

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD  
OFFICE OF MARINE SAFETY

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In the Matter of:	:
	:
MAJOR MARINE ACCIDENT	:
COLLISION JAPANESE FISHERIES	: NTSB Project ID
TRAINING VESSEL EHIME MARU AND	: No. 51701
U.S. NAVY NUCLEAR ATTACK	: DCA01MM022
SUBMARINE USS GREENVILLE	:
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Recorded Telephone Interview JOHN HALL.  
(TAPE 8, SIDES A AND B)

Tuesday,  
February 20, 2001

BEFORE:

DONALD J. TYRRELL, Chief  
Major Investigation Division  
NTSB

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 (2:05 p.m.)

3 MR. TYRRELL: I've turned on my tape  
4 recorder. It is 0704 Eastern Standard Time on  
5 Tuesday, February, the 20th, and I'm talking to Mr.  
6 John Hall.

7 Mr. Hall, I was wondering if you could  
8 start by explaining to me how this trip was arranged  
9 in the first place.

10 MR. HALL: The trip was arranged, started  
11 in March of 2000. I was involved with a company  
12 that originally was going to organize a golf  
13 tournament with the USS Missouri. It involved the  
14 Navy League.

15 The net effect of all of that is, to make a  
16 long story short, the Navy League wasn't able to get  
17 everything organized like they had told us they were  
18 going to do. And the golf tournament just couldn't  
19 be organized in the short time it needed to be done.

20 It was supposed to have happened in January  
21 of this year, and they just couldn't organize it.  
22 And so it was scuttled, or canceled and was stopped.

23 And we started again this year where we had  
24 enough time to do it.

1           Based on that, my association in meeting  
2 those people at the Missouri and subsequently,  
3 that's how I got on -- that's how I got the  
4 opportunity to organize the sub ride.

5                           E X A M I N A T I O N

6                           BY MR. TYRRELL:

7           Q           How does one go about actually organizing  
8 one of these visits?

9           A           Well, in my case, while we were there  
10 touring the Missouri and having dinner with those  
11 people and discussing the golf tournament, you know,  
12 I found out.

13                        I'm not sure exactly how I found out but I  
14 found out that you could, in fact, visit either  
15 surface ships or submarines and that there were  
16 civilians that were allowed on these trips.

17                        And so based on that, I said that would be  
18 great. That would be an opportunity of a life time.  
19 I'd love to work on that.

20                        So, over the course of the year, when we  
21 started the golf tournament and then when it was  
22 canceled, you know, we just kept lobbying that we'd  
23 like to be able to do this.

24           Q           And who in the Navy would be --

25           A           Well, in my case, that contact was Mickey

1 Nolan. Okay? His contact was Admiral Mackey.

2 Q Admiral Mackey?

3 A But I didn't have direct contact with  
4 Admiral Mackey so much as -- I've only met him  
5 twice. It was primarily Mickey Nolan initially and  
6 then I think he had discussions with Admiral Mackey.

7 And Admiral Mackey, I'm told now, organized  
8 the trip.

9 Q Okay. And Mr. Nolan lives in Honolulu?

10 A That's correct.

11 Q And so he was close to where --

12 A Well, he was involved in the golf  
13 tournament.

14 Q Oh, okay.

15 A And the golf tournament subsequently  
16 didn't go off for the reasons I stated.

17 Q Okay. When you were planning the trip, did  
18 the Navy give any -- oh, I don't know -- did they  
19 put any restrictions on it during the planning  
20 process? On what you could do and not do?

21 Or, did they tell you anything about what  
22 types of things would be available during the trip?

23 A No. What the Navy said, the Navy issued  
24 us a one or two-page letter, told you the kind of  
25 clothing to wear, what was allowed and what wasn't

1 allowed.

2 I'd have to find that piece of paper.  
3 Pictures couldn't be allowed unless the Captain  
4 approved them. They wouldn't allow -- he had a  
5 certain kind of clothing to wear.

6 They didn't -- it was a preferable type of  
7 clothing to wear.

8 They stated that it was possible the  
9 submarine may have to go on an active duty phase,  
10 and you may have to be retrieved and sent back to  
11 port on a surface ship, if the sub didn't come back  
12 on its own, for instance.

13 And they wouldn't tell you whether that was  
14 the case or not, I assume, for security. They  
15 wouldn't want you to know whether the sub was going  
16 out or coming back.

17 And there was a, like I said, a one-page  
18 list that kind of laid out all the different things.

19 Q If you can find that and you can send me a  
20 copy, I'd be very appreciative.

21 A All right, sir, I'll look.

22 Q All right.

23 A I may have it. I may not have it. But,  
24 I'll be happy to look.

25 Q I appreciate it.

1           A           But, that was in -- that was issued by the  
2           -- was it the subpack?

3           Q           Right.  Okay.

4           A           I got that a week ahead of time.

5           Q           I see.  Did they ever put any restrictions  
6           on the number of people in the group?

7           A           No.  Not as I recall, although I think we  
8           were probably reaching their upper limits, that they  
9           probably -- there was never actually any discussion  
10          of how many could and how couldn't.

