

Interview Number 2 with Captain W. Lewis Glenn, Jr., U.S. Navy

Place: Captain Glenn's home in Vienna, Virginia

Date: Tuesday, 22 May 1984

Subject: Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., U.S. Navy (Retired)

Interviewer: Paul Stillwell

Q: Captain, last time, as we finished up, we were talking about the business of turning over U.S. assets to the Vietnamese, and you discussed the admiral's relationship with Commodore Chon. Did he have relationships with Vietnamese officers more junior to Chon?

Captain Glenn: He had relationships with officers more junior than Chon, but the opportunities to nurture these relationships really weren't there, probably somewhat to Chon's plan, because I think that Commodore Chon had some concern for his position. He was the CNO of the Vietnamese Navy, but he had been fighting all his life, and he jealously guarded his prerogative to meet with his counterpart.

Q: Did Admiral Zumwalt get out into the boats himself to see how well the turnover was working firsthand?

Captain Glenn: Yes. Again, as I related last time, we went to

see the firefights, but we made other trips also. During Christmas of 1968, we flew fixed wing to an area in the Delta where there was a combined Vietnamese-U.S. operation going on to clean up the lower reaches of the Delta. We flew into this relatively desolate airport, landed on Christmas Day, and there were only Vietnamese around the airport. We were supposed to have two helos spotted at the airport. There were no helos, but there was a company or battalion of Vietnamese guarding the strip. We started asking around and we finally came up with two U.S. advisors working with those Vietnamese. They were a part of this combined operation, and they agreed that they could give us a jeep and driver to us about 20 miles away, there the combined Vietnamese-U.S. armored boat operation was headquartered. So that Christmas morning, we hopped in the jeep and went roaring off through the countryside, much of it controlled by the VC. I did convince the admiral to take his cap off, fatigue hat, which had three silver stars on it. I thought it was prudent, driving through VC country, not to be flashing a three-star hat.

We went over to this operation where the Vietnamese and the U.S. were working together, the Vietnamese being transported on the boats; the Vietnamese working alongside our coxswains and various other positions. Once again, he had only been in-country about four months at that time, but already he was pushing to get

more combined operations, more experience side by side, because he recognized that we were going to have to leave the country, and the only way the Vietnamese could pick up the load was by observing their U.S. counterparts as much as possible.

We went often to the Vietnamese Naval Academy at Nha Trang to visit the midshipmen, professors, etc. That was up in II Corps. There was a combined operations center down at Vung Tau, and we went to that combined operations center fairly frequently to try to accelerate things, to see what kind of progress was being made. So he made a lot of firsthand observations. Again, one nice thing about war is that there's not as much paperwork. There's too much but still not as much, and so we were able to take those mornings and go out into the field and still finish the paperwork by 6:30 or 7:00 in the evening, or finish up whatever had to be done after dinner. Again you only needed sleep, and there was nothing else to do but work, so 16, 17, 18 hours really didn't make much difference.

Q: Did he make an effort to learn the Vietnamese language so he could discuss things personally with these people?

Captain Glenn: I don't remember him making any attempt to learn the Vietnamese language, and I don't know whether that was by

design or not. I'm a very poor linguist. I'm tone deaf, as you can tell from my accent. I've been away from the South 20 years, and my accent doesn't change. A cause of that to a certain extent is my tone deafness and I have a very difficult time with languages. So I probably wouldn't have been focusing on that, but I don't recall any particular attempts on his part to learn the Vietnamese language.

Q: Did Admiral Zumwalt work through interpreters, or did the Vietnamese generally speak English?

Captain Glenn: The Vietnamese generally spoke English. Once again, the French had been in Vietnam forever, and many of the Vietnamese had had their children educated in the United States or perhaps had been educated in the United States themselves at our naval war colleges and Army war colleges. It would have been a nice thing to do, because it always makes people comfortable, but it wasn't essential.

Q: You talk about this trip, going out into dangerous territory. How much concern was there for the admiral's personal safety?

