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AIR NATIONAL GUARD ORAL HISTORY

**LT GEN DANIEL JAMES III, USAF
Director, Air National Guard**



1 November 2007

**Interviewed by
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DATES/TOPICS	PAGE(S)
Introduction	i
Table of Contents	ii-iii
 <u>3 March 2006 Interview:</u>	
Lt. Gen. James identified himself for the record	1
Pentagon’s 2005 BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure Commission) goals and strategies	1-2
BRAC’s impact on the Air National Guard (ANG).	3
SECDEF’s BRAC Recommendations Versus BRAC Commission’s	4
BRAC requirements for the ANG	4-7
Program Budget Decision 720 and the ANG	7-11
General James’ VANGUARD program	12-14
Future Total Force and other transformation initiatives	14-19
ANG culture	19
Other promising Total Force transformation initiatives	19-21
General officer positions on the Air Directorate Staff, National Guard Bureau (NGB)	21-22
Changing relationship of the Adjutant Generals and the Air Staff, Headquarters, U.S. Air Force regarding ANG transformation	22-25
Additional general officer positions in the Air Directorate, NGB	25-27
 <u>20 March 2006 Interview:</u>	
General James identifies himself	28-29

Transformation initiatives and maintaining the ANG's relevance	29-41
Office of ANG Transformation in General James' office	41-43
General James' assessments of his offices of Transformation and Diversity .	43-47
Chief NGB's (i.e., LTG Blum's) jointness initiatives	47-55
Hurricane Katrina 2005	55-58
Joint staff established in the NGB	58-64
State joint National Guard headquarters established	65-69
Potential implications of National Guard jointness for ANG/Air Force ties .	69-74
<u>24 March 2006 Interview:</u>	
General James identified himself	75
Building credibility with the Adjutants General	75-76
Obtaining additional general officer billets for the Air Directorate, NGB . . .	76-77
Elevation of Deputy Director ANG to major general	76-79
ANG Special Assistant to the Chief, NGB	79-82
Deputy Director ANG could revert to a one-star rank	82-83
Biggest changes in ANG during his tenure as Director, ANG	83-94
Impact of growing up as son of a senior African-American officer	94-98
Why General James joined the ANG	98-99
Serving as the Adjutant General of Texas	99-100
Proudest accomplishments while Director, ANG	100-103
Disappointments while Director, ANG	103-106
Closing remarks	106-107

INTRODUCTION

Lt Gen Daniel James III began his long and distinguished military career in 1968 when he graduated from the University of Arizona's Reserve Officers Training Corps program and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the United States Air Force. Following completion of undergraduate pilot training at Williams AFB, Arizona in 1969, he completed two active-duty tours in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War logging 500 combat hours as a forward air controller and F-4 Phantom aircraft commander. In September 1978, he left the Air Force and joined the 149th Tactical Fighter Group of the Texas Air National Guard (ANG) at Kelly AFB in San Antonio. After a series of assignments with that unit, culminating in his service as Commander of the 149th Operations Group, he was appointed as the Adjutant Governor of Texas in November 1995 by Texas Governor George W. Bush. In June 2002, he was appointed as the Director, Air National Guard by President Bush. General James retired in June 2006. He was a command pilot with approximately 4,000 hours in fighter and trainer aircraft. His major awards and decorations included the Distinguished Service Medal, the Legion of Merit, and two Distinguished Flying Crosses. General James was the first African-American and the first three-star officer to serve as Director of the Air National Guard.

I conducted these oral history interviews with Lt. Gen. Daniel James, III, Director of the Air National Guard in his office in Arlington, Virginia in March 2006 prior to his retirement. They focused primarily on significant changes in the ANG and the National Guard Bureau that took place during his service as the Air Guard's Director from 2002 to 2006. During his tenure in that post, General James was best known for his proactive approach to the military transformation initiatives being promoted by the Air Force and the Department of Defense and dealing with the sweeping changes in the Air Guard mandated by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission in 2005.

The transcripts of General James' interviews were edited by Dr Susan Rosenfeld of the ANG's history program in the National Guard Bureau and have been included in the oral history collections of the Air National Guard and the United States Air Force.

