

Interview with Chief Gray, Captain Gibbs, and Chief Smith
February 3, 2006

Welch: This is an interview with Chief Jerome Dale Smith, Chief Randy Gray, and Captain Chuck Gibbs. It is taking place at the Arlington County Fire Department, Fire Station No. 1, on February 3, 2006. The interviewers are Nancy Berlage and Rebecca Welch.

Berlage: Could you give me some brief information about your rank on 9/11 and your general duties at the time?

Gibbs: I was fire battalion chief on B shift, assigned to North battalion. B shift was working that day, that's why I was at the Pentagon.

Gray: I am Randy Gray, battalion chief, I was with Chief Gibbs, detailed on C shift. That day half of the officers in our department were up at the Fairlington Elementary School Community Center for mandatory training with the county manager. We were in that class when the attack occurred. Everyone in that class was ordered to report back to their fire stations to prepare reserve apparatus for further attacks or other attempts going on in the county. After a short period of time at Fire Station One right here preparing reserve apparatus I was called down to the Pentagon to participate there.

Gibbs: At that time I was assigned to the training academy, in charge of recruit training. I was outside with the firefighters in training scavenging stuff for the training academy in the property yard. I saw the plane go across the county and thought that it didn't look right. I didn't think a lot of it, because it was near the airport, except for the speed of it and that it was very low. I turned around and saw a plume of smoke and immediately thought of the Pentagon. We went back to the training academy and got our protective gear and drove to the Pentagon.

Welch: Where is the training academy located?

Gibbs: At Walter Reed Drive and Arlington Mill, the Shirlington area. At the training academy I was assigned an area by Chief Schwartz.

Berlage: Did you all get to the Pentagon around the same time?

Gibbs: I probably was there first. When the actual call came out I was at the Arlington Hospital and heard it on a radio, not a fire radio but a radio or TV, that there had been an explosion at the Pentagon. I will never forget, the traffic was at a stop, I had to go the wrong way down Washington Boulevard to get there, even in an emergency vehicle. It was gridlocked already. When I got there Chief Schwartz, assistant operations chief, was already there, he was filling in for me so I could go to the hospital at the time. That's why he was there first. When I arrived, he was just getting out of his vehicle, it was overwhelming to him, and he told me to go to the Center Corridor.

Berlage: You went around to the Center Courtyard.

Welch: How did you get through there? How did you get in?

Gibbs: A&E Drive.

Welch: There was still transportation going in and out of A&E Drive?

Gibbs: This was at the very beginning, I don't know exactly, but everyone was still scavenging about, and there was a lot of smoke and everything.

Berlage: So you walked in rather than taking your vehicle?

Gibbs: I took my vehicle, the fire Suburban, and parked it at the hydrant, there in the courtyard. That's where it ended up for a couple of days.

Welch: I'm doing the medical side. By the time you got into the Center Courtyard, which became the major exit point for people able to get out, were you already finding injured people coming out?

Gibbs: Yes, I was there so early, most of the people weren't out, but on the way in I was passing some folks. There was a whole court of people everywhere. You could tell the ones who were obviously injured, but there are a lot of people at the Pentagon.

Welch: The courtyard was filling up with people right away?

Gibbs: Not really filling up, they were all exiting, trying to get away from the building. We were trying to get in and they were trying to get out. I never figured out how this occurred: Lt. Locke from DC unit had a Datsun Truck Four, and Chief Schwartz told him to go to the courtyard. I didn't have a lot of folks initially.

Berlage: Do you think the other folks were from Arlington?

Gibbs: It will come back to me.

Gray: We had Agent 3 in there pretty early.

Gibbs: That was later on.

Welch: You stayed in charge of the Center Courtyard?

Gibbs: Yes.

Welch: There is a lot of confusion in the story I'm trying to tell about the medical side in the Center Courtyard..

Gibbs: I've been in the Department 26 years now, and there are a lot of interesting things that happen in that Center Courtyard. It was like I was watching a movie and being part of it. There was a squadron of Marines, I think, and a colonel, I don't know the time period, that were all lined up to go in and try to get folks. I was there trying to get things organized and make sense of it. They were talking, and the next thing I knew they were in formation, marching in. I said, no, that's the last thing I need, more people in there. I ran around in front of them and told them

they couldn't go in there. The man was pretty good, he gave them a command and they just reversed and marched back out.

Welch: In drill formation?

Gibbs: Yes, it was like a movie, it was unbelievable.

Welch: Did they realize that you were in charge? I don't know if DoD understood the incident command system. Were you in charge?

Gibbs: Yes. It was different than what we were used to dealing with. We are very action oriented, and so are they. They are used to not waiting if there is something to be done. The great thing about it was that he gave me complete cooperation and said he would do whatever I needed, and he did. It could have been a problem.

Welch: So everyone acknowledged that you were the commander of the incident inside the Courtyard?

Gibbs: Yes. They were a great help. One of the initial things I remember about Lt. Locke, Truck 4, is that we were four, a three person truck and myself, and we were going down a hallway, in a lot of smoke and water, like a movie. They didn't have a radio. We split up to do a search pattern. We went a short way and I heard over my radio that all personnel had to get out of the building because there was another plane coming. I turned to leave and remembered the others had no radio. I had to run and get them and luckily the plane did not come. That was when I wondered how I got into that situation.

Welch: We understood that one problem on the medical side was that the people in the clinics did not have communication, so they were trying to call DPS and were in communication on the scene with you guys, but there was no way to communicate with the EMS services or the ambulances outside and north side. It was a real problem, particularly in the Courtyard and the

North side.

Gray: It wasn't a major problem on the impact site. That's where the critical region was.

Welch: My impression was that it was on the Courtyard side to the North side but not on the impact site.

Gibbs: I'm trying to understand what the problem was. The Courtyard, as far as the medical services being rendered, was more triage, sorting out what we had. Everything I requested that I needed, I received responses from my counterparts on the outside, who got me the assistance. I don't know what the problems were.

Berlage: So, on the inside you didn't have any problem with your radios communicating with the outside?

Gibbs: I could get through pretty well.

Berlage: When you said "they" had a problem, were you referring to the Washington people?

Welch: I know that the medical clinic staffs from within the Pentagon who were in the Courtyard did not have communication apparently, so they would bring people out for triage and they would disappear. Neither the fire department nor the medical staff could communicate with people on the North side.

Gray: That's correct. There was no radio communication between the Pentagon medical folks and the fire department, even on the outside. On the impact side it got under control pretty quickly, because of one individual.