Captain Glenn: I had a lot of concern; he had none. He was just

totally devoid of any fear or worry or anything like that, and so he was always willing to go anywhere at any time, doing anything, and we did. The only thing I tried to do was just commonsense things like, "Take your three-star hat off, boss." And when he wanted to go down the river in an open boat or something like that, I'd just tell him, "That doesn't make much sense. There's no way you can get those sewn three-star things off your lapels. You also are older, you know, you're going to be a prime target. Don't do it." And things like that. But the places we went, rockets had been through the wardroom the night before; the rockets could have come in the wardroom at that time. There was never any attempt not to go into a place because the security was not good. He felt that if his lieutenants could be there, he could be there. And the only thing I tried to do was to at least not make him an obvious target. So we went. I would say that I knew the Delta and probably flew over more of South Vietnam in my year than anybody else in-country. I had a log of my hours. I think I had something like 378 hours in a helo and numerous hours in fixed wing. You got where you knew every river. You could tell where the B-52s had been a couple of weeks before, because when you'd flown through there prior to it, there weren't the big marks in the landscape that looked like craters in the moon. We went everywhere, and on occasions, we were fired upon. One such

occasion was at the very tip of the Delta, I think Ca Mau is the name.

Q: Ca Mau Peninsula.

Captain Glenn: Ca Mau Peninsula. There's a river that runs behind the Ca Mau Peninsula, and we were sure that the Vietnamese were darting into the Ca Mau, and moving supplies into the lower part of the Delta. So we went down one day in fixed wing to reconnoiter the place to see if it was possible to put a fire base or something in down there. We flew low, and as we flew low, we could see tracers coming up at us. That made it pretty obvious that the Viet Cong were there. So we put a fire base in there. As I recall, the operation was Silver Mace. I may be wrong on that, but I think it was Silver Mace. We sent an LST in and used to support PCFs based there.* We had already cut them in the northern part of the Delta with the Parrot's Beak operation, and coming across the other river from the Parrot's Beak to the Gulf of Thailand. Having cut them along there, we figured if we could take the Ca Mau away from them, then we could also cut any opportunity for them to have a base on the southern end. The supplies just went to nothing.

*LST--tank landing ship, an oceangoing amphibious warfare vessel with a shallow draft that also suited her for work in the rivers of Vietnam.

Q: Did Admiral Zumwalt make any Swift boat and PBR patrols himself just to get a feel for what they were like?

Captain Glenn: He wanted to make numerous Swift boats and PBR patrols, but I always managed to keep him out of those things. Once again because he was making such a tremendous contribution over there, and if some chance rocket hit, and we lost him, we'd lose such a valuable asset that it shouldn't be done. He kept pressing me, and I kept pushing the issue aside. I still think I did the right thing. As everyone knows, he made a tremendous contribution over there and to the Navy, to the nation, and I think sometimes you have to just step in and help people like that, because they don't worry about their own personal safety.

Q: How did you do that, just avoid scheduling any such things?

Captain Glenn: Yes. He would say, "Put such-and-such on the schedule," and I just wouldn't schedule it. We'd finish up one thing at a fire base and he'd say, "I'm going down the river with these guys."

I'd say, "No, we've already set you up to go to that other fire base that got hit last night and took a lot of casualties, and those guys are counting on you coming. We don't have time."

And he would go. He was easy to schedule, because he didn't like to worry about that stuff, and so I would lay it on. He was easy to keep on a schedule. He recognized that his time was limited, so when you told him, "We've got to go," he would go. He seldom kept people waiting. Once again, he's a very, very considerate, kind person.

On a personal note, a good example of his consideration was shown to my roommate, Howard Kerr, and me. Howard was the flag secretary. We got food poisoning while we were over there, and both of us got pretty sick. At 1:00 o'clock at night, the boss was in trying to find out how we were getting along, and did we need a doctor? I mean, he was thoughtful, concerned. For that reason, he was easy to keep on schedule, because you'd tell him, "Hey, you're keeping somebody waiting," and he would give you a little annoyed look, but he didn't want to inconvenience people. You could keep him moving.

One other personal insight I'd like to offer. He worked, once again, very hard, six, seven days a week, but he tried to go home once a month. I used to fly home with him. And when he got home, he dropped away all his papers and everything else and spent all his time with his family. He was either sitting around talking with them or trying to get a tennis game with them, or strolling with them, or whatever, but just as he concentrated 100% of his time on his time on the war when he was in Vietnam,

when he got home, he thrust everything aside and concentrated 100% of his time on his family. He was very, very devoted to his family. He has unbounded energy, and he'd focus his energies in one direction and then another. So his time with his family was all quality time. I guess I learned a good lesson then, and I think it's important in the Navy, because you are away a lot, but you can be away even when you're home if you don't spend quality time with your family. He showed me a lot about focusing on the family and spending quality time with them.