11                    In our group, we thought it was 14 going  
12          originally, and I'm sure you're aware that the  
13          Clarys were not part of our original group.

14          Q           Right.  Right.  Well, when they knew that  
15          you had a group of fourteen, did the Navy comment in  
16          any way about the number of people in the group?

17          A           No, sir.

18                    MR. TYRRELL:  I was wondering now if you  
19          could think back to the morning that you went on the  
20          trip.  And if you could just give me a running  
21          narrative of what you did and what you saw, what you  
22          heard throughout the day, starting with when you  
23          arrived at the subbase in Pearl Harbor.

24                    MR. HALL:  We arrived at the sub-base full  
25          of anticipation for an opportunity of a lifetime.

1 We were met by the Captain, the XO and the Chief in  
2 the boat, and it was docked there in Pearl Harbor.

3 They explained to us that this would be a  
4 great day and that they were going to do some  
5 training missions that day, and that they were happy  
6 to have us aboard. And they wanted us to engage  
7 their crew in, you know, don't just be -- be happy  
8 to talk to anybody in the crew. The crew will talk  
9 to you.

10 And it was going to be a nice day that day.

11 It was sunny when we left, actually. I don't think  
12 it changed, the weather, changed later in the day,  
13 although when you're in a submarine, you don't  
14 really realize that, or you don't know.

15 MR. TYRRELL: That's true.

16 MR. HALL: But, it started out a nice,  
17 sunny morning, at least when we went out.

18 We left -- we all came aboard, went down  
19 the back hatch, went to the crew mess. And were  
20 briefed by the Captain, the XO on what we could do  
21 and what we couldn't do in the boat.

22 We had two junior officers but senior on  
23 the boat that would lead tours. We broke us up into  
24 two groups. And going out, they would lead tours.

25 Everybody had the opportunity I think that



1 wanted to to go up to the conning tower on the way  
2 out, which was quite a thrill, actually. That's  
3 what you really think about when you think about  
4 submarines is that submarine going out and you're on  
5 the conning tower.

6 It was pretty impressive.

7 MR. TYRRELL: I'll bet it was.

8 MR. HALL: At any rate, we didn't go  
9 anywhere on that boat but what you didn't have  
10 somebody with you, an officer.

11 And we went to, from a tour standpoint on  
12 the way out, we went to everywhere they'd let us go.

13 We couldn't go anywhere after the crew mess because  
14 that's where their propulsion system and engineering  
15 is.

16 And so the crew mess, went to the officers'  
17 ward room, saw the officers' quarters, the crew  
18 quarters, saw the torpedo room. We saw the sonar  
19 room. We saw the control room.

20 Those are the areas that we were allowed to  
21 go.

22 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

23 MR. HALL: And during the day -- and as you  
24 went to these different places, they had sailors  
25 there who explained what they did.

1           And we had discussions. You were allowed  
2 to ask any questions. In this one piece of paper  
3 that was sent out by the military, or the Navy, it  
4 said that if you asked a question and you don't get  
5 an answer, don't be offended. It's just because  
6 they don't choose to answer that question.

7           It either has something to do that's  
8 classified or they don't care to have you know.

9           And that was pretty evident because as you  
10 get to these different places and you ask questions  
11 and, you know, if it was not something they wanted  
12 to tell you, instead of not answering, they just  
13 said, "I can't answer that question."

14           I must tell you, this Captain and the  
15 Officer group and the crew was highly-motivated,  
16 most very professional. Unbelievable... you've got  
17 young guys and you've got middle-aged guys and  
18 you've got even a few older guys. The older guys  
19 being probably not much past forty. That's old for  
20 the military, I think.

21           But, really, a very professional group.  
22 Kind of on point most of the time that I ever, I  
23 mean, in my discussions with every one of them, they  
24 couldn't have been nicer and more accommodating to  
25 us.

1           We -- they didn't, for instance, in the  
2 control room, you couldn't look -- you know, they  
3 didn't want you dealing with -- they would just give  
4 you parameters as far as saying how fast they could  
5 go, how deep they could go.

6           They would say, for instance, "not more  
7 than 800 feet" or "not faster than twenty knots."

8           You know, you get the impression they could  
9 do more than that but they're not going to tell you  
10 that.

11           So they were very informative as they went  
12 about their business. It was always business first  
13 but they were very informative. If you asked a  
14 question, they would do their best to answer it.

15           And the tour was, you know, quite frankly,  
16 the tours were fairly easy. I mean a submarine is a  
17 very tight place.

18           Have you been in a submarine?

19           MR. TYRRELL: Yes. I have.

20           MR. HALL: You know, when you go, you know,  
21 and the sailors are always moving around doing all  
22 kinds of things. They're always going about their  
23 business. You know, and as you go through a  
24 passage, you have to turn sideways to get through  
25 them.

1 MR. TYRRELL: Right.

2 MR. HALL: I mean it is by its nature a  
3 tight, compact place.

4 MR. TYRRELL: When you were going on the  
5 tour, was that about the time that the submarine  
6 first submerged?

7 MR. HALL: That's correct. I mean as it  
8 was going out. Remember, I said we got in the  
9 crew's mess and they said:

10 "Well, we're going to divide you up into  
11 two groups and you each have an officer and he'll  
12 take you around to the different stations. And  
13 you'll discuss in each different station with the  
14 seaman or officers who are there," which is what  
15 they did.