Welch: Who was that?

Gibbs: There was a three-star general, I don't know his name, I think from the Air Force--

Welch: I'll bet it was the Surgeon General.

Gibbs: He was just super for us.

Gibbs: I was assigned by Chief Schwartz to check out what was happening on the impact site. I went up there before it collapsed. The general grabbed hold of me and asked what we needed. I told him and he was just super. All the medical people on the impact site were not needed there, I told him they needed to be back toward Washington Boulevard. They stood by there the entire time. It was not an issue at all. I never saw a victim come out of the building, from where I was.

Welch: They could not have gotten through there, could they?

Gibbs: Yes, they could have, through the Fifth Corridor.

Welch: Through Five and Six.

Gibbs: They could have gotten out of the impact site, that general area. No one came out while I was there.

Gibbs: We had a lot of victims come through the Courtyard, going down A&E. That was a constant flow. I remember a couple of people in particular, late into the operation by several hours. There was still a lot of smoke, and two ladies came out of the building on a golf court. They had obviously been sheltered somewhere else in the building and realized they could get out there. You could tell they had been in there, they had soot on them: they just appeared. It was weird.

Welch: After the evacuation and everything?

Gibbs: Yes, after a couple of evacuations, we did the evacuation thing two or three more times.

Welch: Which is what Nancy wants to figure out, how that worked. I only saw one or two injured people, period. They were treating some back behind the heliport, the pad. But I only saw one or two. There was no interference at all from the military on the impact site at any point. It was very good.

Welch: Nobody, as far as you know, from the Arlington County Fire was over on the North side? I have said that the fire departments worked from the Center Court and from the impact site, the SW of the building. So there was evacuation from the Center Court and up to the North, where we had a problem, because people didn't come--ambulances and EMS. So the fire department was not in fact over there.

Gibbs: Where is North exactly?

Welch: Over on the River side.

Gibbs: Over by Route 110, on the outside of the building? The Mall side?

Welch: The Mall and River side. If this doesn't ring a bell with you that means we are correct.

Gibbs: The three of us were not there.

Gibbs: We were pretty much either at the impact site or the Center Court. We didn't have any use to be over at the Mall side. That's what made the count of the injured difficult to do.

Welch: A&E Drive is our main access, so you would see a lot of our resources near A&E Drive to get to Center Court.

Berlage: There were resources also in South Parking also, weren't there?

Gibbs: Yes, that's the access to A&E Drive. There is no access from the Mall side.

Berlage: Were there volunteers lining up on the impact site, civilian and military, to go in behind you to rescue victims, like there were in the Center Courtyard?

Gibbs: After I was given the assignment by Chief Schwartz we knew a plane hit the building but didn't know the extent of it. We walked to the impact site and there was an engine there working the hand line from the exterior, four or five guys. It didn't initially look all that bad. It was confirmed by somebody from the Pentagon that they saw several people there near the doorway just to the left of the impact site. I got three or four folks from Fort Myer and Arlington Rescue

104 and we went in, wandered around the impact side on the inside, for no more than ten minutes. I decided it did not look good. We had to crawl over stuff, and hit stuff. I decided it was time for us to get out. I was the last one out and was about 30 feet from the building when the collapse occurred. That had been pointed out early on, the possible collapse, but it didn't register with me, we probably never should have been in there to begin with, but we were. The collapse was a very non-dramatic event. You could hear it snap and it just fell. Big plumes of smoke and dust came out and it was over. There were airplane parts; we walked back to the helipad and I set up what ended up being called the River Division. It was not on the River side, but that's what Chief Schwartz said it was. We started operating from that point. The military folks were lined up in a semicircle with their stretchers, medical bags, and all that, but there just were no victims there. The general came up and they moved everyone back. There were no issues with the military or anybody other than the fire department on the impact site, because of that general. He was very nice, plus he was good at getting people and resources to us as needed. He was very helpful.

Welch: What sorts of things would the military be able to supply the fire department? What kind of things were you asking for?

Gibbs: Initially I didn't ask for anything, I just needed fire people. We started attacking the fire and things were pretty chaotic for at least the first hour. Not a lot of control, but he kept everybody back and stood there at the ready.

Gibbs: It was controlled, but we had more things to deal with than we had personnel to deal with them. We were used to getting anything we needed, but there was such a large building, fire, area, large everything, that it felt it was out of control. Looking back, I think we were just getting the formation foundation for the incident command.

Welch: Do you all organizationally divide up by attacking a fire and also search and rescue, simultaneously, or did you ask the military to do the search and rescue?

Gibbs: Everything we do has a division or group category.

Welch: Would you be short of personnel?

Gibbs: You prioritize the most important thing at the time. Saving people is the first, and that's what we gear our actions to. The fire and whatever other emergencies come up as they come. Searching a building the size of the Pentagon is enormous, and we didn't know the total damage. There were certain areas we couldn't get to right away, which was not a comforting thing, either, because we are used to getting in and doing our process and going through. That was another piece of our "controlled chaos."

Gray: We are very systematic about how we approach things, we go through the process, going through the system, getting things up and eventually get around to everything. One of the things about the Lt. col. and the group of soldiers that he had was that they only had scarves over their faces, and were not well supplied. We knew if they went in we would have more casualties. But just like Capt. Gibbs said, the military in the Courtyard were excellent. Everything I asked for. We were there so long and were tired, thirsty, we had no provisions. I told the colonel we needed refreshments. I heard a banging and turned around and the guys were taking soda machines apart and got us drinks.

Berlage: So you didn't encounter resistance from the military about clearing out of the building?

Gibbs: When I saw those people marching, I was anticipating resistance. They are as hard to stop and we are, but they understood the uniform and the chain of command.

Welch: You didn't hear about bad experiences on the other side?

Gibbs: No, they stood by. The general stood by on the helipad where I was and where Chief Gray ended up being, and he was a great resource for us.

Gray: I can add to that. We needed maps and things, it was funny that our usual backups of Suburbans were that day switched over to another vehicle, and we only had some maps of the Pentagon. There were many people not from our jurisdiction that didn't understand the building's layout. We needed maps to be sure we were all on the same one. He had a reserve Suburban without any of our normal command modules, our maps and other things were all down at the yard. I told the three-star general and the next thing I knew we had maps on the sides of the trucks, and he was helping us with crowd control. I don't know what we would have done without those folks.

Berlage: We can check the interviews and find out his name.

Welch: The only Air Force person I know was the surgeon general and was in the Courtyard, so that would be a different one from the one you are talking about.