Q: Did he go in for any recreational type things like going to Baguio or what have you during these trips to the Philippines?

Captain Glenn: I don't recall us doing that at all. It was basically at home with the family, maybe some people in for dinner, maybe not. Generally since he only saw his children once a month, he tended to spend that time with the children. Mouzetta and Ann were the two who were home at that time, and, of course, Elmo and Jim were not. Jim flew into Vietnam once just to see us and kind of toured around the country with us for about three days, but Jim was in school, and Elmo, of course, later transferred to Vietnam, but he was, I think, deployed previously

Glenn #2 - 41

Zumwalt was an action officer. He let his staff officers work, but he stayed on top of things. He came back to brief the Navy hierarchy, and he didn't bring back a briefing officer. I mean, he was the briefing officer. He liked to get where the action was, and he felt if he did it, then he would know it better than others, and was eminently successful. He has a very soft voice but the power of his arguments, I mean, you just couldn't top him. It's incredible.

Q: How would you compare the relationship between Admiral Zumwalt and General Abrams with the Veth-Abrams relationship?

Captain Glenn: It was entirely different. There really was no Veth-Abrams relationship. I don't remember any real personal meetings between Veth and Abrams or any real requests for equipment or anything else from Veth. So really there wasn't any relationship. And that was one of the first priorities Admiral Zumwalt saw, because the Army was the top dog in Vietnam, and if we were going to do some substantial operations, we had to have their support and cooperation. We also had to make them believe that we were fighters, which General Abrams was. So until you convinced General Abrams that you really were there to kill VC, to make some offensive moves, to try to get them out of the country,

Glenn #2 - 42

you weren't going to have cooperation from MACV. He did that, and he was very successful.

Q: Part of an aide's job is to make life easier for the admiral. How did you perform that? What things did you do for him?

Captain Glenn: Well, I guess I tried to make sure that I took all the trivia away, tried to make sure that he didn't ever have to worry about anything but concentrating on the major issues. And that started from quickly finding out what he wanted to eat, so that breakfast, lunch, and dinner were something that he could ingest and it was done. Get the stewards to lay out his uniforms and other items so that he didn't have to worry about those. Get an itinerary that would click and allow him to see everybody he wanted to see. At the same time, to give him periods of quiet time so he could think. To act as a barricade at the door sometimes and to be abused, because you wouldn't let someone go in during these quiet times. I tried to learn enough about him personally and professionally so that I could just take every item that he didn't have to do away from him. And either I did it or get somebody else to do it. I'd take adequate notes on a trip so he didn't ever have to worry about what was covered. I tried to

make sure that there was never any slipup. The time for cars to arrive, the time for guests to arrive, the time for all those million and one things that happen during the day. I tried to stay ahead of the power curve on all of those so that he knew they were going to happen, and he didn't have to worry about it. You know, just everything from the white wines at a formal dinner to the right color socks.

Q: Did you have any slipups, despite your best efforts?

Captain Glenn: Well, I guess the slipup that I remember most was at dinner one night at the quarters. The guests at the dinner were General Abrams, Admiral McCain, who was CinCPac at the time, the Ambassador, General Brown, etc.* It was a very nice dinner and one of the larger ones Admiral Zumwalt had hosted. In Vietnam, nobody dressed formally. It was hot, no air-conditioning, so it was an open-shirt gathering. We had roast beef au jus, and as the steward was serving Admiral McCain, he tipped the platter, and the juice came down over his hair. Admiral McCain had a beautiful shock of white hair, and this juice came down his face onto his shirt. I mean, not a tremendous amount, but enough to get through his hair, down his face, onto his shirt. I got up in great embarrassment to try to help Admiral

*Admiral John S. McCain, Jr., USN, Commander in Chief, Pacific.

McCain. He got up, and I showed him the bathroom and he got himself cleaned up. I offered him a shirt of mine and he turned to me and said, "Ah, no, if I use your shirt, you'll just frame it and tell everybody that this is a four-star admiral's shirt that you've been wearing." So he said, "I can wear my own."