16 So we had an escort, a babysitter, if you  
17 like. And as we went to each one of these stations,  
18 whoever was on station or on watch, if you had  
19 questions, they'd answer them.

20 MR. TYRRELL: Were you in the control room  
21 when they submerged?

22 MR. HALL: No, I was actually on the  
23 conning tower. I was one of the last ones to come  
24 down.

25 MR. TYRRELL: Oh, okay.

1           MR. HALL: I don't think I was with the  
2 last group but I was one of the last. I was in the  
3 crew mess probably when we submerged because I came  
4 down and went straight to the crew...

5           MR. TYRRELL: I see. I see. When you went  
6 into the sonar room, can you describe for me what  
7 you did there?

8           When you went into the sonar room, can you  
9 describe for me what you did there and how long you  
10 were there, and what they said to you?

11          MR. HALL: Probably, five to ten minutes.  
12 I don't know. It's hard to relate to time when  
13 you're down there because, one, you're anticipating  
14 learning new stuff and this is a neat deal.

15          There were four men in the sonar room at  
16 screens and one man sitting -- standing behind them.

17          It was dark in that they were either -- I  
18 don't remember if they were running -- what color  
19 lights they were running, but I don't think they  
20 were -- it might have been a blue light, kind of.

21          And they explained to you how the sonar  
22 works. Pretty dull to me but I sit there and listen  
23 to that.

24          MR. TYRRELL: (Laughing).

25          MR. HALL: But, I mean they explain it and

1 you watch it and I mean I don't know that I could  
2 sit there for six hours on a watch and do what they  
3 do.

4 MR. TYRRELL: Right.

5 MR. HALL: But, then they also had some  
6 tapes of going out, that the whales that they put  
7 in, and say, "All right, here's what a whale sounds  
8 like."

9 They actually had some tapes that would  
10 give you different sounds because I don't think  
11 there was much in the area to listen to on the  
12 existing sonar.

13 MR. TYRRELL: I see.

14 MR. HALL: So they explained that. And I  
15 don't think we stayed in the sonar room all that  
16 long.

17 MR. TYRRELL: How many people were in your  
18 group after they split you up?

19 MR. HALL: Well, uh, six or seven.

20 MR. TYRRELL: Were you all in the sonar  
21 room together?

22 MR. HALL: No. You passed through. You  
23 know, because the hallways, you can't put seven  
24 people in one of these little rooms like that at one  
25 time, in the sonar room. It isn't big enough to put

1 seven in there.

2 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

3 MR. HALL: So the first three or four go in  
4 there. And then they, as they move on to the next  
5 area, then the next three or four come in there.

6 MR. TYRRELL: When you go into the control  
7 room after the submarine was submerged, did they  
8 darken the room, or did it have regular ambient  
9 light?

10 I mean, not ambient light but --

11 MR. HALL: The first time I was in the  
12 control room, it was not dark.

13 MR. TYRRELL: It was not dark. Okay.

14 MR. HALL: and I'm not sure I ever recall  
15 it being dark. I recall the sonar room being dark  
16 but I don't recall the control room being dark.

17 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. It just occurred to  
18 me. I've talked to ten of the guests and I never  
19 asked them whether the lights were on (laughing).

20 MR. HALL: No, I don't recall it being  
21 dark, to be frank with you.

22 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. Now I understand that  
23 it wasn't until after lunch that they started  
24 putting the submarine through these training  
25 maneuvers?

1           MR. HALL: I think that's probably true.  
2           We had lunch at a pretty good depth. And I know at  
3           that depth they wanted to retrieve some water from  
4           the torpedo tubes because we all got a bottle of  
5           water tested to a certain depth.

6           And I think we had lunch and then I think  
7           we started to do the different maneuvers.

8           MR. TYRRELL: Okay. Can you describe for  
9           me how the maneuvers -- what maneuvers were executed  
10          and where the guests were, and that sort of thing?

11          MR. HALL: Well, you know, during the day,  
12          as you took these tours, you got an opportunity to  
13          either be explained to or try certain things.

14          MR. TYRRELL: Right.

15          MR. HALL: Early on, I think everybody who  
16          wanted to got an opportunity to sit at one of the  
17          controls. Okay?

18          And I actually didn't do that because it  
19          just didn't look that interesting to me to sit there  
20          and look at a dial and hold on to, you know, a  
21          steering wheel. Okay?

22          MR. TYRRELL: Right.

23          MR. HALL: Because all you're really doing  
24          is looking at a dial and a man sits, you know, a  
25          Chief sits behind you who actually -- see, I



1 understand something about airplanes.

2 So what they try to do is trim this sub up  
3 the same way you trim an airplane up so that an  
4 airplane goes through the air, a submarine goes  
5 through the water with the least resistance.

6 MR. TYRRELL: Right.

7 MR. HALL: And it's not just one guy who  
8 controls this. It's quite a few people who have to  
9 be in sink in order to make the sub go through that  
10 water and do the things it needs to do as  
11 efficiently as it needs to do it.