Gray: I would be interesting to talk to him.

Welch: Speaking of maps, I remember talking to the Pen Ren people who said they were scurrying around to find maps or other architectural plans. The plane went into the new renovated side, so whatever layouts there were, were not necessarily known to everyone. Were you able to get new drawings, or didn't it matter?

Gray: It didn't matter. That early on, all we needed was the general maps. Schwartz from his position in the South Parking looked up and saw the sign saying the River Entrance, that's why he named us the River Division. There were jurisdictions from all over Virginia, Washington, and Maryland, it was important to have a very general layout so we would at least have somewhat of a guideline.

Welch: We interviewed Chris Coombs, the only FBI agent we talked to. He indicated that something like 98 percent of fire departments in the U.S. now operate under the incident command system. That means, I presume, that you get all these fire elements from all over from other jurisdictions, they automatically understand, so the military just took orders, but the fire departments automatically know how it works, right?

Gibbs: The military has basically the same thing. We call it an incident command system, or incident management system, but theirs is a strict chain of command, so they do the same thing. Once the Lt. Col said something to the others, they fell in line, with no issues. It was very surprising and very good.

Welch: Do you remember if anyone on that side asked for the Old Guard, the Honor Guard. They did a lot of unpleasant business.

Gray: That wasn't the first day, I wasn't involved with that.

Gibbs: I remember a bit early on they were trying to get a perimeter, because they were trying to keep it a secure facility, and protect it from further attacks. It was a fairly large perimeter around the impact site. The guys were getting a lot of smoke and I told them to fall back. If you tell the military to stand by a certain entrance he will stand there until he drops. I told them to move their perimeter back until we could get it under control. In the after action report you can see that we tried during the first days to get a better perimeter, but if you had a tee shirt with fire department on it or EMS you could get through anywhere into the building. We realized that it would never happen to us. We establish a hard perimeter in a formal staging area and bring people in through that kind of system. If it happened again in this county, we would do much better.

Welch: You mean you would station fire people--

Gray: Remote from the incident.

Gibbs: For example, we might bring them in here to TJ, but not close. It would be blocks away.

All these resources from all over the area, including state and federal, would come to this staging area to check in.

Gray: One entry point.

Gibbs: Someplace where we could handle it, then they would be grouped up and brought to the scene as requested.

Welch: As opposed to everybody just showing up.

Gibbs: One unit at a time all over the place. We as quickly as possible got a fence up and went to passes, arm bands, and other things to try to make sure we had a secure scene. If it happened today I know we would be a lot more aggressive in the early stages of getting a formal staging area and getting people under much more control when they checked in. We are learning the way the terrorist are attacking is to disguise themselves as firefighters or have bombs in their vehicles, things we read about around the world. We have to do a better job in the future to make sure we have better team control. It will still be out of control the first two or three hours, I don't care what you do, if you have an event of that magnitude you are not to get but so much perimeter. But we finally got control of it maybe the third or fourth day; I think that you could expect that now the first day we would probably have a fairly secure perimeter and entry control.

Welch: You never know where an event is going to take place, so it's hard to set it up in advance.

Gibbs: There are things that occurred that we didn't think of. Speaking about scene control, there were so many people at the Pentagon to start with, they meshed with the response personnel coming in. There was a volunteer with me from PG, who worked at the Pentagon.

There were so many people, there's no way in reality that we could control that. One thing that was occurring was when we went in we were told to get out about three times. We felt very helpless. We were trying to do our job, but people are attacking us while we are trying to do our job. I had no idea what was going on outside. At midnight or 1:00 I went outside and saw another world. I knew stuff was happening, but to see it is a different story. When they kept telling us to get out I was wondering where the military were, but when I heard the fighter jets over the Pentagon I felt good. But then I thought, they are serious, and it scared the daylights out of me, because when they shoot at something--I thought of my kids in Arlington.

Berlage: Did you actually evacuate from the Courtyard during those inbound plane warnings? We evacuated into the Courtyard, so we thought maybe they wouldn't hit the same section, but we didn't know what would be hit the next time.

Welch: I thought it threw everyone out of the building, including the Courtyard.

Gray: There was no place for us to run.

Gibbs: It was the same on the roof. When we finally got up to the roof.--where are you going to go? So they determined they would watch and run like heck to the other side of the building.

Welch: I thought everybody left including the Courtyard.

Gray: The heliport side evacuated to the other side of Washington Boulevard.

Berlage: Do you remember how many times you did that?

Gray: At least three times, in the first three or four hours.

Berlage: Did that include pulling back for the collapse?

Gibbs: No, it was said over the radio that a plane was coming.

Gray: The collapse occurred within 30 minutes after impact.

Berlage: So that was before the inbound planes.

Gibbs: Long before, I think the first two were for planes they couldn't identify, and the third and fourth time were bomb scares, if I remember correctly. That's when we thought about the perimeter, because anybody could walk up with anything and drop any kind of bomb.

Berlage: Were those all together in the morning?

Gibbs: The first two were back to back. It was "everybody out," "all clear," and everybody went back. After no more than 15 or 20 minutes everybody had to go out again.

Gibbs: I didn't get the bomb scare. I remember the plane warnings, I never had felt that helpless. About the bomb scare, I didn't know it was a plane that hit the building. I heard the explosion and didn't know it was a plane until we were going down the hallway and saw it.

Welch: They did in fact evacuate injured people out of the Courtyard. When Chief Schwartz called for a full scale evacuation out of the building, around 10:15 or thereabouts, you did not leave, but stayed inside?

Gibbs: The people in the Courtyard did not leave, there was no place to go.

Gibbs: When you go down A&E Drive, you are almost going back into the building. I would feel safer out there.

Welch: They maintain they took out injured people on golf carts.

Gibbs: That's what we were doing, not because of the evacuation, but getting the injured out anyhow.

Welch: That didn't change the pattern?

Gibbs: You have so many minutes to get out, and calculating how long it took me to get in, I knew I couldn't get out in time.

Welch: We thought they would pack up their stuff and the injured and head out North away from the impact site.

Gibbs: The injured people, yes, but the operating fire people no.

Welch: You are saying the injured people were taken out routinely, but not an additional packing up and leaving.

Gibbs: When that comes across the radio, you take any safe area that you can. With all the equipment, personnel, and people there was no way we could get out.

Welch: Do you remember what route they took?

Gibbs: The A&E Drive was the exit.

Welch: They didn't go back through the other corridors on the north side, back into the building from the middle and out the other side?

