OK, these are our problems. These are how we can fix them. This is what it's going to cost. But we're, we're still a good distance away from that.

Q. (41:57) Who would, who would write that plan? That's one of the problems I guess, is –

A. You're right, and who would own that plan, you know in the NAVY, precluded it would be CNO, and SECNAV, but no one service can do it alone.

Q. (42:11) It's such a small piece of the puzzle, not even the military could have drawn something up on their own.

A. Well, there have actually been certain informal working groups that have been meeting for years, addressing just exactly what you're talking about with people from the FBI, CIA,

Department of Transportation, Health and Human Services, Interior, Commerce, trying to figure out what they needed to be doing to be prepared and to try to prevent such attacks. They've all been doing it, not all, but most have been doing it with no, no blessing, no support.

Q. (43:03) Have we learned anything from this?

A. We learned there's a hell of a lot we don't know and there's a hell of a lot that's really, really difficult to know and to put in perspective. Even a closed society like the former Soviet Union is awfully vulnerable to a terrorist attack from within. An open society like ours it's almost an imponderable problem. You can pick the things you would least like to have happen. An airplane diving into a nuclear reactor, and do what you can to prevent that, but the, almost all of the things that first come to mind, especially that come to mind to a government employee or a military person to reduce those probabilities through things that are specifically prohibited by our Constitution and for which hopefully people will not stand.

Q. (44:15) There had to be some synthesis of your thought to come up with a *Cole* type of incident. Maybe a what happened in Beirut back in 1983 or something, led you to believe that the magnitude and the creativity, the imaginations and the coordination that went into September 11th probably had to be bigger than you would have ever imagined. I don't know if that's true or not, but is there, given what we've seen now, can you, are you, could you put together a point paper similar to what you did surrounding the *Cole*, as a result of September 11th? And could you maybe talk about that a little bit.

A. Yes, other people have already done that. I've seen several of them. It's not particularly challenging. You could do with a very small team. One of your pre-requisites for anything like

that though is you need some number of people who are willing to die for it. In our culture those come pretty hard. In Islam it's a lot easier. But it's not challenging and there are other scenarios like that and like the *Cole*. There are still risks that our surface combatants are exposed to that we can't handle, and it's been there for a long time. A masked small boat attack with more to the boats, laden with explosives and someone wanting to be a martyr. We can't stop it.

Q. (46:01) Even, I remember going through the Straits of Malacca and we were worried about bumping into boats, but –

A. Anytime you're in constraint water, at the Persian Gulf, Straits of Harman (phonetic) Straits of Malacca.

Q. (46:15) Even like Lombock (phonetic) Straits or something like that –

A. Any.

Q. (46:20) From the NSP (phonetic).

A. Any. And if there're NAV buoys, if there're oil platforms, if there's merchant shipping you can hide half a dozen bog hammers behind it easily and just wait until your target's within a thousand yards and it's a gimme. You'll even get half the bog hammers back.

Q. (46:38) And we're, I mean from the Navy's standpoint we're really restricted by Rules of Engagement. We just can't go off and shoot down people that we think might be targeting us. We've got to, they've actually got to commit first and that's (chuckle) hard to figure out that.

A. Yep.

Q. (46:57) It really is a fascinating area of the study. What are you going to do now in the next year or two years?

A. Well, I'm going to work here through July, you know, 2002, and then I'm going to retire. Would have retired before this, but every time I get ready to retire the Navy dangles something in front of me that look interesting and so I hang in for a little bit longer.

Q. (47:26) Hanging in as a result of September 11th or just running out your commitment through the end of –

A. No, like I told them, I'd be here for years, I'd be here for a year. I have been the victim of a lot of cognitive dissonance for decades. I'm a radical Libertarian politically, and working for Uncle is just endlessly jarring.