CHARLES J. GROSS, PhD
Chief, ANG History Program
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LT. GENERAL DANIEL JAMES, III
3 MARCH 2006

DR. GROSS: This is Dr. Charles J. Gross, Chief of the Air National Guard History Program. I'm interviewing Lieutenant General Daniel James, III, Director of the Air National Guard, in his offices at the National Guard Bureau in Arlington, Virginia. Today's date is 3 March 2006.

DR. GROSS: All right, General James. Would you please identify yourself sir, and we'll proceed with the interview?

LT GEN JAMES: For the record, I am Lieutenant General Daniel James, III, Director for the Air National Guard. We're located in Washington, D.C. at the Pentagon, and also in Crystal City, and Andrews Air Force Base. You have to excuse me. I'm a little nasal.

DR. GROSS: Thanks. From your perspective, what was the Air Force trying to accomplish with last year's BRAC [i.e., Base Realignment and Closure] exercise? Was it more far-reaching than some observers have concluded, including not just -- rather eliminating surplus infrastructure and saving some money?

LT GEN JAMES: Well now, Dr. Gross, you wouldn't try to put words in my mouth, would you?

DR. GROSS: No, no, no. It's just a question!

LT GEN JAMES: I was a bit disappointed to see the strategy that was used, because I think it was a bit far-fetched in the terms of taking an infrastructure process and

rolling into that movement of iron, and as it turns out, people not being able to move because of the BRAC Commission, which I think they were trying to do to protect manpower in the Air National Guard. I appreciate their intent.

If you look at what the other two services did in the BRAC process, you'll see that they used it more like a pure infrastructure process. What I think the Air Force was trying to do was get a document or get something that would become law, that wouldn't be easily undone. In doing so, because I think they already planned on how they would use these manpower savings, in terms of recapitalization or new programs or whatever, and I think maybe even committed on the [inaudible] to the use of these savings by the manpower that would be available from BRAC, doing it the way it was done. They really wanted to make sure that it couldn't be overturned.

I think the Air Force got the feeling that Congress did not have the will to overturn BRAC. As the process evolved, you saw the President come out publicly and state that he would sign the BRAC, because he had confidence that this is what DOD [i.e., Department of Defense] needed, because he had confidence in the Secretary of Defense, his appointee.

DR. GROSS: Uh-huh, surely.

LT GEN JAMES: And also, to quote a senior officer, he said, "Well, you know Congress doesn't have the stomach to overturn BRAC. They won't do that. The Senate may vote it down, but it will never be voted down in the House. So we're just going to press forward."

I think they underestimated the power of the BRAC Commission, because in the past, the BRAC Commission had not changed many of the-- well, I shouldn't say that.

They did change that, and DOD wanted to have submissions that were less likely to be changed.

If you look at the other percentages, I think maybe 25 percent of it was changed or touched. Then it moved on in guidance to the teams, and this time they wanted to keep very few things touched, when in fact, when you get to the Air Force program, you'll see that a lot of things were changed.

I got the impression that we were in trouble in the Air Guard because one of the assistant secretaries of Defense made a comment that there will be a BRAC and the Guard will play this time. The obvious implication there is that we didn't play last time.

In any forum I was in, where I had the opportunity to articulate the value of the National Guard, especially the value of our Air Guard bases, be they stand-alone or whatever, because of the lack of infrastructure that we need in terms of housing and child care, medical, etcetera, and because we don't have investment accounts, we have a very good return on the dollar that we're giving to sustain the Air National Guard.

So what happens is you have to eliminate a large number of Air National Guard bases before you start to give any savings at all. So I tried to tell that story as often as I could, but I could see that either it's being directed by DOD or it was agreed upon and embraced by the Air Force leadership, that this was the direction that we had to go.

I remember my BRAC representative being very frustrated when he was going to the meetings and trying to work with the panel on the Air Guard submission. I said he had to go back in there and keep representing us, because if he pulled away from the table, then God knows what will happen. So I hope that answers you.

DR. GROSS: Yes. What were the major differences, in your perspective, between what Secretary Rumsfeld sent forward to the BRAC Commission on Friday the 13th of May [2005], and what the Commission came up with and sent up to the White House and Capitol Hill?