Gibbs: It was between 7 and 1.

Gray: The impact was at 4 and 5, 4 to your left and 5 to your right.

Gibbs: Five was almost where the thing was, it would have been 7 and 1.

Gibbs: You have A&E, the fire, and next was 6 and 7. People were coming through there.

Gibbs: Which would have been the north side. We didn't have any units over there.

Welch: People went out that way?

Gray: We can assume they did.

Gibbs: There were cars over there, but our focus was A&E. As far as the other entrances and exits, I wasn't as familiar with them as I was with A&E.

Gibbs: The Pentagon medical folks would not be in radio contact with us anyhow, they are not normally. If someone's calling me on my radio, it's a fire department person. They never had our radios to communicate. They would have had to find fire department personnel and work through the incident command system. That's the way the command system is set up.

Welch: They were trying to work through the Pentagon system and that wasn't functioning.

Gibbs: Exactly. And possibly the Pentagon police.

Welch: They would work with the Pentagon police or protective services, they were trying to do that, but they just didn't have communications.

Gibbs: Right, they were all focused trying to communicate with us. I think that was one thing that came up, how we could have better communication--with the Tri-Care Lorenzo Clinic. The trouble with that is that the folks down there are transitory; we get a system set up and they are transferred somewhere else. We were constantly going through that.

Welch: But like you they had exercises, had done some mass casualty exercises, too, but they may not be coordinating with yours.

Gibbs: You can have exercises, but your entry point or final point is through a certain segment, and if you don't coordinate through there all your drilling won't make any difference.

Gray: We have large scale annual exercise events with them at the Pentagon and it's always the same thing. They are physically on a side of the building that we can't get into, basically. We always use A&E as our entry point, and they are over by 7-10, physically on the other side of the building. In future I think we will see a formal mobile home-like command post thing and will actually get reps to that. We can start working better. You have to have a command post for the FBI, Mr. Jester, the building people, etc., because they all have to get a rep to that command post. We can't give them all radios, it won't do any good. Too many people talking at once is not the answer. You need to get reps to a formal command post and pass information face to face.

Gibbs: One of the things I was alluding to, now in 2006, I believe that everyone that was in the Pentagon in 2001 is now gone. With a constant turnover it's hard to get a system down when you always have new people coming through.

Berlage: Were there any radio communication problems with the other fire stations or fire departments that were there?

Gray: One of the first things I did when I got there was to get the signs up and put everyone together with their department and they stayed on their radio channels. They knew what the command channels were and could either send runners, which we put with them, or call for updates. In Northern Virginia they could switch over to us, but we found that there were a lot of things going on and they had more freedom to talk on their own phone. It's more difficult being scattered out on different radio channels, but everyone can't talk at once on one radio channel. When we have a small fire you can hardly get on to the radio, so you can imagine it in an incident of that magnitude. I read after action reports that said we couldn't communicate, but we couldn't have radios and all talk on the same channel. It's better to for everyone to have their own radio, and move to one central command channel when they have to give situation reports.

Welch: We can't even talk in our own building, so we understand.

Gray: That's how we overcame a lot of those things.

Gibbs: What Chief Gray did about posting people by jurisdiction was great, it did allow us to overcome some communications issues. Speaking to what you were talking about initially, I was with Truck 4, and they did not have the radio frequency. So when I realized I had to get out of the building I realized that they didn't know what was going on and I couldn't leave them like that. It would have been good if they had heard the radio so we could have all run out together.

Gray: But it didn't have a major impact on operations, at least on the heliport side.

Gibbs: It's better when everybody knows what is going on, whether you are talking or listening to it. When there is an evacuation, everybody needs to be able to hear that.

Gray: We realized that the military didn't have our radios; all the different agencies had gotten it quickly, so we put up airborne blows on our fire trucks and posted signs all over the Pentagon. It is a traditional thing from the days when there were no radios--if you heard the three air horn blows you knew to evacuate the structure.

Welch: You didn't do that at first?

Gray: We did that the second or third days. As a department we had to overcome the fact that Pentagon personnel did not all have our emergency radios.

Berlage: You had different departments that you were directing, how did you pass on directions about what different people should be doing?

Gray: On the Heliport side we did face to face.

Berlage: You would have spoken to an officer from another department?

Gibbs: It was usually a chief officer, either me or Chief Gray, face to face, whoever was in charge of that group. Specifics on what to do, how long they were to stay, who they were replacing, and get a written name of everyone in their group.

Gibbs: We have an accountability system, for routine events we make sure we have passports on their helmets and names. Some didn't have them so we wrote them on pieces of paper. That is standard procedure.

Gibbs: I forgot the time frame, but after working 20 or 30 minutes we would tell the next group who they were relieving, where they were, and what the objectives were. That's how things worked on the first day on the Heliport side. It worked pretty well.

Berlage: Did different departments stay in their own groups, or were they integrated?

Gibbs: Basically within themselves.

Gray: Initially we were integrated but as we got more organized we broke it up.

Gibbs: I was in school, and went back to get my uniform. I didn't realize it was a terrorist attack: When I crossed the bridge I saw the smoke and the plane gone down, I assumed it had happened before. You expect when there is an airport in your jurisdiction something will go wrong, just like it did with Air Florida. I did notice that during the class a couple of chief officers kept getting up and walking out of the class and thought it disrespectful. They had gotten pages that there was an attack in New York. They said there was a plane wreck in the Pentagon and everyone was called back to their station. I went out and got in my truck, drove over, parked and got dressed. I was probably here for ten minutes before I realized it was a terrorist attack.

Welch: Did you have training that differentiated between a terrorist attack and a plane accidentally crashing into the Pentagon?

Gray: We've had terrorism training since Chief Logger.

Gibbs: He was ahead of the curve on that.

Welch: What kinds of things would be different in terms of how you would ramp up for a terrorist attack versus a plane crash?

Gray: We have different teams that are concerned if there are chemicals or biological events or all the different types of weapons of mass destruction. We have an SOP on that and there's been a lot of training. We carry a lot of men.

Gibbs: Biological or chemical monitoring would be implemented immediately, now; not then, but since.

Gibbs: There's potentially a difference. Just like in Atlanta, we call them secondary bombs, the potential of additional bombs to try to injure us, so there are more precautions we would take.

You go to a different mind set, that this was done on purpose to hurt folks rather than something that happened by accident.

Welch: So you take into account what the military calls force protection, you knew that somebody could come in after you.