12 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

13 MR. HALL: I didn't actually ever sit at  
14 the controls because it just didn't look that  
15 appealing to me. But, I think most people in our  
16 party at one time or another, early on before lunch,  
17 had the opportunity to do that.

18 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

19 MR. HALL: When we started after lunch and  
20 we started the certain different maneuvers, I know  
21 we did some -- he went into some high-speed  
22 maneuvers. And I don't know that I really  
23 understand what he actually did other than I know we  
24 did some banking at 15, 20 or 25 degrees on both  
25 ways. I know he did some high-speed turns

1 underwater.

2 And then we did this emergency blow down to  
3 the top. And then we were headed home. Except we  
4 didn't head home.

5 MR. TYRRELL: Do you remember when they  
6 went to periscope depth?

7 MR. HALL: I do.

8 MR. TYRRELL: Can you describe that process  
9 and where you were? Where everybody else was, if  
10 you can remember?

11 MR. HALL: I can't describe where everybody  
12 else was. I can pretty -- I can describe where I  
13 was.

14 MR. TYRRELL: All right.

15 MR. HALL: After we had done these  
16 maneuvers, banking maneuvers and high-speed turns --  
17 because they were at a pretty good depth when he did  
18 that -- he then said, "We're going to do this  
19 emergency blow-down."

20 And then he asked me if I'd like the honor  
21 of pulling the two levers for 'balance' picture.  
22 And then so I'm in the left in the -- have you been  
23 in the control room?

24 MR. TYRRELL: Yes.

25 MR. HALL: Okay, so you know you have the

1 two steering columns and the Chief sits behind the  
2 two steering columns, right?

3 MR. TYRRELL: Right.

4 MR. HALL: And to the left of that is where  
5 another seaman does -- there's numbers and gauges  
6 there and switches and things. And that's where I  
7 was, to the left of those.

8 I think I was up kind of towards the side  
9 of the wall 90 degrees from those two driving  
10 positions, are these two valves.

11 And they're kind of high up on the panel.

12 So, when he told me to do that, I moved  
13 over and met this particular seaman and he started  
14 explaining to me how this drill was going to go.

15 And he did it about three times because I  
16 want to make sure that it wasn't going to be any  
17 kind of screw-up. I wanted to make sure I can do  
18 what I was supposed to do.

19 And while he was explaining that to me,  
20 everybody else was kind of getting organized,  
21 meaning the crew, the captain.

22 I mean, I wasn't paying a whole lot of  
23 attention to what was going on other than, okay, my  
24 job is going to be this. You know, you're going to  
25 hear three bells. And when you do that, you'll pull

1 these -- they unlock these two levers. You pull  
2 them down. You have to count out loud for ten  
3 seconds. And then you push them back up and lock  
4 them back into place.

5 And then you sit down. That was my  
6 instructions. Okay?

7 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

8 MR. HALL: So we go to periscope depth.  
9 There is an Officer of the Watch. It happened to be  
10 a guy named Cohen, a younger guy, a young JG, I  
11 think.

12 And he makes a couple of turns. Doesn't  
13 say a whole lot. Makes a couple of turns on the  
14 periscopes. And the Captain says, "I want to see."

15 And he steps up and he takes a couple of  
16 turns.

17 And he actually asks the periscope to go up  
18 two feet. He just said, "Up two," is what his words  
19 were, as I recall.

20 And then he took a couple of more turns.

21 Now there are flat screens in there but  
22 where I sit, you don't really see them because I'm  
23 all the way to the left side of the submarine and  
24 I'm, you know, right there where all those switches,  
25 gauges and dials are.

1           And, you know, you've got, well, you just  
2 don't see it because they're not readily easy for  
3 you to see at that point where you sit there.

4           But, you know, everybody else in our group  
5 -- I won't speculate, but everybody else in our  
6 groups says "You can't see anything on those flat  
7 screens."

8           I mean, you know, whatever they see in the  
9 periscope, you see.

10           MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

11           MR. HALL: So then we go see -- I believe  
12 he said "Let's go to 400." And so -- and the sub  
13 actually goes down there quite quickly. I'm amazed  
14 at how this big, mammoth thing moves pretty quick.

15           He goes to 400. He ran through a whole  
16 bunch of checks, me and the sailors, talking back to  
17 him. Him agreeing or just, you know, acknowledging  
18 them.

19           And then we started this procedure and  
20 there were three bells, boom, boom, boom. And then  
21 the sailor next to me said, "Okay." And I pulled  
22 these two levers out and I counted out loud to ten -  
23 - "A thousand one, thousand two, thousand three."

24           I really had to kind of yell it out. Put  
25 the two levers back in. The seaman said, "Sit

1 down." And I sat down. And that submarine then  
2 began to rise very quickly.

3 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. And can you carry on  
4 with the narrative of what happened next?

5 MR. HALL: Well, that submarine came out of  
6 that water pretty quick. You don't have any windows  
7 obviously so you can't see. But, the sensation for  
8 me was, you know, you don't know when you're out of  
9 the water until you start to feel that submarine  
10 fall forward.