The next morning, when Admiral McCain was leaving the country, he called the quarters at 6:30 to talk to Admiral Zumwalt. (I monitored Admiral Zumwalt's calls.) His comments were short and to the point, "I just wanted to tell you to please ensure that nothing happens to that steward. That was an accident last night and absolutely no fault of his. Bud, I know that you won't let anything happen, but I just want to affirm my intent in this matter." I must admit, that was something that I'll never forget about Admiral McCain. It seems to me it takes a very large man to remember something that small at 6:30 the next morning and to make a call to make sure that people did not overreact. I was impressed.

Q: What was the purpose of you monitoring the calls?

Captain Glenn: I believe that is done by all flag officers. I was in Admiral Hayward's office as his administrative assistant three years ago, and we monitored those too.* There are two

*Admiral Thomas B. Hayward, USN, Chief of Naval Operations from 1978 to 1982.

reasons. One the same reason they take an aide on a trip, that is they're very, very busy, and if you can take a little bit of the pressure off they can concentrate on bigger things. So in monitoring a call, for example, if someone asks a question concerning a piece of correspondence, you can remember where the paper is or you can retrieve the paper for the boss. The boss has read it, but this refreshes his memory. He doesn't have to tell you, "Go get it." If you are monitoring the call and are on top of things, within about 60 seconds, you'll have that paper on your boss's desk. I do that even in my job today.* So it's just a help to your boss so that he can do his job more efficiently. These guys work terribly long hours with very demanding schedules. They've got reasonable staffs, but running a 70 or 80 or 100 billion dollar corporation is so great that you've got to help streamline operations in every way possible.

Q: Did you tape-record these calls?

Captain Glenn: No. No, we never tape-recorded anything.

Q: I would think that this would save time, that the admiral wouldn't then have to tell you what he wanted, because you had picked it up during the call yourself.

*At the time of the interview Captain Glenn was serving as executive assistant to Vice Admiral Robert L. Walters, USN, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Surface Warfare).

Captain Glenn: Yes, if phone taskings come in, and you're a good aide, the boss doesn't worry. He'll put the phone down, go back to what he's doing, and in ten minutes, you'll show up with whatever things were needed. So it works both ways. It's a tremendous time saver, and that's what you're there for.

Q: Did you learn to read his handwriting?

Captain Glenn: Yes. Yes, I was able to read his handwriting very well, but probably not as well as Howard Kerr.

Q: Captain Kerr was talking about a time when Admiral Zumwalt came down to breakfast wearing pieces of three different uniforms. He had part khaki, part white, and part green. Did you see other examples of absent-mindedness?

Captain Glenn: Oh, yes. He totally concentrated on the job, when we'd go home to Clark, he would come out with the worst-looking outfit you've ever seen.* He just didn't worry about that stuff. Those things weren't important to him, so somebody else worried about them for him. Incredible man.

Q: How long did these trips to the Philippines last, typically?

*Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines, where Admiral Zumwalt's family was living while he was in Vietnam.

Captain Glenn: We would go over Friday night, and we would leave early Monday morning (0200) so we could start the working day in Saigon.

Q: So essentially it was one weekend a month.

Captain Glenn: One weekend a month, yes.

Q: Who minded the store back in Vietnam during those trips?

Captain Glenn: The deputy commander. Admiral Zumwalt made some changes though. When he arrived, the commander and the deputy were both in the same office. Soon after that, he moved his deputy into the Delta, so that he'd be closer to where the action was, so they could both find out what was going on rather than both sitting up at headquarters.

Q: Who was the deputy during most of this time?

Captain Glenn: Admiral House for a short time, and then Admiral Flanagan was there for most of the time.*

Q: How close was his working relationship with those two?

*Admiral William H. House, USN; Rear Admiral William R. Flanagan, USN.

Captain Glenn: Not real close. He had definite ideas and needed to implement them. I'm not sure he felt that there was a need for a deputy. He felt more like it was a position created rather than one needed. There weren't enough representative functions or other items to require a deputy.

Q: I would think that would be especially so in someone like Admiral Zumwalt, who was not a slave to the normal chain of command.

Captain Glenn: Yes, it would be, and it was obvious. That's why he moved him out of the headquarters, because he was wasting their time. And that's another thing—he would not waste anybody's time. He didn't like that. So he put them where they could get involved in the action of directing the field commanders.

Q: What can you say about the admiral's ability to absorb information and concepts?