Q. (48:03) It's an aborationist (Phonetic).

A. Yes.

Q. (48:07) And working in Washington, too.

A. Yes. This is my first time I've actually lived and worked here. Don't misunderstand me I love the Navy and, and the Navy and all of DOD have a very legitimate function, it's just that we also do a lot of illegitimate things with those functions. And some of those things really piss off a lot of other people in the world and they'll take advantage of any opportunity to smack us, and I think, you, know now that Osama Bin Laden has shown that it's possible to really cause serious damage, I think we'll see more of it.

Q. (48:56) What are you going to do when you retire?

A. I'm going to go finish a house I've been building in California for twenty years. I'm not an engineer, I'm a designer.

Q. (49:04 Unintelligible).

A. And I've got some designs I've been kicking around I'd like to finish and see if I can sell them.

Q. (49:12) Outside of the military structure, or, yes.

A. Yes.

Q. (49:18) Anything else you'd like to say for the historical record?

A. Yes, I think it's really encouraging that you're doing this. At the end of the Desert Shield, Storm, saber flail, we had acquired an awful lot of knowledge and damn near all of it was documented in official Navy messages. None of it, almost, this is only a slight exaggeration, none of that survived. The lady that heads the Historical Center she and I collected boxes of official naval messages, most of the concern was the mine campaign. Never could get them out of the Command. Command, you know, just kept, it just wasn't a high priority for them and eventually they got lost. And now, there are people like me running around and I'm sure any number of others, who had knowledge, personal knowledge, that was documented once. It's gone. I think it's important and it will be valuable that you guys get down what you can. I've been encouraging other people I know who were more involved with the aftermath of the attack

on September 11th to write down their experiences and their observations, and their recommendations. With not a lot of success.

Q. (51:01) Can you give us their names?

A. Yep. You can tell him I sicked you on him.

Q. (51:07) OK.

A. Commander JIM YOHE, Y-O-H-E.

Q. (51:12) That name sounds familiar.

A. And LCDR TOM RANSOM, R-A-N-S-O-M. CAPT BUTCH HANSEN. WILL HELM.

Q. (51:37) Any civilians? I think a lot of times the civilian perspective is really unique.

A. We didn't, we didn't have any civilians in my group that I knew that were there at the time. It just happened that they were, at least most of them were off somewhere.

Q. (52:00) Anyone that you know of that's actively involved in Homeland Defense?

A. Oh, my yes, we have a whole team in 812 that's doing homeland defense.

Q. (52:12) Think one or two names that would be especially where the Navy's going with the orienting and so –

A. Well, why don't you talk to CAPT HANSEN.

Q. (52:29) OK.

A. Because they work for him. See if he'll set aside some time for them. We're all a little bit busy right now trying to get the I War Briefs done, but theirs is mostly done now. So's mine, and they can probably spare an hour here and there to talk to you about what their insights are on the attack and what they think they may have learned from it.

Q. (53:00) OK. Would we be able to touch base with CAPT HANSEN at the same number we reached you at?

A. No, but if you call me at that number I can look up his number. Or, I keep bragging about having.

Q. (53:13) (laugh) Your list.

A. The list of redundancies. (sound of paper shuffling). Oh shit, wrong list.

Q. (53:35) It's good you carrying a couple of little money around now, so when if you have to evacuate you're, I'm starting to think about that too.

Q. (53:41) Oh, please I hope not.

A. Because I travel so much I always carry three or four thousand in my pocket in cash in hundreds. Wednesday morning I went to B of A here in Crystal City and drew out another five thousand and that was, kept it there, just.

Q. (54:01) Just in case, huh.

A. Well I figured and I still figure, you know, there'll be others.

Q. (54:08) Are you particularly wary about the Washington area, or do you think they're done with Washington for a while and they're going to.

A. Would you be?

Q. (54:13) Well I don't know. I, you know it's funny because I have a, well I'll tell you this after we get off the tape, but Karen do you have anything more.

Q. I don't, Thank you Mr. Yates.

A. You're welcome.

Transcribed by:
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