11 And, you know, the analogy I gave the other  
12 day was like in an airliner when it lands, then the  
13 nose comes down and hits the runway.

14 MR. TYRRELL: Right.

15 MR. HALL: Well, it's the same way in that  
16 sub. You know you're out of the water coming down  
17 because you can feel it starting to -- the sensation  
18 of it going forward, you know.

19 And about the time we had just started that  
20 sensation to come down, there was a loud bang, a  
21 loud noise. And the submarine shuddered, meaning it  
22 got shook.

23 And, uh, at that point, the Captain, he  
24 said, "Jesus, what the hell was that?"

25 And he immediately, we're all sitting there

1 kind of -- stunned is not the word because we don't  
2 know. I mean we'd never done this before.

3 But, you knew something wasn't right,  
4 especially when he said that. And he immediately  
5 turned and got on the periscope.

6 And it wasn't but a few seconds later that  
7 he says, "We have hit the ship." And he named it.  
8 So he must have been able to see the stern clearly  
9 in the periscope.

10 And he said, "Would my guests go  
11 immediately to the crew mess?"

12 And everybody just started getting out of  
13 there. And the crew mess is not very -- it's down  
14 one deck. But, you have to go forward about six,  
15 eight, ten feet and you hit a stairwell and you go  
16 down that stairwell. And you come back, you know,  
17 ten feet and you're in the crew mess.

18 So we didn't take long to get to the crew  
19 mess. And when we got to the -- I was one of the --  
20 I was about probably the third or fourth person down  
21 to the crew mess.

22 And there is a big, flat screen in the crew  
23 mess. And when you went in there, you could  
24 actually see the ship. And it was, by my  
25 estimations, I didn't think the ship was very big

1 because it didn't -- there wasn't a whole lot of it  
2 in the water, up sticking above the water.

3 If I had to guess -- and I'm not going to  
4 guess, but that ship didn't look very big to me.  
5 But, you could clearly see it was a ship.

6 I didn't see any life rafts. I didn't see  
7 anything like that. But, you could see the ship.  
8 And so, obviously, the periscope was following the  
9 ship because -- and we weren't in the crew mess  
10 twenty seconds as a group once we all got there,  
11 when the seaman said:

12 "We need to move you to the torpedo room.  
13 We need to convert this mess over to a first aid  
14 station."

15 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

16 MR. HALL: So, two seamen led us all down  
17 to the torpedo room. And that's on the same --  
18 that's on the same level as the crew mess. So you  
19 just have to go forward.

20 And it didn't take long to get us in there.

21 And, of course, we're all kind of shook because now  
22 all of us as a group are standing in the torpedo  
23 room. And guys are going back and forth at a fast  
24 pace, hurriedly. Grabbing all kinds of stuff.

25 And a lot of things were stored in the



1 torpedo room. There's extra room there -- a lot of  
2 first aid, a lot of ropes, rope ladder gaffs, and  
3 that kind of thing.

4 And we actually helped them. The gaffs are  
5 all lashed down so I helped them unlash some gaffs.

6 We helped to pass some ropes over. We helped to  
7 pass a ladder over because they had to crawl up on  
8 where the torpedoes sit on a rack.

9 And on the rack in-between there were no  
10 torpedoes. So that whole rack was kind of barren.  
11 But, down in-between there, you had to crawl up on  
12 top of the rack to get that stuff out.

13 MR. TYRRELL: I see.

14 MR. HALL: So we helped to pass it out.  
15 And, periodically, officers would come and go and  
16 tell us what's going on. Plus, we can hear  
17 everything on the intercom.

18 MR. TYRRELL: Can you tell me some of the  
19 things that you heard over the intercom?

20 MR. HALL: Yes. I heard the captain come  
21 over the intercom not very long after this happened  
22 and we got in the torpedo room. He told his crew  
23 that they were trained to -- that there had been  
24 this accident occurred, we had hit the ship and  
25 there were life boats in the water and people in the

1 life boats.

2 He didn't see anybody in the water that  
3 wasn't in a life boat. And they were trained for  
4 this, to render assistance and for the crew to, even  
5 though the adrenalin is pumping, to slow down, think  
6 what they're doing it and do it the proper way.

7 I remember him saying that. He then said -  
8 - there were a lot of announcements, some by him,  
9 some by other crew officers, obviously.

10 There was some discussion. They evidently  
11 -- and this is a little bit of speculation on my  
12 part. But, we were sitting down in the torpedo room  
13 and we can't see anything or do anything, and only  
14 what we hear.

15 I think they had, whoever was in the  
16 conning tower was trying to communicate with whoever  
17 was in the life boat. They couldn't communicate.  
18 They didn't know whether they were Japanese or  
19 Chinese to begin with because the word came down:

20 "Does anybody speak Japanese or Chinese?"  
21 Because they didn't know. And whoever was in those  
22 life boats didn't speak any English.