Gibbs: If we had been in that mind set, we definitively would have done a better job on the perimeter. Who are we dealing with? It could have been anybody. Usually no one can get into the Pentagon. At that time, anybody could have gone in. I could have been talking to a Lt. Col. who was really someone else in a uniform.

Welch: Did you do any monitoring for chemical or biological on the scene?

Gibbs: Chief Parks (?) did, we had the National Medical Response Authority team, they started right away. That was his first assignment before he started helping us. He did that first, there are only four of those teams in the United States, and one is in the Washington Metropolitan Area. They were dispatched right away.

Welch: Who was that?

Gibbs: They do more of weapons of mass destruction-type stuff.

Welch: Who do they work for?

Gray: The Department of Health and Human Services.

Gibbs: All the fire department in the call up region are on the team. So they were dispatched early on. Most of the vehicles at the time were stored in Arlington County. One of their first assignments was to take as many air samples as possible.

Berlage: Talk about the fire suppression operations, what you were all doing in the courtyard and over on the impact site. How long did it take to extinguish those exterior fires over on the Heliport side?

Gibbs: Initially the Fort Myer fire engine was there, we used the wagon pipe off of it and the airport foam tender was there very early. I had them direct their stream into the impact collapse site. The construction materials and oil drums that were burning, that was all black smoke. That wasn't really a priority. At some point I had them direct a stream over that to keep it under control. The foam tender from the airport--once they got a water supply established I had them play their water to the impact site, not foam. There was no need to use foam, because it was a building on fire. They controlled the fire on the impact site from the exterior, but it was burning down towards Corridor 4-5.

Berlage: Did you go inside to do fire suppression right away, or did you have to get that outside area?

Gray: After I came out and set up a command, I had the firefighters take the lines in through Corridor 5, which is one to the left. We knew it would be a long stretch, advancing the hose, so everybody was aware that it would take a long time. I explained that if they had to crawl over and under a lot of debris, to not go and to let me know. There was no need to go, at that point we assumed everyone was out and that we were dealing with a vacant building. That was maintained that afternoon. Then DC came in with a bit of a different factor.

Berlage: What do you mean by DC having a different factor?

Gray: They came in and started their operation without conferring with anyone from Arlington County on the impact site. They came in with their own chief and started doing their own thing. I knew the first battalion chief there, so that ended up working out, Chief John Thingman (?). They ended up working well on the impact site. They operated their ICS system independent of the Pentagon or fire department ICS. That's not the way it's supposed to work, but it worked the first day. After that some things took place. I knew Chief . I would talk to him and he with

me. Later that afternoon another chief came to where we were, and things worked pretty well.

Initially it was kind of rough.

Welch: Did you argue with each other

Gray: No, we discussed things. Their units and the Northern Virginia units worked pretty well side by side.

Welch: They didn't take orders from you?

Gray: They did, once we laid out the strategy of what we were going to do.

Gibbs: Our officers through their chief officers. Later on, things took place, but the first day they ended up coming on board.

Gibbs: When I was coming down Washington Boulevard I saw a lot of chaos. We usually are very clear where our command post is. There was a lot of movement and a lot of people. I saw so many different things and wondered where our chief and command center was. Somebody told me he was way over in South Parking underneath the bridge. We grabbed ice and water on the way down and left it on the side of the Boulevard for somebody to get. I went to the command post and Jim was trying to figure out who and what was on the scene and what they were doing. There was some concern about one commander who had just gotten back from cancer surgery. He had been inside doing some initial search. After getting my assignment to give him a break I couldn't find any of our rigs, or the command post.

Gibbs: We were operating out of the buggy from Fort Myer.

Welch: I thought Chief Schwartz had his--

Gibbs: He was way down in South Parking, underneath the bridge. I remember when I got my assignment I looked up and there were guys with guns all around. I felt that they had my back and I could concentrate on my job. That stood out in my mind. I found Chuck, they were trying

to get some rehabs, fluids, and such. I finally found Bobby and he was pretty beat up. I told him to take a break. I got a vest to identify me and got the general to move the people back from the perimeter again. Chuck called all the officers in and we had signs on the top of the rig. The fire was clearly moving from Corridor 4 to Corridor 5. We had had training in the renovated area so I had a feel as to what was going on in there. We still had water flow and we took advantage of the evacuation, I took a quick accountability and saw that DC had the most units there. We took it one floor at a time, right to left. We assigned the DC guys to the C Ring to push the fire back towards the plane. The Northern Virginia assets we assigned to the D and E Ring. We were going to spot the fire in the 5th Corridor and push it back to the plane. We were trying to keep the fire from going from the C Ring into the B Ring, because on the 2nd Floor and above there were walkways. I asked Bobby to stay with the DC chief to make sure things were progressing as we hoped they would. It was a matter then of setting up an entry control with Capt Young and make sure that we could account for everybody going into the structure and that the attack was coordinated. When we felt we had the first floor under control, we could see it burning on the second and third floors. It would burn out room by room. We didn't want people scattered over all the floors, it was too dangerous. Once we had the wires in place and felt we had cut the fire off pretty good, we had chief officers in charge of each ring and we started moving to each floor and trying to get in front of the fire.

Berlage: They are going inside with those hand monitors.

Gibbs: Yes, they were up to 400-500 feet long, they had to be made up. The standpipe systems which we would normally use were all ruptured and there was no pressure. Dale was on the inside doing the same sort of thing. By late in the day it was pretty much under control.

Gray: I would say by around 1400 it was under control, but not out, by far.

Gibbs: The roof now was burning like a big dog.

Welch: The roof was a problem, wasn't it?

Gibbs: That's a whole other story.

Gibbs: Cat Snyder went up there and reported the conditions on the roof. A clear decision was made at the command staff level that at that point if the entire roof burned off the Pentagon we wouldn't lose anything, because we knew there was a concrete roof there. We wanted to try and coordinate a search for people in safe havens, just in case someone might have survived in some office somewhere, or like the lady that came out on the golf cart.

Gibbs: Any time I talk about this in the Pentagon, Chief Gray's and Capt. Gibbs's world was completely different from mine.

Welch: Like you were at different fires.

Gibbs: It was a different world.

Gray: The size of the building is a major factor in that.

Gibbs: They had more fire. I remember that the plane ended where we were starting. When we connected to the stand pipe there was no pressure, the plane had taken them out. We were a little fire and searching at the same time. I'll never forget, the water was up to my knees, that's when I discovered somebody's legs. I expected some of it, but as we started to search we found more and more bodies, pieces of everything. Another thing that occurred to me was that I didn't know what to look for, I didn't even know it was a plane at first.