LT GEN JAMES: The major differences were that those places where aircraft were moved, that the language that was in the adjustment by the BRAC Commission said that the personnel would still stay there, and there would still be a unit there, and the personnel that were there would still stay there. They were allowed to be, by the law. That's what challenges us so much now, because now they're trying to adapt to the BRAC language as well as transform it. It takes away any flexibility you might have to move that manpower. So that's the primary difference.

I have a slide that might be helpful for me to pull and let you see. What it talks about before the BRAC Commission: how many bases were touched, how many people and things were moved. And then after the Commission was finished, what the result in adjustment was.

I want to say before it was somewhere in the neighborhood of some 25 actions were to take place, and the Commission changed a number of those, somewhere in the teens. So the actual movement of people, there were only five states that have unrestricted language where people can be touched and moved from missions or for other offsets.

DR. GROSS: So how does it look like you'd be able to square that circle?

LT GEN JAMES: Well that's an interesting way to put it, Dr. Gross, about squaring

the circle, turning that tough corner. We're looking at the language to see if we can get the interpretation that allows us to do that. Quite frankly, right now, as we look at the challenges that the BRAC has given us in terms of the manpower needed just to adhere to the units that they plussed up when iron was moved in there; for example, when a unit goes from 18 to 24 [aircraft] .

DR. GROSS: Right.

LT GEN JAMES: That requires additional manpower. If there's manpower within that state, but it's at a different location: I'll give Kansas as an example. There's a plus-up, I believe, at Forbes [Field, Kansas]. There's manpower in McConnell [Air Force Base (AFB) Kansas] that could be used to plus up. Let's say there's a plus-up in Barnes Airport, Massachusetts]. There's a manpower bonus that we feel should be allowed. We may have to get a nod from the governor to do that, but the biggest challenge we have is trying to do the manpower from one state to the next. Now that would be problematic even without a BRAC.

DR. GROSS: Yes, yes. I understand.

LT GEN JAMES: With the BRAC, I think a lot of people are waiting to see what these court cases are going to rule. I think they will be in courts. It's typical of this nation that the court system is one that takes a while, and there will be -- whichever way it comes out, there will be appeals and so forth. So I don't see a quick resolution of it in the courts, to be honest with you. But it really somewhat ties our hands as to how much we can do in trying to both, as I said earlier, comply with BRAC language and yet still transform our National Guard with new missions, new roles and so forth.

DR. GROSS: Okay. During a 26 July 2005 Air Director's staff meeting, which I was attending, you told the participants that both the TAGs [i.e., the Adjutants General] and the Air Force were convinced that you had let them down during the BRAC process. What did you mean by that?

LT GEN JAMES: Well, when the BRAC came out and they saw how much movement was happening, I'm sure that the TAGs said "Hey, wait a minute. What happened here? You're supposed to plead our case. You're supposed to stand up for us. You're supposed to keep things like this from happening." So I think that they felt that way initially, that what happened, until the process went on and we described how it really went and they realized that we did in fact try to articulate and champion the cases of the Air Guard during the process. But it was not something that was going to be easily received by the Air Force.

And then I will tell you historically this goes back to -- I think a couple of leadership changes in the senior leadership in the Air Force. When the position [of Air National Guard Director] was changed from a two-star position to a three-star position, I think that the Air Force felt that now I had the right to tell the TAGs what to do. I would say very few of them really appreciate the position that the Director's in, and that he has to try to get some type of consensus amongst the TAGs, because he has no command authority. They saw me as a three-star and they saw the TAGs as a two-star.

DR. GROSS: OK.

LT GEN JAMES: [They] never really realized that I was not in their chain of command and that the TAGs know that. So I had to try to be just as persuasive in my articulation of what I think the Air Guard units should do as I possibly could. That

was the only way to do this, because they worked for the governor; he's the commander-in-chief, the adjutant of the individual forces in the states and the Adjutant General. It is his delegated responsibility to run those for him.