23 So you find out later the captain is one of  
24 those life boats and he didn't speak any English.

25 And I think then there was a discussion

1 over that as they come down that they couldn't --  
2 before I left the crew mess, which I hadn't been in  
3 there twenty, thirty seconds -- maybe a minute at  
4 the most, but it was about 20 plus seconds before we  
5 all got down. And we couldn't have all been there  
6 20 seconds before they herded us out as a group.

7 But, it took, you know, a good minute,  
8 minute and a half to get everybody down there.

9 There was a diver ready to go-- if you go  
10 past the officer's mess going aft, that's where the  
11 hatch is, about six to eight, ten feet.

12 I mean, not the officer but the crew mess.  
13 That's where the hatch is. That's the hatch we  
14 came in and out of.

15 And when we boarded and it was the hatch we  
16 went out when we disembarked.

17 And they had a diver there ready to go.

18 MR. TYRRELL: He was all decked out in the  
19 scuba equipment?

20 MR. HALL: He was ready to go. But, they  
21 couldn't, you know, they couldn't launch him because  
22 the seas were just too rough. If they'd opened that  
23 hatch, they would have taken on water.

24 MR. TYRRELL: Did they make an announcement  
25 to that effect?

1           MR. HALL: Yes, they did make an  
2 announcement, said, "You know, it's better if we  
3 just, you know, follow these life boats around and  
4 make sure that we've rendered assistance."

5           See, they never saw anybody in the water  
6 who wasn't already in the life boat. And they said:

7           "We'd just better follow them around until  
8 we get Coast Guard on here, or we're going to have  
9 bigger problems getting people trying to disembark  
10 them from life rafts and try to put them on the  
11 boat."

12           They were all about trying to figure out  
13 how to render assistance. They had the messes set  
14 up for emergencies. They had all the first aid kits  
15 laid out.

16           The reason I know all this is when we  
17 actually came back to the crew mess, their stuff was  
18 everywhere. And they had to then start putting it  
19 back to make room in the crew mess.

20           I didn't see what they did in the ward  
21 room, but we were told earlier the ward room can be  
22 set up for an operating room. They obviously didn't  
23 need it.

24           But, I think they tried to -- they had a  
25 big rope ladder. I think they tried to put it over

1 the conning tower, and it was just a problem.

2 MR. TYRRELL: I see.

3 MR. HALL: So they felt they couldn't  
4 properly take the people out of the life boats  
5 without getting them hurt more. And it was better  
6 off to just-- pardon me?

7 MR. TYRRELL: Oh, I'm sorry. I had to  
8 clear my throat.

9 MR. HALL: I think they thought it was  
10 better just to follow them around the submarine and  
11 keep track of everybody until the Coast Guard got  
12 there.

13 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

14 MR. HALL: But they were all about, if they  
15 could, rendering assistance.

16 Now had this been somewhere else and they  
17 weren't relatively close to shore, I...

18 (BEGIN TAPE 8, SIDE B:)

19 MR. TYRRELL: When you say the seas were  
20 washing over the boat, you're saying they were  
21 washing over the submarine?

22 MR. HALL: Yes. You see that when you see  
23 all the pictures here.

24 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

25 MR. HALL: I couldn't tell it then but I

1 see all the, you know, they show these submarines  
2 every damned day. And all you have to do is see and  
3 the water washes right over the top of them.

4 MR. TYRRELL: You're talking about the film  
5 they're showing on television?

6 MR. HALL: Yes. Yes. Yes. You can see it  
7 wash over.

8 MR. TYRRELL: Right.

9 MR. HALL: And that hatch is right aft of  
10 the conning tower.

11 MR. TYRRELL: Right.

12 MR. HALL: About ten feet, maybe.

13 MR. TYRRELL: Could you tell me something  
14 about, if I could take you back to when you were in  
15 the control room when they were -- after lunch.

16 Can you tell me if people were moving  
17 about?

18 MR. HALL: During these maneuvers?

19 MR. TYRRELL: Yes.

20 MR. HALL: I think you picked a spot that  
21 you weren't in anybody's way but, yet, you could  
22 hang on to something.

23 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

24 MR. HALL: Because, you know, on these  
25 maneuvers, you went at these angles. You did have

1 to hang on.

2 MR. TYRRELL: But, you weren't told to  
3 stand in a particular place? You picked a  
4 convenient spot? Everybody?

5 MR. HALL: Well, the Captain was right in  
6 front of the periscope and there's a console. In my  
7 particular case, there was a little jumpseat in  
8 front of that console and I sat on that jumpseat.

9 And so everybody basically was behind me.  
10 But, earlier in the day -- there's plenty of room in  
11 that control room.

12 I mean it's tight but there's plenty of  
13 room. I don't think I ever -- I don't think anybody  
14 had a problem with enough room or places to stay and  
15 stand in where you can see everything in addition to  
16 the seamen that were on duty there.

17 MR. TYRRELL: Was there a lot of talking  
18 going on in the control room?

19 MR. HALL: I don't think so. You know,  
20 you're anticipating -- first of all, you don't know  
21 what to say. And you're anticipating hearing what  
22 they say. You want to hear what they say.

23 So I don't -- I don't recall any talking.

24 MR. TYRRELL: I understand that there was -  
25 - I think his name was Captain Huger? He was like a

1 tour guide? Is that correct?