Welch: There was no one from the FBI with you inside, was there?

Gibbs: There was nobody; Truck 4, Lt. Duck, and that was it.

Welch: That was Alexandria, did you say?

Gibbs: DC. There were some other people working with DC, that Capt. Gibbs ran into. Truck 4 was very helpful, we just had more than we could deal with. I was on the radio with Chief Schwartz, saying I needed people, and he said he needed people, too and would give me some as soon as he could get them. The reason why they went under the bridge because they were evacuated there after the first plane alert. Initially he was right the corner of South Parking, Corridor 4. It was midnight when I got out of there, the longest day of my life. When I saw all that stuff outside, it was unbelievable.

Welch: On the search and rescue medical side, they had more people than they had casualties. From your point of view, you had far too few assets than jobs to do. There was a real disconnect about where the problems lay in the whole scenario.

Gibbs: Chuck and myself, we were trying to find out the extent of what we had. Part of one floor had collapsed, and we had to pull back; you never know what will fall next.

Berlage: So, was it a while before you actually started fire suppression ?

Gibbs: We started right way, we did the water and kept going.

Berlage: Were you working with any of the building maintenance people to turn off the electricity, or fans for the smoke, or anything like that?

Gibbs: At first, there was nobody but Truck 4 and myself, everybody else was running out.

Gray: Somewhere around 3:00 or 4:00 the maintenance people did turn off the water in Corridor 4 and the power. There was a major water leak in Corridor 4 also. Somebody from the Pentagon had turned that off, somebody in a brown suit, one of the building guys. Those kinds of decisions had been made by ; our job was clearly--actually, I didn't realize what my job was until I read the after-action report. I said, "so that's what I was doing," because it was clearly just a matter of keeping it going. Chuck continued to do what he does in Virginia, and I

just a buffer. I felt like I was at an ATM machine, the three-star general had them lined up and when they saw the blue vest, every organization or person wanted to talk to the guy in the blue vest. I wasn't the incident commander, and thought I could identify myself as a group leader.

Gibbs: Most people there thought the heliport was the incident command post, including the fire people.

Gray: I had an incident commander's vest, not a division or group vest. That was the only one we could find, because our rig with all our vests was somewhere else.

Gibbs: We ended up interacting with a lot of other people. The three-star general had them lined up and they would walk up and introduce themselves and tell what they were there for. I would send them off to do things.

Gibbs: I saw a picture of me early on talking to Rumsfeld, and I have no recollection of it.

Welch: Even his own people didn't know where he was at the time. Do you know where that picture is? Do you have photos?

Gibbs: I have no idea.

Gibbs: I have some more comments about the roof, because I think it's really important. The core decision was made that the roof was not worth the risk of anyone being lost trying to save it. They didn't tell us the entire truth about what might burn. The fire was burning underneath the shingles. Finally somebody came out from the command and control in the Pentagon and told us that if we didn't stop the roof fire, and he drew two lines on the map where it had to be stopped, the terrorists would win. The fire was moving over toward the River side over Corridor 5 toward Corridor 6. We had a lackadaisical approach before, because we were methodically just going forward. It was very dangerous for us to work on the roof, there were no flat areas, if we slipped and fell, we would get killed. So we were trying to do it as safely as possible. When they told us

that Corridors 5, 6, and 7 were already filling up with smoke, and then the fire would burn thought he command and control pipes, or the major antenna and communications equipment that was on the roof, it changed the whole ball game. We had been holding back a bit because everyone was convinced there were more attacks coming, and we didn't think we had to use all our resources on the roof at that point.

Gray: The way we operate, normally, just from the critical aspect of the job, when you go out, hour after hour you get tired. We had no idea what time of day it was when we were relieved around 4:00, we just knew it had gotten dark.

Gibbs: Time goes fast for us. Within the first hour, a military officer on the heliport side said they needed help in the command center, and we needed to go. We knew a bit about the Pentagon, and we knew that the command center was where everything happened. We put a group together of about 15 firefighters, with air bottles, and stuff to keep it up and running. We got there and there was just smoke. Someone had just panicked and didn't know what was going on around the building.

Welch: In fact, that's where the senior executives were, except for the deputy, who was forced to leave.

Gray: It ended up being a minor smoke problem and an odor, but there was never a threat, and they were never compromised.

Berlage: Did they talk to you about turning on or off the air handlers?

Gray: No, they would have done that before.

Gibbs: There were discussions about air handling. I don't remember the particulars, but it was because of the smoke in the nerve center. I wasn't handling it, but I heard it on the radio. That was an out of the blue thing.

Welch: The secretary was going to abandon the Pentagon. That was a critical thing, that the U.S. government was not going to hi-tail it. There was a factor here that was beyond any of our individual jobs. Decisions were being made on how we presented ourselves to the world.

Gray: It was not an issue, but it was checked out, confirmed OK, and I don't think it was addressed later on.

Berlage: There were reports that you were the one who called the warning before the building collapsed.

Gibbs: No, that was a captain, a safety officer in the Air Force. Lasher, it was. As I was walking up to the impact site he identified over the air, and it got put out as a general announcement, that there was a crack in the building. It was pretty wide, four or five inches. It didn't register what it could have resulted in, but he is the one who identified that. The collapse occurred after we came out of the impact site.

Berlage: As division commanders, did you have responsibility to do whatever you needed to do without getting permission each time from Chief Schwartz?

Gray: It was funny, we hardly ever heard from him. I felt like we were by ourselves out there. Groups of firefighters would come up, some with breathing apparatus and some without. Chuck and I would talk briefly. We could not send the ones without them, and Dale couldn't send the military men into the building without them, so those kind of guys we would send to the roof. It was a real problem for us. We were using more air and needed more masks than we had. We had air units there trying to fill them, but that wasn't keeping up with demand. We have now corrected that, the government has helped us with grants and stuff and the region is much better than we've ever been. When guys were coming out, exhausted, someone would be standing at

the entrance to take their mask, get air, and get another group together to go back in. Even DC ran out of air at one point.

Gibbs: Throughout the course of the day, and earlier in the day, I was requesting units, and I knew he wasn't able to send me everything, he sent me what he had. They had priorities out there that I wasn't even aware of. He sent me a large group of firefighters from some other jurisdiction. I thought "great," because we were stretched and we hadn't searched everything. We would send these folks to the roof. I told the officer in charge what I needed them to do. They looked at me and asked "where do we get masks?"

