

AUG 15 1996

101 Woodbine Court
Williamsburg, VA 23185
Phone: (804)-229-0905
13 August 1996

Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., USN (Ret.)
1000 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 3105
Arlington, VA 22209-3901

Dear Admiral Zumwalt:

Mr. Cal Cavalcante, head of the Operational Archives at the Naval Historical Center, has suggested that I contact you. I am a professional historian and have a contract with the center to write a book about women--both the Nurse Corps and other women--in the Navy. It is an exciting and interesting project, and I am enjoying working on it. I have gotten the story up to the 1970s.

An important part of such a history is talking to people who played vital roles in women's service, and this is where I hope you can help me. Since you were the CNO responsible for opening so many opportunities for women, your views are extremely important. I have, of course, read the part about women in your book.

Would it be possible for me to talk to you? I come to Washington often and could easily stop at your office or your home for a chat. I hope you will share your memories with me. I'll look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,



Susan H. Godson

Susan Hall Godson, Ph.D.
Historian
U.S. Navy Contractor

file
INTERVIEWS
Misc



E. R. ZUMWALT, JR.
ADMIRAL, U. S. NAVY (RET.)

August 22, 1996

Susan Hall Godson, Ph.D.
Historian
101 Woodbine Court
Williamsburg, VA 23185

Dear Dr. Godson:

I would be glad to talk with you. You can contact my executive assistant, Priscilla, at my office to set up an appointment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "E. R. Zumwalt".

E. R. Zumwalt, Jr.
Admiral, USN (Ret.)

1000 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 3105
Arlington, VA 22209-3901

Tel: (703) 527-5380
Fax: (703) 528-5795

Calendar

Mon

SEPT 23

1300 ✓
1400

Interview w/ Dr. Godson
re Women in the Navy

A large, stylized handwritten number "2" in the bottom right corner of the page.

ADMIRAL ZUMWALT & CONSULTANTS, INC.

1000 WILSON BOULEVARD, SUITE 3105, ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22209-3901 (703) 527-5380 FAX: (703) 528-5795

E. R. ZUMWALT, JR.
PRESIDENT

September 4, 1996

Susan Hall Godson, Ph.D.
Historian
101 Woodbine Court
Williamsburg, VA 23185

Dear Dr. Godson:

This is to confirm your interview with Admiral Zumwalt, on Monday, September 23, at 1 p.m. I've enclosed directions to his office which is within the System Planning Corporation office space.

Sincerely,

Priscilla Barry
Priscilla A. Barry
Secretary to Admiral Zumwalt

1000 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 3105
Arlington, VA 22209-3901

Tel: (703) 527-5380
Fax: (703) 528-5795

Enclosure

101 Woodbine Court
Williamsburg, VA 23185
29 September 1996

Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., USN (Ret.)
1000 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 3105
Arlington, VA 22209-3901

Dear Admiral Zumwalt:

It was such a pleasure meeting you last Monday, and I thank you very much for your time and for sharing your knowledge with me. Our chat was extremely useful to this historian, and I appreciate your willingness to help me out a bit.

The tape sounds clear, and I will transcribe it soon. I will, of course, send you a transcript for review.

Interestingly, after I got back from Washington, I had a note from Captain Robin Quigley. She said that she gives no interviews. I wasn't surprised at her response.

My next stop is Orlando to see Admiral Duerk. Talking to people is the fun part of writing this book on women in the Navy.

Thank you again for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Sue Godson

Susan H. Godson

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11/21/96

Admiral —

^P ~~Not back~~

Here's the corrected
copy of the interview ^{2 ll} ~~Back~~
transcript for your
files.

Thank you so much
for all your help.

Sue Gudon

101 Woodbine Court
Williamsburg, VA 23185
10 November 1996

Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., USN (Ret.)
1000 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 3105
Arlington, VA 22209-3901

Dear Admiral Zumwalt:

Here is the transcript of our conversation back in September. Please look it over and let me know if I should make any changes on the computer. Talking with you was most productive, and I appreciate your willingness to help me out.

Now, a little Navy bookkeeping. When I have finished the book, I am supposed to turn over the tapes and transcripts of all interviews to the Naval Historical Center so that future historians will have access to the material. To do so, I must get permission from you. If this meets with your approval, could you please sign and date the enclosed donation form and return it to me?