Captain Glenn: It was phenomenal. Immediately upon arrival, he took a trip, six days, through Vietnam, and by the time he got to headquarters and relieved, he already knew what he needed to do. He looked at the map, saw the Vam Co Tay and Vam Co Dong Rivers

running along the Parrot's Beak of Cambodia, and immediately saw how to interdict the supplies coming down from North Vietnam. When they went to I Corps, they had to go into Cambodia because they couldn't bring them down through Vietnam and the natural infiltration point was the Parrot's Beak. In six days, having traveled around the country, wham, he was able to then figure out, "Okay, I have forces in place, I've got those guys who are too far offshore. I'll just bring everything in one more notch, put the LSTs where the Swifts were, the Swifts in closer, and then put the PBRs up the rivers." It was like a computer. He could see it all; the logistics, every end of things. It was brilliant. He conceived on a grand scale, but he was also able to worry about all the fallout and what you had to do to make this happen. So it was fascinating seeing him at work. And, once again, for a 26 or 27 year old, it was an absolutely wonderful experience, one I'll never forget and one that's been very useful.

Q: Did he have a good memory for details?

Captain Glenn: Yes. I can't recall him forgetting anything, but I must be careful, because I also worked for Admiral Hayward; he didn't forget either. There must be a common trait that runs through these individuals. Their capacity for recall is almost

mystic. You stop a briefing in mid-sentence and pick it up a month later and if you start that sentence, they say, "Don't give me the trivia. Let's start where you were."

Q: It makes them good for oral history.

Captain Glenn: Yes, yes, it would. It could occupy you for 50 years.

Q: Did Admiral Zumwalt use murder boards when he was going to give a briefing?*

Captain Glenn: Yes, he would. He would give the briefings and let his staff murder him. He was very, very easy to criticize. He took criticism well and would change things. If he didn't feel that what you told him made sense, he would work it around so you thought you had made your contribution. When there was a glaring error and you pointed it out to him, he immediately fixed it. People liked to murder board him, because they knew that he wanted the truth. They didn't have to tell him just what they thought he would like to hear. They told him what he needed to hear, and even if they were wrong, he never unloaded on them. So you were always willing to speak up, and you always felt free to give him

*Murder boards are used when someone has to make a speech or briefing. Beforehand he will try it out with his staff and other advisors who point out shortcomings and raise the sort of questions that listeners might be expected to bring up.

your very best advise. Great men sometimes are not willing to let others have a piece of the action, but he was not that way at all. He absolutely would listen, and take aboard what was good.

Q: You talked last time about the insiders and outsiders on the staff, the ones who really got with the program. Would he include some of these outsiders in his murder boards to get their viewpoints, also?

Captain Glenn: Oh, yes. When people talk about Admiral Zumwalt's "kitchen cabinet" or his small staff, they haven't really studied the problem. I remember I was an XO when one of his Z-grams came out, and it was talking about Mickey Mouse or something like that.* Of course, the XO on a ship is the guy who enforces all the rules and regulations. When that Z-gram came out, it didn't change things on my ship one speck. If a guy looked neat in his haircut, then I let him wear that haircut. I didn't go out and measure a guy's hair to see whether it was a quarter-inch or an eighth-inch. Some guys looked scruffy with a quarter-inch of hair, some guys look scruffy with a half-inch. I would not allow any excessive hair, but I felt that what he was telling us was, "Use your judgment. You're mature guys; use your judgment." Some people felt that because he formed a "kitchen cabinet," it was

*XO--executive officer of a ship. Z-grams were messages sent to the fleet by Admiral Zumwalt when he was Chief of Naval Operations; for the most part, Z-grams published information on changes in personnel policies.

because he was unwilling to listen. I think it was just the opposite. I think it was done because others were unwilling to "tell it like it is," and maybe an unwillingness to explore the unknown, because he was not a man who was willing to stick with the status quo. He was going to try things. He would rather shoot 1,000 arrows at the target and have ten hit than only shoot two and the two hit. So he tended to try new things. And if you were unwilling to explore new things, then he tended to reject you, not because your advice wasn't sound, but because you were unwilling to look at new avenues and opportunities, and he felt that we should do that. He had a natural curiosity. People who were willing to explore new things, came up with bright ideas and were willing to work, got his support. At the same time, I must say that I think Admiral Zumwalt's greatest failing was that once he had decided that you could make a contribution, he always kept you on board, even when others might be moving ahead faster in their width of vision. I would have to say that his greatest failure was once he embraced a man, he never dropped him by the wayside. He always kept that guy with him, and I think at times to his personal detriment.