Knowing that, when they looked at the TAGs, the Air Staff would be better looking at them as members of the governor's cabinet who happen to be Guardsmen, as opposed to two-stars. I mean I've heard comments about "well gee, if that guy worked for me I'd fire him." Well, the implication was General James, he works for you. Why don't you fire him? Well, he doesn't. She doesn't. They [i.e., the TAGs] know that and I know that. So that's not the way the system works. So I was getting frustrated because I was feeling like both sides felt like I had not properly carried out my role in leadership in this BRAC process.

DR. GROSS: Did they feel anything about it at this point, do you think?

LT GEN JAMES: I think there's a better understanding, especially by the TAGs, of what the challenges were, and I feel a little better about it. But I still wish it had gone differently. I always will look back and wonder what I could have done differently.

DR. GROSS: For now, the active duty Air Force part, the senior folks over there?

LT GEN JAMES: No, I don't think they-- well, there's been a lot of changes since this all started, but I don't feel that they feel that I didn't do my job. I think they started to get a sense because of the hearings that took place with the BRAC Commission after their submission. They started getting a sense of how big this BRAC was in terms of the Air Guard and how much turbulence it had caused within the states, and I think they got a sense of how tough this really was. So I don't feel they have those same sentiments today, at least not to the degree that I probably had

the day of the staff meeting that you remember so well.

DR. GROSS: Yes. [They both chuckle.] Well, I have a question here about PBD [i.e., Program Budget Decision] 720 that was apparently released by the Pentagon in late 2005, and I understand that, at least one version of it, talked about eliminating over 14,000 Guard personnel slots through 2011. Was the Air Directorate involved at all in the process that led up to the formulation of that PBD?

LT GEN JAMES: Well, that's one of the things that concerns me, is because when I talked to my manpower people, they said "No, we didn't have an input." Now the folks in manpower and the Air Staff will say "Well, we've got your data in our database. Those are your numbers. We used your numbers."

But one of the things I would have liked to have been able to do better and I want to encourage my successor to do, is to make sure that—and this continues today, not as much as it did in the past, but still continues today—make sure that we are at the beginning in the policymaking and the formulation, and the scrubbing of any of these policies and projects and agreements and initiatives that we're going to be involved in. So that in fact, you will have the Guard on board from the very beginning. We found out about -- actually found out about it by accident. There was someone from the FM [Directorate of Financial Management and Comptroller, Air Directorate, National Guard Bureau (NGB)], the financial community, and the Air Staff called our folks to get some numbers. They said "What's this all about?" "Well, we're just doing a 'what if' drill." So we backtracked that a little bit. Then the staff came to me and said, "Hey, I think they're doing a cut drill."

DR. GROSS: Ah!

LT GEN JAMES: Then so when we found that out, then we peeled it back a little bit, and then I went and asked a couple of folks, and they said “Yes, we're looking at some. Don't you know when the Chief talks about only three ways in which we could generate the kind of offsets we were going to need for recapitalization?” One was streamlining our processes and one was restructuring the Air Force. And [inaudible] the streamline process I mean improving our processes, making them more efficient. One was changing the structure of the Air Force to gain efficiencies, and the other one was to do some personnel offsets; in other words, reductions in personnel. I remember a conversation that a lot of senior leadership had where that was discussed as there were only three ways we could generate the money, because we weren't going to get anything more from DOD. As a matter of fact, we were handed bills from time to time, and we used PBD 720 as an example.

In December, late -- close to the holidays -- you get handed a bill. Last time it happened it was called a 753. Here, this is a bill that we want you to understand that you need to pay. So we were not aware, in terms of it being right in the very beginning, sitting down in the room with somebody from Manpower in the DP [i.e., Personnel] world, and somebody from our DP world and sit down and say “Okay, we think this is the right number of people that would have to go as a mix of active, technician, AGR folks and traditional Guard members, to offset this bill that we're trying to offset, that will help us restructure by the end of the FYDP [i.e., Future Years Defense Program].”

But one of the things that they said was, “But you don't have to worry about this, because your first cut doesn't come until '08, as opposed to the active component that's going to take a cut of about 35,000 people.” And I said “Well yes, but it's a huge cut in '08. To make up for that, you had to cut 9,000 people.” So that's about 65 percent of the cut comes in the first year that it's in effect.