The story of the Navy's women is coming along. I have gotten the ladies through the 1970s in draft form, so at least the end is in sight.

Thank you again for your time and help.

Sincerely,

Susan H. Godson
Susan H. Godson

*P
has CC of transcript*

Interview



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

NAVAL HISTORICAL CENTER
WASHINGTON NAVY YARD
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20374-0871

NAVAL HISTORICAL CENTER
ORAL INTERVIEW INFORMATION FORM

Accession No. _____

Interviewer

Susan H. Godson

Interviewers Organization

Naval Historical Center

Interviewee

Adm. Elmo Zumwalt, Jr.

Current Address

1000 Wilson Blvd., Suite 3105
Arlington, VA 22209-3901

Interviewee to Review

Transcript

☒ Yes ☐ No

Date of Interview

23 Sept. 1996

Place of Interview

Arlington, VA

Number of Cassettes/Reels

1

Security Classification

Restrictions (if any)

Subject Terms

Abstract of Interview



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

NAVAL HISTORICAL CENTER
WASHINGTON NAVY YARD
WASHINGTON, D C. 20374-0571

IN REPLY REFER TO:

ORAL HISTORY DONATION

Subject to the terms, conditions, and restrictions set forth in this agreement, I Adm. Elmo Zumwalt do hereby give, donate and convey to the Department of the Navy a nonexclusive, paid-up license throughout the world in the information and responses on tape and in the printed transcript of the tape (hereafter referred to as "the donated materials") provided during the interview conducted by Susan Gudson, on 23 Sept. 1996 at Arlington, VA. This donation includes all copyright interests in the materials which I may now possess or which I may in the future obtain and includes the right to reproduce the work in copies or phonorecords, to distribute copies or phonorecords to the public, to perform or display the work publicly, and to prepare derivative works thereof, and to have others do so for Government purposes. The public use of the tapes and transcript is to be restricted as follows:

 Closed for a period of years, as of the date of the interview stated above.
✓ Open to researchers at the discretion of the archivists of the Operational Archives Branch, Navy Historical Center, their decision to be based on such considerations as potential embarrassment to living persons or their immediate successors, the interests of national security, or potential prejudice to the friendly relations between the United States and foreign nations.
 Other:

 I hereby give the historians of the Naval Historical Center free access to the tapes and transcript of this interview, with the understanding that the donated materials are to be used as source material for histories being written and published under the auspices of the Department of the Navy.

The archivists may dispose of the donated materials, as they see fit, at any time.

Elmo Zumwalt
Interviewee's Signature

11/13/96
Date

I accept the license and materials donated above on behalf of the Department of the Navy, subject to the terms, conditions, and restrictions set forth above.

BERNARD F. CAVALCANTE
Head, Operational Archives Branch
(Comm) 202-433-3170
(AV) 8-288-3170

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW WITH

ADMIRAL ELMO R. ZUMWALT, JR.

This is Susan Godson interviewing Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, September 23, 1996. Admiral Zumwalt was Chief of Naval Operations from 1970 to 1974 and was instrumental in opening opportunities for women in the Navy.

Z=Zumwalt

G=Godson

G: Admiral, the 1970s were a difficult time for the Navy. After the Vietnam War, there were obsolete ships, a curtailed building program, the end of the draft, an all-volunteer force. With that kind of background, the big changes in the women's programs were mind-boggling compared to the 1950s and 1960s, which were times of apathy for women in the Navy as well as the other services. No one really cared and often wished the women hadn't been there. There wasn't much interest in strengthening or even maintaining the programs for WAVES. In the mid-'60s there was a GAO study suggesting the services just hire Civil Service instead of military women. Before the 1970s, the services had a trained nucleus concept for women, but then did women start to believe that the military could be a viable career for them?

Z: Well, first, my watch as CNO began in 1970. I had come there from two years in Vietnam, where I had rap sessions with probably 20,000 sailors. I came to Washington consumed with the knowledge of what the young people thought was wrong with the Navy. When I took over, the reenlistment rates were the lowest in history--9 1/2 percent. The all-volunteer force was still down the road. We were in the midst of the worst antimilitary, antiwar mood we had ever been in, and it was desperately important to turn things around. Others thought we should wait until the war was over, but I thought it was just too critical a situation to wait. ~~Normally,~~ *W,* ~~the clear indication of any improvement would~~ *Need immediate* turn our reenlistment rate situation around, and I felt I knew exactly what was on the minds of those youngsters.