Q: Are there any examples you could use to demonstrate what you mean by that, that he wasn't moving ahead as much as he might,

perhaps?

Captain Glenn: I'd rather not. Sorry.

Q: You talk about people who are unwilling to offer things. Is that because they don't have anything to offer, or they think he might not be receptive?

Captain Glenn: Well, I think it probably works both ways. They probably think that he would not be receptive. At the same time, they're so locked in their traditional ways that they don't want to step to one side to make sure that the straight and narrow path they're walking on is really the yellow brick road. And I think there was a lot of that. The Navy is a conservative outfit, and he was so different that it was disturbing. I thought he was a breath of fresh air. I still think he's a breath of fresh air. He has a lot of brilliant ideas that I think should have been implemented, and I think that some strategies he tried to implement in the Seventies would make us be better in the Eighties.

Q: Were there things in Vietnam that he tried to do but did not succeed?

Captain Glenn: Yes. He tried to use many different techniques. He was successful in getting the PBRs up the river, and he was successful in moving the Swift boats into other places. He wanted to get the surface effects vehicles working in Vietnam. He thought that they would be very useful. However, because of the noise they made, they really weren't adaptive for that type of warfare, and so some effort and money was wasted in that area. However, I would suspect that a good deal of the data base for our decision to go with these vehicles for the Marine Corps comes from that research in Vietnam.

Q: How much concern and latitude did Admiral Zumwalt have on rules of engagement?

Captain Glenn: He felt that his commanders in the field had good judgment. He told them basic rules of engagement. He always felt that his subordinates were as capable as he and that he had responsible young men. They weren't going to kill civilians or innocents, but they had to be given a reasonable opportunity to protect themselves, because once again, when some guy rises up out of the rice paddy with a B-40 rocket and shoots it at you, you've got to return the fire or die. He was not hung up on rules of engagement. He was hung up on the fact that he had good people in

the field and that those guys were willing to give their lives for their country and for what they thought was right, and therefore, they deserved to have delegated to them the authority to make decisions in the field. And that's why many of these tactics such as the waterborne ambush were developed. It made ingenuity go up a hundredfold because of his approach to things, and it saved lives, and it got the VC, so it did the job.

Q: Do you have any other examples of that kind of ingenuity?

Captain Glenn: Paul, you know, there were hundreds, I guess. The Stefencavage one sticks in my mind so clearly, because it was such a tremendous boost to us at a time when we really needed the boost. Before he got there, his commanders were on very short leashes. And after he got there and talked to them and got them rolling, they were trying all kinds of operations. They were moving out in different directions.

Q: What impressions do you have of the principal subordinates. That is, Salzer, Price, and Hoffman?

Captain Glenn: It's incredible that the luck of the draw could have put three men in their positions, and Zumwalt did not know

them when he arrived. A very, very mixed breed. Roy Hoffman, you know, was a seaman-to-admiral type. He was a captain over there. He was a rough, tough, do-anything, action-oriented guy who went on every firefight himself, wanted to be there, a fascinating individual.

Salzer, on the other hand, was, I think, an economist out of Yale. He was very, very bright, good mind and a tremendous ability to plan. He quickly rose to the forefront of the commanders, because he could see beyond his heavy boats. He could see ways to put things together, ways to pinch the VC with combined operations between the Swifts and the heavy boats and the PBRs. He was a terrific wartime strategist and activist.

Art Price, on the other hand, was the only aviator in the group, and he brought a good insight into how aviation can be used, and he got more air support, and used air support in clever ways.

Q: I take it from what you say, there was a lot of give and take between them and the admiral, not just him putting things out.

Captain Glenn: Oh, absolutely. Absolutely. He met with them, and he would just cull their good ideas. There were times when he had what he thought was good idea and his field commander said, "You know, sounds great here in headquarters, but let me tell you,

I've been there, and that just won't work, boss. That may look right on the map, but let me tell you, they've built such-and-such there, and you can't get a boat from there to there, and you can't get support from there to there. There are no supplies." So he'd back off. Good sessions, though.