Moseley's [i.e., Gen. T. Michael Moseley, Air Force Chief of Staff] gone on record as saying we don't know whether that 14,000 number is right. Because if you do all the full-time, then you get down to a figure, I think it's somewhere around 2,000. Their figures say it's around 3,200. But it would have been much better, I think, and much easier for us to live with a number and not have to come back and say, "Well look, I can't find this. I think the number's more like this," because that means if it's a lower number, then it's going to have to be paid through the Reserves and the Active.

But if you look at the percentage -- I'm not a math major obviously, -- but if you look at the percentage, the Air Force's percentage of 35,000 people out of a 350,000-person Air Force is about ten percent. The Reserves, out of the Reserve component it runs about ten percent. But if you look at the Guard percentage proportionally, it runs to almost 15 percent, 14-1/2 to 15 percent. Well, you know when you're talking about proportions, that's a third higher than the other two components. So that right away kind of jumps out at you. But they have told us we have the flexibility to take that out of the structure any way we saw fit, in terms of how many full-time, how many part-time, what have you. But still, that's a *big* number for this organization, especially in terms of what we're doing today, and what we have to do to transform for the future.

DR. GROSS: How do these numbers from PBD 720 fit in with what you're trying to do with BRAC and other things that are going on?

LT GEN JAMES: Well, I mean let's face it. If you are going to reduce the Air National Guard 10,000 people, you're talking about 96,000 people left if we're fully manned, and everything that we're doing today will tell you that there are things we'll have to stop doing if we're going to abide by BRAC, take the manpower reductions and transform.

You see, the big piece of this is like the commercial I saw back during football season, where they had this airline that was being actually built while it was flying. They were riveting on, they were riveting and putting stuff on the wings -- or trying to fix a race car while it's in a race. I mean you've got to continue to do the mission and transform without any manpower adjustments. Now early on, it was said to us by the [Air Force] leadership that "Don't worry. The Guard will not be -- end-strength will not be changed."

DR. GROSS: Right. I remember there were stories in the press about that.

LT GEN JAMES: Well, I would ask you, if you look up those testimonies and those public statements, if they said, couched that during the BRAC process, because that's what being said now. "Oh, that only applied to the BRAC. Our end strengths wouldn't be changed during BRAC. That didn't apply to the post-BRAC." So what they're saying is all bets are off now that BRAC's over. So I've asked my folks and I would ask you to research that testimony, and find out in what public forums the leadership of the Air Force has said that our end-strength would remain at [106,700]?

I told the TAGs when this first started happening that I didn't think that was doable. I don't think that was a promise that the Air Force could keep. I think if DOD had mandated that, it would have been a different story. But for the Air Force to use that as a proclamation instead of a desire or goal, was something that I think was doable. Because I had already seen DOD come down and hand bills late in the fiscal -- actually, late in the calendar year when staffs were away, and say "Oh by the way, here's your bill." So I just said "I don't know whether that's doable. I really don't think that's doable." And General Blum [i.e., LTG H Steven Blum, Chief, National Guard Bureau] felt the same way.

DR. GROSS: Yes.

LT GEN JAMES: There was something that came up earlier in one of my discussions with you that triggered something else I was going to talk about.

DR. GROSS: Sure.

LT GEN JAMES: But I can't remember what it is. I should jot it down.

DR. GROSS: You'll recollect it later.

LT GEN JAMES: Maybe it will come to me as we go through more of the questions.

DR. GROSS: Okay, sure. Well, the next thing I'm interested in, what happened to the artist formerly known as VANGUARD?

LT GEN JAMES: Well, you know, that's a good question. VANGUARD was my attempt to try to get out ahead of what I saw was an inevitable change in the Air National Guard. VANGUARD was a program that I laid out over a time line of 20 years.

Now what happened to VANGUARD was there are parts of what we're doing right now, in what they call these transformation initiatives, Total Force Initiatives.

DR. GROSS: Right.