I had visited hundreds of men in hospitals, in addition to the 20,000 I had talked to. Never did I hear, "Why am I here? Why did this happen to me?" But I heard all kinds of complaints about the Mickey Mouse in the Navy, the racism, all kinds of things we did just to show ^{for} we were superior. I began this program of changing the personnel system with a series of Z-Grams. I was very conscious of the fact that without the draft pressure, maintaining a viable force would be impossible. With the "valley" coming after the "baby boom" years, keeping enough men in the Navy was going to be very difficult.

So from the standpoint of need and equity, I decided that we just had to move on the gender issue. The opposition to it was

that you can't ever teach a woman to fly; that you can't have women in combat because the public would never stand for casualties coming back; you can't have women taken prisoner because the public won't stand for the things that happen to them. And yet it seemed to me that the women's movement made it quite clear that women wanted to be, expected to be, and were going to be treated as equals. This meant sacrifices, as well as equal opportunities.

The opposition was so great that I had to do it by means of pilot programs. There was only one ship, the hospital ship *Sanctuary*, ~~40~~ which it was legal to send women, and I put women there in all ratings that had been traditionally male, ~~and~~ and they did every bit as well as men.

G: Yes, I was reading the files on the *Sanctuary* experiment, and the commanding officer said he would like to have women on board "in perpetuity."

Z: Again, with women going into flight training, we had to make a pilot program, an experimental program, and they did well there. They couldn't land on carriers because the law prohibited it. They flew patrol craft and did every bit as well as their male counterparts, and they therefore, I thought, proved themselves.

The last month of my four-year tenure, the Congress was about to hold hearings on whether or not to admit women to the service academies. The ~~Senate~~ ^{President} wanted to send the most senior officer who disagreed with me to testify, so I sent my very loyal number two admiral, who didn't agree with me! The Naval Academy was a crucible, the final passage, and women proved themselves there. They were mistreated there, but I think that is all behind us now.

G: You have talked to many Navy women over the years, why did they want to make the military a career? What is the main reason?

Z: I had a letter from a woman in San Francisco, and she said that all her life wanted to be a naval officer. But she felt that with so much discrimination against women, she would not be able to have a successful career. I think women want to be where the action is every bit as much as their male counterparts.

G: Do you think this is more true of officers than enlisted women?

Z: I think it is true in both categories. Enlisted women get in more trouble than officers, but the same is true of their male counterparts.

G: In your Z-116 on the opportunities for women, you didn't mention aviation training. Were you just doing it slowly?

Z: It was controversial enough! By that time, John Warner was SecNav, and he was listening to the male chauvinists!

G: What sort of opposition did you get from male officers?

Z: There was more opposition from the ^{older} ~~younger~~ officers. It was fascinating. It was easier to convince a gracious Southern admiral that he should treat a black man as an equal than to treat a woman as an equal! There are just men who believe that women do not have the stamina to do the things that need to be done in combat. And women should not be subjected to that kind of thing.

G: But it was a man's duty?

Z: Right.

G: I talked to Adm. Fran McKee several weeks ago. And I wrote to Adm. Duerk, and she said she would be glad to talk to me, so I'm going to Orlando.

Z: Please give her my regards. I'll have to tell you a story about Adm. Duerk's promotion, since she was the first female flag officer. We had a ceremony, and the newspaper people were there. They took a picture of me just as I was giving her a congratulatory kiss, and that appeared in all the papers. I got a letter from an old friend saying, "Dear God, I never thought I'd live to see the day that the Chief of Naval Operations was kissing an admiral!" So I wrote right back, "No one ever becomes Chief of Naval Operations without having kissed a lot of admirals!"

G: Adm. Duerk sounds so nice on the phone. She has a roommate who was in the regular Navy.

Z: The woman admiral who has come closest to matching a male's naval career is Rear Admiral Roberta Hazard. Have you talked to her?

G: Not yet. She's on my list.

Z: She was with me as a commander. She then had a magnificent career. The CNO wanted to promote her to a third star, but she has problems with her heart. Another one to talk to is Captain Rosemary Mariner, who was an early aviator.