Q: How frequently would he talk to the task force commanders?

Captain Glenn: A monthly meeting in Saigon, and then he'd talk to them on a daily basis. Either they met him when he was in the field, or he would fly to their headquarters for a briefing once a week or so. Good interface.

Q: In all of the descriptions of Vietnam, there is great emphasis on the body count as a means of measuring success. Was that emphasized at all with Admiral Zumwalt?

Captain Glenn: No, he didn't emphasize body count. He was interested, though, in arms and supply caches, how many guns or how much food or whatever. He just felt the body count didn't tell you too much, but if you were getting to their supply lines, then eventually they would run out of bullets. They might be able to find food, but you can't find bullets, and you can't make guns in

a rice paddy.

Q: How good was our intelligence on that sort of thing?

Captain Glenn: You mean, how much we got?

Q: In being able to measure what they probably had overall and how much of that we were getting.

Captain Glenn: I really don't know how good the intelligence was. I just know that supply stocks that were intercepted in the riverboats were pretty dramatic and effective. You figure what a sampan can carry and cut off the sampan, then they have to carry the materials on someone's back. Then you really do limit how much can be carried. If you find ten tons of ammunition and rifles and it's 50 miles down the Delta and you know somebody's got to bring that on their back, then you're talking a lot of man-days and months and years to move that material.

Q: In an offensive scheme like this that depends on tactical surprise, what steps were taken to try to ensure communications security?

Captain Glenn: As I recall, there was no real concern about communications security because the PBRs were six boats in the middle of nowhere. I don't remember concern about communications. The Army, I'm sure, had some because of big sweeps but we were small potatoes compared with the Army. We ended up doing a lot by cutting supply lines, and that's something the Army really couldn't do. The supplies were moving by water or along the riverbanks, because you can't move supplies over rice paddies. So the Army wasn't stopping the movement of supplies. It took the Navy to do that.

Q: Did he get involved any in the psychological warfare operations?

Captain Glenn: You know, I don't know, because that effort, I believe, was in a special category, and I didn't go to any briefings outside the headquarters on it, so I really don't know.

Q: What about the pigs and chickens operation. Do you recall that?

Captain Glenn: I know what you're talking about, but I just don't have a good recollection of it.

Q: In his oral history, Admiral Veth had a negative impression of the news media. How would you describe Admiral Zumwalt's relationship with the media?

Captain Glenn: Well, he was careful. You know, a good relationship, but he was always careful. He felt as long as you knew your newspaper person and knew he was a professional, that if you said, "This is for the record," or, "This is background," or "This is deep background," that the individual would respect that.* He did not particularly trust the newsperson whom he did not know. I believe he felt that some of the news people would do anything to sell a newspaper. So I would say that he didn't have a great trust of the media. However, he trusted the media that he had worked with before.

Q: Did you then monitor the things that were coming back, newspapers and TV, to see how these things were used once he had interchange with them?

Captain Glenn: Yes, and it seems to me they were pretty fair. I don't recall any instances where they abused him. But I don't remember us spending a lot of time worrying about feeding the press the right information. If he felt he could talk about

*Background material is that which can be used for publication but not quoted directly or attributed to a specific individual. Deep background is that which cannot be used for publication at all but which is provided to a reporter so that he will have a better understanding of the subject and not inadvertently make mistakes in his stories.

something, then he talked about it for the record. If he didn't feel he could talk about it, he either would know the individual and give it to him as background, deep background, or he wouldn't. So it wasn't an attempt to feed the press information that they should get, it was, "Can we tell them about this operation? Is it over? Is anybody's life going to be in danger if we tell them?" But we never tried to manufacture or tailor information going to the news media. Always we were straight with them: "I can't tell you anything about that. The reason I can't tell you is because the guys are still down there; they're still working; it's a tactic that we're trying. If it gets in the news, some of my guys may get killed, and will not take that chance."

Q: What can you say about Admiral Zumwalt's political awareness and capability?