LT GEN JAMES: The first group and others that were in VANGUARD. So VANGUARD is not dead. VANGUARD has been accepted, but here's what

happened. The reason why I stopped using VANGUARD was because the Air Staff had asked me or someone had asked me, I can't remember exactly who it was and it doesn't matter, but the thought in the Air Force was, "we want to do it this way, and we want to call this VANGUARD II," implying that it was a Guard program. That's why I backed off from using the name on any of the subsequent initiatives. Here's why. As I said earlier, VANGUARD was a program of us divesting of iron, old iron and transitioning into new missions. So that at the end of this period of time, we would have transformed and we would have been relevant for the future.

When the Air Force looked at their program and their needs, they said "Wait a minute. We need to get those savings soon rather than later." So they compressed what was originally VANGUARD into what they called the Beacon Force, where they divested of more airplanes than we had envisioned, much sooner. So they pushed VANGUARD, compressed it down to "Van," in terms of Beacon Force, and then they called Future Total Force 2025, and then just Future Total Force.

DR. GROSS: Right.

LT GEN JAMES: Okay, and you've heard those terms and you've seen those come up. When you look at the numbers that were coming out of the Guard, there were substantial numbers coming out of the Guard by the year -- by FYDP, by the year FY '11.

DR. GROSS: This was numbers of iron.

LT GEN JAMES: Of iron.

DR. GROSS: Yes.

LT GEN JAMES: Earlier, and then there were other -- by '14, we had divested significant numbers of iron that would have been easier to absorb over that 20-year period. So my VANGUARD was compressed, and that's why I took the term away. I still believe that that was the right approach. Obviously it was, because it was adopted, and now it's been turned into these Total Force Initiatives.

The idea that we would go into the missions, that we had different types of structures, different types of associations and integrations; i.e., that we'd have things like community basing, and that we'd have active associates, the active duty associates with Guard units, all those things. If you look at these Total Force Initiatives, you can see VANGUARD in there. It's almost as if the Air Force said "Look. This is a good idea. We need to start thinking about this, and somehow start laying this out for the Air Force, so we will be where we need to be." That's what Future Total Force 2025 was.

Well, I think it was when the F/A-22 buy was still up around 300 or more jets, I looked at what they were doing with Future Total Force 2025 or Beacon Force, and compressing our losses more toward the front end, and said "You know, if we're going to have that air sovereignty, air supremacy, air superiority match that we would have with the F/A-22 numbers and when they're coming, then we could divest, the Air Force could divest of F-15s, which would allow us to have offsets to keep our iron a little longer until we could identify new missions.

You see, the problem with moving everything to the left, I said this in a briefing once and had to stop briefing it, because I was told to stop. But I said "This is too much, too soon, too disproportionate."

DR. GROSS: Right. I remember that.

LT GEN JAMES: Remember that?

DR. GROSS: Yes.

LT GEN JAMES: Okay, and so what I was saying we could smooth out this gap, this delta between airplanes going away and offsets that they were gleaned by divesting of active duty F-15 assets, because that was almost a two for one in terms of cost for an F-16, and therefore not have to shut down or transform F-16 wings, which we had the preponderance of in the Air Guard, as early as we would have to do otherwise, because there was really no bridge. In other words, when they laid this out, it talked about when the iron would go away and how much iron would go away. And then say when the new mission would start or when different iron was going to come in or a new mission was going to come in, or change or a consolidation, a different structure coming in like an active associate, that would bring people, maintenance and flying hours to that unit, and that would allow it to continue to function if we continued down the road.

That was the anxiety, that's what we saw in the Air Guard. That's what the TAGs were able to see. They kept saying, "Okay, we need some more specifics."

DR. GROSS: Yah.

LT GEN JAMES: When you start looking at the specifics, you could see that there was a gap in there, and when General Wood came in as a [Headquarters, U.S. Air Force] programmer, he said, "I will commit to you that we will develop a plan that has on ramps as well as off ramps." That was the phrase he used. So we've been

working very hard at making sure we did that, to the point where we just recently looked at Fargo, who was losing their iron. They have the oldest F-16s in the fleet, and determined that we needed some type of bridge, and there was none out there in fighter iron. So they were, The TAG was willing to accept a future mission in what we call the light, now joint, cargo aircraft. But there was a gap between when the F-16s go away and when the joint cargo aircraft becomes a reality. So General Blum had promised a bridge. So he said, "Well, we'll put four C-130s into Fargo, [North Dakota] and so they can start on the military construction that we'll need for a cargo-type airplane, keep some pilots that want to stay and continue to fly, others will transition into a Predator mission, and provide that bridge that we talked about earlier."