2 MR. HALL: He wasn't a tour guide. He was  
3 the Chief of Staff for the Admiral of the submarine.

4 MR. TYRRELL: Right.

5 MR. HALL: And he was aboard as our  
6 liaison.

7 MR. TYRRELL: Did he help arrange for the  
8 visit?

9 MR. HALL: Not that I'm aware of.

10 MR. TYRRELL: Is it normal -- you probably  
11 wouldn't know the answer to that.

12 Well, did he say that it was normal to have  
13 such a high-ranking officer accompany a tour?

14 MR. HALL: Well, he's I won't say only a  
15 full bird colonel, but he is a full bird colonel.  
16 You know, that I would consider that high-ranking.

17 He is a former submarine commander. Why he  
18 was there, I don't know. But I think they do  
19 probably send a representative out when they take  
20 these tours. I mean I assume that. I don't know  
21 that for sure.

22 MR. TYRRELL: Okay, but he hadn't been a  
23 point of contact before?

24 MR. HALL: I never met him until that  
25 morning.



1                   MR. TYRRELL: Or talked to him on the  
2 phone?

3                   MR. HALL: I never talked to him on the  
4 phone until that morning.

5                   MR. TYRRELL: Okay. All right.

6                   MR. HALL: Nice guy. He was most of the  
7 time after this accident happened, and a lot of  
8 times, he was the individual that would come and  
9 back to the torpedo room and try to tell us what was  
10 going on.

11                   I think they were concerned after this  
12 accident happened that we were okay emotionally  
13 because they kept -- he kept coming back and forth  
14 and saying, "Is everybody all right? Anything I can  
15 get you?" You know.

16                   And then he would tell us what he knew.  
17 Because there was some -- what I didn't tell you,  
18 the one scenario, is when we were down that torpedo  
19 room, there was at one point that come across -- and  
20 I assume this is when the Coast Guard got on station  
21 -- that somehow somebody must have communicated with  
22 the crew because there was word come down one time  
23 that:

24                   "It looks like everybody who was on the  
25 ship got out and they're in lifeboats."

1           And we were all elated and happy. And then  
2           it couldn't have been ten minutes more and they come  
3           back and said:

4           "No, there was thirty-five on board,  
5           there's only twenty-six in the lifeboat. We're  
6           missing nine."

7           And you just went right to, you know, your  
8           emotions went straight down to the bottom then.

9           MR. TYRRELL: Right.

10          MR. HALL: So it was kind of a roller-  
11          coaster ride in that regard for emotions.

12          We were, you know, in the -- when they were  
13          trying to render assistance, we were basically  
14          totally out of the way once we got to that torpedo  
15          room.

16          We later moved back into the officers ward  
17          room. As a group, we all sat in there. And pretty  
18          much out of the way of everybody, as a group, which  
19          was more comfortable for us because that torpedo  
20          room, basically, you're standing in an aisle.

21          There's not many places to sit down or get  
22          off your feet, you know.

23          MR. TYRRELL: Right. Okay. Is there  
24          anything else that we haven't discussed that you  
25          think I should know about?

1           MR. HALL: Well, I was trying to think.  
2 Uh... no. I'm sure I'll think of something when I'm  
3 not talking to you.

4           MR. TYRRELL: Well, if you do think of  
5 something and it's important, I'd appreciate it if  
6 you would give me a call.

7           MR. HALL: I could tell you that the  
8 Captain came back and talked to us when we were in  
9 the ward room for five minutes maybe -- I won't say  
10 ten. Five minutes.

11           He told us that the accident happened and  
12 that, you know, we were rendering assistance. I  
13 don't think he came and talked to us until all the  
14 Japanese had been taken out of life raft and taken  
15 back by the Coast Guard.

16           Then came on and said, "We're determining  
17 whether we'll stay on site."

18           Because at that point, you know, we figured  
19 we'd be heading back in. I think that's when he  
20 came and told us that they were going to need to  
21 stay out there and assist in the search and rescue.

22           It didn't make all our people too happy.  
23 But, you know, this is a situation. You make the  
24 best of it and do what you have to do.

25           MR. TYRRELL: Right.

1           MR. HALL: So, as a group, we pretty well  
2 stayed in the officers ward room. They fed us. I  
3 mean there wasn't much for us to do. We just played  
4 cards.

5           And, later on, they found an area for us to  
6 get in the bunks. But that submarine popping around  
7 like a cork on the water was not real comfortable.

8           MR. TYRRELL: I'll bet.

9           MR. HALL: Because it's not made to do  
10 that.

11          MR. TYRRELL: Right.

12          MR. HALL: Those seas are rough enough.  
13 You know, at that point, the people who hadn't taken  
14 any seasickness tablets, we all took them because we  
15 thought we were going to be popping around there for  
16 a long time.

17          MR. TYRRELL: Did the Captain ever say why  
18 the accident happened? Did he give any kind of  
19 explanation to you?

20          MR. HALL: No.

21          MR. TYRRELL: No?

22          MR. HALL: He did -- he did -- that morning  
23 on our way in, which is 8:30 or 9 o'clock in the  
24 morning, I remember him coming into the, because few  
25 of us, we all stayed up as late as we could.