Captain Glenn: Well, he was very politically astute. He recognized the political pressures that the nation was bringing to bear long before they hit their fever point, and he knew that the politicians would, of necessity, have to bow to this public opinion. So he recognized the realities of politics. If a guy wants to stay in office, he's got to do something for his district, or he's got to do something for his state. The American

people were sick of Vietnam. They didn't appreciate it. I must admit, I fault the media a little bit for that, but can you really fault the media? I mean, the big problem was that every night when you sat down at your TV set, they saw either a young American guy getting killed or somebody else getting killed, and frankly, you get tired of it. So the American people got tired of people getting killed. It's not something that you enjoy, and you had ten minutes in color, in living color, every night. He recognized those problems, those difficulties. I wonder how World War II would have gone if every night it meant 15 minutes of color photographs of our guys hitting the beaches and getting blown away in the Pacific or some of the terrible battles in Germany.

Q: In that sense, you would say that the media was a hindrance to the war effort?

Captain Glenn: Yes, the media was a hindrance to the war effort, but once again, we've got a free country, and you've got to make a living if you're a media person, and so you bring forward what will sell.

Q: I think the big difference between Vietnam and World War II is what technology permitted to be happening.

Captain Glenn: Absolutely. In Vietnam, you've got people who were shattered, in terrible situations physically, and a helicopter would arrive on the scene almost immediately and move this person away, and he'd live. In the Second World War, the guy died, bled to death.

Q: Did you perceive any difference in the conduct of the war after the new administration came in in January '69, the Nixon Administration?

Captain Glenn: I saw an acceleration in the turnover to the Vietnamese, but Admiral Zumwalt had previously been aware of that need. He arrived knowing what Nixon's plan was going to be. So from our point, I don't think things changed a bit. Yes, they changed in Vietnam, because others came to realize what Zumwalt already knew. We were a year ahead, or six months ahead of our time. He was very astute. He stayed ahead of the power curve all the way. We saw others falling in line with what we already knew, or what Admiral Zumwalt already knew was going to be the need to turn things over or the ACTOV - Accelerated Turnover to the Vietnamese. He implemented that from the beginning. He knew what was coming, so no change for us, but yes, the rest of Vietnam, the Air Force and Army realized that the Navy was really

on board and far out in front.

Q: You said your objective had been to get home when you wound up the tour. Did you have any misgivings about leaving an operation that you had gotten so intensely involved in?

Captain Glenn: I have never had a job in the Navy that I wanted to leave. Again, though, the Navy causes you to have to set some priorities. If you want to have a family, you've got to have some time with the family, so you've got to move from one thing to another. I left it with great misgivings or disappointments that everything that I had seen rolling along wasn't complete.

Disappointment that I was leaving the friends that I had made. I hated to leave those. But I can say the same thing about my XO's tour, my command tours, you know. You don't want to leave those things, because you are involved and you're excited and you're engrossed. At the same time, life moves on, and I guess that's one of the things that I enjoy about the Navy. It gives you new and different challenges time after time after time.

Q: Did Admiral Zumwalt ask you to extend your tour any?

Captain Glenn: No. I had a son who was six months old when I

left and he was going to be a year and a half when I got home. And he would not have asked me to extend. I guess I was at that young, tender point where you just know better than to ask that type thing. I probably would have done it out of loyalty to him, so he would never have put me in that position.

Q: Many of the people who have served closely with Admiral Zumwalt wound up with subsequent tours near him. Why didn't you?

Captain Glenn: Well, I left and went immediately back to a sea tour. By the time I completed my sea tour, he was in a position where he was concerned about some of the criticism that he was getting, and I think that he recognized that I wanted to stay in the Navy and was in for the long haul. He did not want me to be tarnished by his brush. The people he kept around him were the commanders and the captains that he could make flag officers out of, and he could reward those individuals. I was a lieutenant, and I think he felt that in my case that it would be counterproductive to me to get too close. And I think there's probably some truth in that. There's still a backlash in the Navy. I am never embarrassed to express my admiration for Admiral Zumwalt. But there are a lot of people who disagree with me. So I think that he did me a favor. We've been close friends ever since.

Glenn #2 - 66

Q: To wrap this up, is there anything else you want to say about him that I haven't asked about?

Captain Glenn: I'm sure there are millions of things that after you leave, I'll say, "Why didn't I think of this?" But I really don't. Once again, he's a wonderful man. I admired him, I still admire him. I call him a friend to this day, and if he called me right now and asked me to go do something, whatever it was, I would put down what I was doing and do it. He's that kind of guy. He would do the same for me.

Q: I'm grateful to you for spending this time and sharing your thoughts about him.

Captain Glenn: I enjoyed it. Thank you much. Thank you.