G: Was there a lot of reaction to Adm. Duerk's becoming a flag officer?

Z: No.

G: Because she was a nurse? The directors of the Nurse Corps of the other services had held star rank well before the Navy promoted Duerk, so it wasn't out of place. I suppose there was more reaction to Adm. McKee's promotion?

Z: Yes. More controversy.

G: I was going to ask you more about your People Program. The main part I was interested in was, of course, the women.

Z: Have you read my book?

G: Yes.

Z: That probably has ^{so} much in it as anything ~~x~~ I can say here

G: I have sort of run up against a stone wall about Robin Quigley. I think you and Captain Quigley had the same goal: to integrate women more fully into the Navy but went about it differently. What I don't understand is how she could disestablish the WAVES. How could she abolish the billet of Assistant Chief of Naval Personnel for Women? Melvin Laird was against this--I saw a letter from him. He wanted to wait until all the services took similar action.

Z: Robin's philosophy, as I understood it--I don't recall being at opposite ends with her. Do you find any evidence that I was?

G: The only evidence I have found was you might have disagreed with her about the timing. Your goals were the same. She was opposed to almost everything, from women on ships, in aviation, to attending the Naval Academy, to the NROTC. She said that there were plenty of women coming into the Navy as college graduates and the Navy didn't need these programs. She was very conservative for someone of that age.

Z: On the other hand, the decision to do away with the position of director of the WAVES and assistant chief for women was almost the exact opposite philosophy, namely women are not women, they're naval officers; men are not men, they're naval officers. You don't have an assistant chief of naval personnel for men. You should treat everyone the same. In that sense, she was right with us. My disagreements with her were that she was not as radical as I was in pushing this totality of there being a single term: naval officer.

G: When she so abruptly disbanded the WAVES, it seems to me that leaves a vacuum. There is no support structure.

Z: Well, you see, the theory was a detailer should be every bit as concerned about the woman officer as about the male officer.

It took a while for the word to get around that they wanted to be treated exactly like the men. Genderless.

G: In spite of the fact that women could not be assigned to ships or aircraft, which made it difficult. I wrote to Capt. Quigley, but I heard she doesn't want to be found by anybody. I doubt I'll hear from her.

For a few months, Fran McKee sort of took over, before she became C.O. of the Naval Security Group at Bainbridge. Was there anyone saying, "Let's be sure that women are being treated fairly, being assigned fairly?" It seems like there was no one.

Z: It probably happened too suddenly. It took a while. In retrospect, I think we would have been better off if we had kept the position for another four or five years until the thing had been forced into us. You know we had to handle the race problem, and we had a minority affairs assistant, who was African-American. That was very controversial, but it really helped to eliminate the openness of the racism. We finally were able to do away with it, and it should have been that way with the women, too. *that position,*

G: It seems, after all those years, if you didn't have a WAVES director clucking over her girls like a mama hen, at least at that time...

Z: Particularly since they were legally discriminated against.

G: And the Navy Nurse Corps had a director. Something I haven't been able to figure out is how, if you and Melvin Laird were against the action, how Quigley did it.

Z: I didn't tell her not to do it, although I felt less than comfortable about it. She was so convinced that it was the right thing to do that I took her advice. And I think in retrospect I was wrong. We should have waited another four or five years.

G: That's interesting, because it seems that if she was uncomfortable with the job, why didn't she ask to be relieved so that you could find someone else for that transition period? It seems like everyone was running pretty scared at that time. It looked certain that ERA would be ratified. I wonder what would have happened if it had been? Robin Quigley's role has been mystifying.

Z: It's too bad she won't see you.

G: I sure don't have a real favorable impression so far. Perhaps I shouldn't say that, but I am sure it will shine through in that chapter.

Z: You might want to talk to Roberta Hazard. She was in my office at that time. She might have a better recollection.

G: Is there anything that I should ask you that I haven't?

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G: There was one other question. In the early 1970s, Navy women, as well as all military women, were not entitled to dependents' benefits such as the men received. There was the Frontiero case in '73. This was Air Force. The Navy had its counterpart, and one woman whom I have talked to was the one who started the ball rolling for the Navy.

Z: This would have happened after my watch.

Corrected Copy--11/21/96

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