Gray: In Arlington and Alexandria, every person is issued a facepiece, a mask. A lot of places don't have them, they had Survive-Air at that time, but it wasn't compatible at that time. A lot of places don't do that. The SCBA is on the fire truck and the mask is on the SCBA. That's what a lot of places still do. Here, everybody is issued their own. Alexandria was on a different breathing apparatus at that time, they are now compatible with us. That was one reason for that.

Gibbs: Major obstacles were demands for air, masks, hand lights, which were going dead because we couldn't charge them up quick enough, portable radios, these things really hampered our ability to do long-term firefighting.

Gibbs: I was familiar with A&E Drive because that was the way we would come in. You have to lower the windshield to get under the tunnel. That was a major problem gaining access to the roof--water. I had two Fairfax's Squirts, describe that, Chuck.

Gibbs: The squirt is the articulating boom on a pumper on a fire truck.

Gibbs: It was low enough to fit under, but didn't give the reach that we needed. I had a couple of them. I knew Fairfax had them, but I had never seen them. So where they were stationed they had to be real quiet. The firefighters with no breathing apparatus tried to get some off the

squirts. That was a major conflict, I had to referee. When things happen we learn a lot of things that we did differently. Hopefully I'll never need to use them again on anything like the Pentagon.

Gibbs: We all remember going into the Pentagon, dropping the windshield down, you duck down, and drive in. I was sitting there and we were having the problems with the roof and such, and it occurred to me that if we cut the roof off of our cabs, we could get our trucks inside. In fact, Alexandria had one. The only time I'd ever seen them. I grabbed the guy and said if we cut the roof off we could put the truck on the inside where we need help. He didn't even break stride, just said "do it" and walked away. Chief Flogger, third to Billie Thomas. It was the second day. I told Billie, cut the roof off, so they took the time to unbolt the doors off at first to keep from cutting them. One of our squads came back down, got their saws out, and cut it off, and I remember sitting there and watching it go down Washington Boulevard and back up around the side to get in without the top on it.

Gray: It was funny to see it going down the road with the top cut off.

Gibbs: All of my inner court discussion is first day, I didn't go back after that. I was in the command post outside where the rest of the world was, I had had enough of that beforehand.

Gibbs: As they talked, some things came back to me. Like with my Suburban, after a few days, where was it? They said it was in the inner corridor, like it had flowers planted in it or something. The battery was dead the doors gone, it looked like someone had trashed it. Actually, it had been trashed. Actually, it had been trashed. Like the soda machines.

Welch: Why was it destroyed, for what reason?

Gray: Everybody had trying to find stuff.

Welch: People cannibalized it

Gibbs: They were trying to find stuff, it wasn't inappropriate, it was just what they needed.

They vandalized the soda machines, that was all. Again, it was great. I don't know where they got the food, this was on the first day--they found grills, and they were cooking. So they fed us. I think the Lt. Col. was a lot of help, I would like to thank him.

Welch: I have some minor points. You mentioned the blue vests. We heard that the medical people had learned from their last exercises to put on vests, not so much for protection, but identification. So for the first time they put on reflective blue vests. And you mentioned wearing blue vests, could everyone tell the difference, between you?

Gray: There was only one blue vest, on the fire service side, ICS.

Welch: Only one guy at the fire wore a blue vest?

Gibbs: Yes, it has stripes and stuff on it.

Welch: Was it blue with stripes?

Gibbs: Outside of the fire service, blue is an identifying color for medical. The fire service has had blue vests for 20 some years.

Welch: So you were not mistaken for one another?

Gray: Earlier, if they were not working within the ICS system, it would be causing confusion, because as they set up the triage and different aid areas, if I saw someone with a vest on I would think that we set it up and they were authorized, which they wouldn't have been..

Welch: They were in the Center Court with blue vests on because they had discovered that they were unidentifiable as medics unless they had some designation as such. Probably outside, too, on the incident side. So now, if they are in an emergency situation they will grab the blue vests.

Gibbs: They weren't close to us.

Gibbs: That never happened on the outside.

Gibbs: We were so close to the smoke and fire, that's not where the medical would be.

Welch: So they were more successful in moving their operation out as you told them to do.

Gibbs: They had room, that's a major factor.

Gibbs: In the Center Court , like a lot of places, there were a lot of walking wounded. They were directed which way to go. There weren't a lot of folks that we actually had to carry out. Some would get to the door, maybe that's the group you are talking about. They had brown uniforms.

Welch: There was a handful from the Tri-Care Clinic. They ran out, because they didn't know anything about it until people started coming into the Clinic and they realized there was a problem.

Cliff: I know there was a lot more stuff there that I missed than I saw, there was too much to take in.

Welch: They said they brought body bags into the Center Court. I think that was the second day. Also the FBI said they were going to set up a temporary morgue.

Gibbs: Our guys know that if there are DOAs, we don't touch them. We have enforced that over and over again.

Gray: From the Arlington folks, I never got a report of anybody from the fire department helping anyone out of the building. Engine 107, when a lady came out after the collapse, crawled out on her own, they assisted her. Nobody brought anybody out on the impact site.

Gibbs: On the Inner Court, a lot of people self-evacuated. After the collapse two people came out, a man and a woman; and they brought out another man who was very sooty, I was wondering where he had been. I saw him on TV. He was really hurt.

Welch: You guys were truly looking at the fire, because there were a lot of military in the building and they went back in and brought people out, usually to the Inner Court.

According to Arlington County reports, three people were medivaced out, and the Park Police helicopters came in and in one case took two people out. A man said there were three people total who were air evacuated out of the Pentagon site. Do you have any idea who it was?

Gibbs: I saw the helicopters, but Chief White and Bobby came with me and they were overseeing the medical part. They would have been the ones who focused on that.

Berlage: In previous incidents at the Pentagon, was it normal to set up the incident command post in the Center Courtyard? We had someone say that.

Gray: We set it up where we need it.

Gibbs: Prior to that time it would be set up where needed on a call. As opposed to now. Now we try to go to the Center Court. Prior to 9/11, it was wherever near to A&E.

Berlage: were any of you aware that Rumsfeld was still in the building with the other leaders, and was that a problem?

Gibbs: It was a problem for me if anybody was in the building. Who they were made no difference to me. If you're in the building, you're in the building. There was no evacuation by the fire department on the impact side.

Gray: We've had a lot of multi-alarm fires in the building, and we don't evacuate the building. We evacuate that ring, section, or whatever, because business goes on in that building. I've been to two-alarm fires where you don't see anything, we just went to the area where smoke is being impacted, and the rest of the building was business as normal.