1           I mean time goes really slow in a situation  
2 like that. You're all in a small room and there's  
3 not much you can do and there was a point where he  
4 came in that morning, that Saturday morning, and  
5 said:

6           "Listen, this is an international incident.  
7 It's a tragedy and I don't know what's going to  
8 happen here. But, I will tell you that you need to  
9 just tell the truth, not embellish the truth. If  
10 you don't know something, don't say something or  
11 don't think what you think happened. Only say what  
12 you saw and what actually happened. And, tell the  
13 truth."

14           He said he'd enjoyed having us on. I mean  
15 he couldn't have been more professional, quite  
16 frankly. He couldn't have been more nice and  
17 accommodating. I mean he had unbelievable grief and  
18 sorrow. You could see it.

19           He was, you know, and the crew took on a  
20 demeanor of being shook up, too. They went about  
21 their business but nobody -- they didn't talk about  
22 it. I mean they were all -- they all knew that this  
23 was going to be some kind of major problem.

24           And that morning, I had breakfast and I sat  
25 in the crews mess with the Chief and he said:

1            "You know, I am still pinching myself. I  
2 don't believe this happened. I don't believe we hit  
3 that -- I don't believe this happened."

4            The crew just couldn't believe this  
5 actually happened.

6            MR. TYRRELL: Did any of the crew that you  
7 talked to make any comment about why it happened?

8            MR. HALL: No. I don't think there was  
9 anybody even made a -- there was not discussion, at  
10 least amongst us or around us. I don't know what  
11 they did amongst themselves.

12            But I can tell you we had an officer with  
13 us the whole time, even when we were in the ward  
14 room.

15            We weren't there sitting there by  
16 ourselves. We had a young officer the entire time.  
17 Our babysitter, basically, is all.

18            And he couldn't have been more  
19 accommodating, a nice guy. But, you know, they all  
20 knew that this is not supposed to happen. Okay?

21            MR. TYRRELL: Right.

22            MR. HALL: And of course they're in the  
23 Navy. They understand these things a lot more than  
24 we understood.

25            It's the last thing we expected to happen.

1 I can assure you of that.

2 MR. TYRRELL: We had received a report from  
3 somebody that alcohol had been served to the guests  
4 on the submarine. Can you --?

5 MR. HALL: I wish.

6 MR. TYRRELL: (Laughing).

7 MR. HALL: I could tell you that issue came  
8 up when we were sitting in the ward room there after  
9 about four or five hours. And, God, could we use a  
10 drink.

11 And I remember asking this officer  
12 babysitter and he said, "There's no alcohol on board  
13 this ship. Not allowed."

14 There was no alcohol -- of any type. But,  
15 boy, could we have used a drink after sitting in  
16 that ward room for hours.

17 Because I remember us all kind of saying,  
18 "Could we have a drink?" Because we were playing  
19 cards. And, well, that's absolutely false.

20 MR. TYRRELL: All right, then. I think  
21 we've covered everything. And I really appreciate  
22 you getting up early to talk to me today.

23 MR. HALL: Well, that's fine. I gave --  
24 did Mr. Clary call you yesterday?

25 MR. TYRRELL: No, I haven't --

1           MR. HALL: He talked to me yesterday and I  
2 told him you were trying to get a hold of him.

3           MR. TYRRELL: Right.

4           MR. HALL: I gave him your number.

5           He said that he was driving through  
6 Washington today. You'll probably get a call from  
7 him today.

8           MR. TYRRELL: Great.

9           MR. HALL: I think he's headed home.

10          And his phone doesn't work real well  
11 because it's getting jammed. And I gave him your  
12 number, and I'm sure he's going to call you.

13          MR. TYRRELL: That would be great because I  
14 was calling him yesterday.

15          MR. HALL: You won't get through.

16          MR. TYRRELL: No, it was just continually  
17 busy, you know, every time I called.

18          MR. HALL: He said it's broke, basically.

19          MR. TYRRELL: I thought maybe he had taken  
20 the phone off the hook, you know.

21          MR. HALL: He's not home. He was in  
22 Florida and he was driving to -- I think he lives in  
23 Massachusetts.

24          MR. TYRRELL: Oh, okay.

25          MR. HALL: But, I did give him your name



1 and number and told him you were trying to get a  
2 hold of him.

3 MR. TYRRELL: Well, I appreciate that.

4 Let me give you my mailing address so that  
5 if you find that letter from the Navy, you'll be  
6 able to mail a copy to me.

7 MR. HALL: Yes, sir.

8 MR. TYRRELL: It's the National  
9 Transportation Safety Board, Office of Marine  
10 Safety, 490 L'Enfant Plaza East, Washington, D.C.  
11 zip code 20594.

12 MR. HALL: Okay.

13 MR. TYRRELL: And I really appreciate it.

14 MR. HALL: I'll look for it.

15 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. Well once again, thank  
16 you very much.

17 MR. HALL: Thank you, sir.

18 MR. TYRRELL: All right, bye-bye.

19 (TAPE CONCLUDED.)