That's the kind of thing that we would have to do to understandably get the support of the people that are going to have to make this work in the field, that being the leadership from the Adjutant General --Governor and the Adjutant General, and even the Congressional delegations in those states.

DR. GROSS: Well, this really is the answer to my next question, which was your assessment of the cooperation by the Air Force in terms of this bridging, you know, the timeliness and appropriateness of new missions for the Air Guard, as we go through this transformation process.

LT GEN JAMES: We're getting a lot more fidelity here. Actually, they started calling them Total Force Initiatives. When they first came out, there were some, I think there were seven or eight, and they came out in letter form and they were signed off by the Secretary [of the Air Force] and the Chief of Staff. The reason I thought that was very significant is because there was a cross-section of missions in there, and weren't all airplanes going to Predator. There was community basing; there was

association; there was kind of a cross-section. And the initiatives were designed to give us some data and some feeling about how these kinds of things are going to work and work out. I will tell you that a lot of people will point to the ones --

[Tape change.]

LT GEN JAMES: [tape picks up] the integration of the JSTAR's [i.e., E-8C Joint STARS] mission with the Georgia Air National Guard and the active duty in Warner-Robbins. But if you look at some of the others like the 55th Wing --

DR. GROSS: At Offutt [AFB, Nebraska], I believe.

LT GEN JAMES: At Offutt, where we started with a flight, the detachment of the flight, we lined up the two different changes -- I said change of command, administrative change of command as opposed to the Ops [i.e., operations] change of command. We identified who we would retain command over the folks. Then we grew that, and now it's integrated in with a squadron, and working very well. Well why? Because we had time.

JSTARS was done very fast, and I think JSTARS is still successful. But a lot of that has to do with people like [Brig. Gen.] Tom Lynn [Georgia, Air National Guard], who was the first wing commander down there, who I think basically with the power of his personality and his understanding of the needs of the folks, kept -- was the glue that kind of held that together. There were a lot of people that were very skeptical and they pointed to JSTARS that "See, this is why we shouldn't do these kinds of things." But I disagree. I think you take something like that and you learn from it, just as we learned from the Offutt. We will learn from the Hawaii association with the C-17 program, and we will learn from other associations that we will be doing in the future.

And it can't all be a one-way street. It can't be just we'll all go to active duty bases and integrate with their organization or associate with their organization. It has to be community basing, Active Reserve. Those kinds of things also have to be in there, so that it is a two-way street, and so that we do have a good balance, and that we do have opportunities for the Air Guard to remain relevant for the future.

That's why we have to be very careful. There's an initiative right now to absorb inexperienced pilots into our cockpits, so that people can be released to go and do some of the jobs that require a rated officer. And I looked through the proposal and I asked them to scrub the proposal, to make sure that the problem was as bad as they say it is -- number one -- okay?

Number two, if the requirements that are out there are really still valid for a rated officer to in with them, to make sure the requirement, the number is right. Number three, how about some of our folks going into some of the FTUs [i.e., Flight Training Units] and IFF [i.e., Identification, Friend or Foe] and what have you that would release rated structures that are there, that could go into these billets. Because the way it was set up, the way I was looking at it now, it was going to be active coming to the Guard, displacing Guard crews, and then the Guard folks going in and manning these Air Operation Centers and all these other places that call for rated folks.

I saw that as a one-way street. I saw that as a win and a lose, because we're giving up cockpits. One of the things that allows us to attract people from active component to come into the Guard is they will have a longer flying career. Some people decide that's what they want, and they want to do something else as a traditional Guardsman, but they want to have a longer flying career and that's why they go into the Guard.

So it has to be appealing to the people coming on active duty, as well as that individual who comes off of the flight line, goes to the [Air National Guard] Academy of Military Science, gets the commission and goes to pilot training. Comes back to the unit as an inexperienced pilot and gets seasoned by these more experienced pilots. Where are those cockpits for him or for her?