Gibbs: The building's so big. Even on 9/11 some people on the River side didn't even know it.

Gray: One funny part that hit me, talking about unusual radio traffic was that things we would have considered a two-alarm fire in the past, a room or office, now was a whole different ball game, with the magnitude of the event.

Welch: You all had never really set up a scenario for a major attack of some sort, say a bomb? People have talked about the possibility if a plane crash because of the nature of the flight path.

Gibbs: We practiced mass casualties, but at the Pentagon, the numbers weren't there.

Welch: Had you practiced this for the Pentagon?

Gibbs: We had just had a drill before the incident for some reason, maybe because of the new structure. I've been on 20-some years, and I've always tried, but couldn't learn the Pentagon. That one day, I learned all about the rings, and sections, etc. I remember when the fire was burning across the upper floors, right to left, and the Alexandria captain saying we needed to break the windows and get the hose lines in there, and we said we couldn't break the windows out, because they had been replaced by big inch and 1/2 windows. He thought he could, so I said go ahead, I don't have time to argue. He wanted to take his engine crew in. It was worse than beating against a brick wall. They tried everything but driving a truck in there.

Welch: The new windows?

Gibbs: Yes. Another thing, Nextel, my cell phone, it never worked. But during that day, it worked great.

Gibbs: The Department has Nextels for all our companies, because that day all the phone lines were clogged, the only thing we could communicate with were the Nextel phones. We now have Nextels in every rig.

Welch: So your cell phones were working that day?

Gibbs: Part of it. My sister, working at the Pentagon, saw me going in and called my mother, crying. I didn't know she saw me. My mother called me on my cell phone. I called my wife.

Gibbs: An important thing to put in for the fire department is that there were no serious injuries to any fire personnel during the entire event at the Pentagon. And that the ICS system worked well during the Pentagon incident, from beginning to end. There were only a few minor injuries and no serious injuries. The ICS system works well if it's started up early and maintained.

Another comment is that at one point on the first day we had too many fire people on the impact site waiting to be deployed into the building. It's feast or famine.

Gray: The first several hours we didn't have enough people, and then more came and we had too many. We couldn't provide enough apparatus to move them in, anyway. Chuck picked up on that got back to Chief Schwartz to stop it. If we had had enough equipment we could have used them. This region is just now accepting delivery of 8 air units that every jurisdiction is receiving, due to grants, clearly because on 9/11 it was clear that we didn't have enough. Now we have lots of air masks plus quicker refilling capabilities. A thousand radios are in, and a lot of things have come to the region to help us be better prepared for the future.

Gibbs: The Northern Virginia jurisdictions were very well integrated at that time, anyway, but they are better now. Also Maryland and DC were better integrated. We put together the ITT, incident management teams, and we realized that none of us, even Fairfax, have enough command officers to sustain operations for days. We were wasting taxpayer dollars, so it was determined to put together a management team in the call region and train 40 or 50 of us on a much higher level of management of large scale events. We have been deployed to New Orleans, To Mississippi, and Florida some times to assist with some of those events. The process, again, was not that this team would take over any incident, but we would come in and

stand behind the incident commander, take notes, help him develop the FEMA forms required, do the incident objectives, the com plans, the med plans; we can also work on the incident, but know that behind us we had a big 40 or 50 person management coming in to help.

Welch: Making sure you don't forget to do so and so.

Gibbs: Yes, and then go back to the office, draft it up, and show it to the chief. As resources come in you hand them a written plan. Here's who the incident commander is, this is how you get hold of him, this is who you are working for in his group, division, or team; this is what radio traffic; if you have an evacuation this is what you should do and where you should go; a med plan--if somebody has a heart attack; so we in the fire service have gone to another level. This team was the first regional team done in the U.S.

Welch: That's interesting, because you hear that if there is another attack they might not do the Pentagon again, they could go anywhere and do anything. We are saying this will be a model which we can deploy, the expertise throughout the country--the fire department is becoming a center for that kind of terrorist.

Gibbs: It's all response services.

Gibbs: Because of 9/11, it might be a volunteer from some little country place, but somebody will be there, there is no question about that.

Gibbs: Fire departments come if you call. As opposed to the police, some incidents they don't respond to.

Gray: Most departments operate with a true minimum staff, the police are very flexible with their staff.

Welch: Is there anything that we have missed, on factual matters, that Arlington County After Action Report found, that we ought to know?

Gibbs: It's a minor thing, probably something that didn't apply to either side. We quickly went back to the traditional names for the building. Side A of the building is the fire front; side B the left; C the rear; and D the side. I remember reading where they got that messed up, but that was just a mistake in typing.

Gray: Actually, that report is pretty accurate. You can always nit-pick something. It was pretty much on target. Also, at that time there was an article in the fire magazine that is pretty factual.

Welch: You figure they captured the events.

Gibbs: It's pretty much right on target.

Gray: Also, at that time there was a firefighting article in the fire magazine that was pretty factual.

Gibbs: They just showed a tape of it.

Gray: At company officer's school.

Gibbs: For some reason, it drains me.

Welch: It does a lot of us.

Gray: We are pretty much done with it. I'm surprised we are doing this. I've never been involved in anything except the after action report.

Gibbs: I've had requests; there was another guy writing a book.

Welch: We are official.

Gibbs: It's just draining.

Gibbs: It was 5 years ago.

Gibbs: There is a guy writing the book and the chief has approved us talking to him, but I doubt anybody's called about us. We are not interested in any of that, it is through the courtesy of the Pentagon that we are here.

Gibbs: I talked to him, I think he got deployed. He kind of captured me, I was going to meet with him, but he got deployed before we met.

Welch: He is in the service, or is he a journalist?

Gibbs: He was in the Reserves, and he got deployed, and gave the project to a partner of his.

Welch: It is late for us to get this together, but we won't bore you with our sad stories, either.

Gibbs: There are so many stories. If there is one person who says they know everything, you don't want to talk with them, because they don't know what they are talking about.

Gray: I've enjoyed listening to these two, some things I didn't know.

Gibbs: That's something we didn't do, we should have.

Gray: We never had a critique of the Pentagon, they are all of the fire department.

We should have gotten all of us in the same room and start talking, with tapes, like this.

Gibbs: I see the big picture now, that after the second or third day when we came back, I had no idea what they were going through out there, and they had no idea about me. There was never a scene or incident where I was disconnected from what the incident commander had. That's the true essence of incidence command, requesting units, prioritizing.