DR. GROSS: Yes, exactly.

LT GEN JAMES: You see? So we have to be open to new ideas, but we have to be careful to make sure that we're always seeking a win-win, that it's not a one-way street. We fix a problem for the active component, but break part of the culture of the Guard.

When I talk about the Guard culture, I don't mean we don't wear our hats and we walk around with toothpicks in our mouths or something. I mean the culture that says we're citizen soldiers, citizen airmen, community-based. We don't PCS [i.e., Permanent Change of Station] a lot. We really get to know each other. We have very strong ties to the community and the state, and that we stay together as a unit a long time, and that's -- one of our strengths can be that stability.

We have very good maintainers, and we have -- the culture that I think about, when I think about the Guard culture, it's the volunteer spirit. It goes back to the militia spirit that says "Put me in. Here's where I draw the line. I will go bear arms for this nation--even though it is not my profession. I will conduct myself as a professional, but I am a volunteer. I'm a volunteer to in fact defend this nation at this bridge at this time, just as the militia did." I think when I talk about the culture, that's the culture I'm talking about. It's a very positive culture, steeped in history, constitutionally-based, and reenacted; is that the word? Reenacted on a daily basis by our citizen warriors,

whether they be an AEF [i.e., Aerospace Expeditionary Force] deployment or air sovereignty alert [i.e., air defense of the U.S. ground alert by fighter aircraft].

DR. GROSS: Okay, okay, good. Are there any other, on these future -- well, it used to be called Future Total Force Initiatives -- are there any other ones that you'd like --

LT GEN JAMES: Total Force Initiatives.

DR. GROSS: Yes, Total Force, that you'd like to talk to here, like -- the move from Richmond down to Langley or anything else that you think is particularly significant now that is ongoing?

LT GEN JAMES: That is a very significant move. There's another initiative right now, where it appeared it was going to be an active reserve associate C-17 in Alaska went in effect, it may be the Guard associating the C-17.

The reason I like that one is just what I was talking about earlier, is that if that is able to happen, and the PACAF [i.e., Pacific Air Forces] commander and the AMC [i.e., Air Mobility Command] commander and the Eglin Air Force Base commander are all in agreement, and the Guard Bureau and what have you, there's a potential there for a trickle-down effect of some C-130s that are very much needed in places like Niagara Falls, so that we can bring some to the table there. Also, the manpower that the active duty will have offset by the Guard being involved, could be used somewhere else. This is that win-win-win I'm talking about, you know. So the Alaskan Air Guard gets to fly C-17s. It doesn't break their C-130 units, but the pilots that would be flying C-130s, some of them might go to the C-17. That would free up, let's say, some C-130s to go into the Reserve, Active or somewhere that's been designated to have X number of airplanes by the BRAC process, that we don't have airplanes, but we have crews,

the ones coming out of the Niagara Falls, [New York] tanker unit there, that would want us to continue to fly and might consider going over to associate with the Reserves there.

So those kinds of things are the things that I'd like to see come to fruition. I don't think I'll see them by the end of my tour here as the Director. But I'm building a transition book with some key initiatives and key information, and that gives corporate knowledge and background to the new director when he comes in, because it would have been very, very helpful for me to have that.

We started the process earlier, just so we wouldn't have what it looks like we're facing now, and that is the previous Director going on leave, a transitional leave before the incoming Director has been confirmed.

DR. GROSS: Okay.

LT GEN JAMES: Now that's not really the kind of situation you'd like to see.

I know it was difficult for me, especially since I had a very new Deputy Director, who did his very best to mind the store until I could finally get confirmed. In this case, I have a very experienced Deputy Director, and I also have one of the officers who was involved in the Langley-Richmond association, who is now in the key leadership here is my [A-] 3, my [Director of] Operations we used to call XO, the XO. He's now my A-3 [i.e., Brig. Gen. Anthony Haynes], so he understands that process.

I've got three others -- two other general officers and one other general officer slot that hasn't been filled yet, and I'm hoping it will. So what I've been able to do now is to increase the horsepower by rank of many of my colonels, so that they can

participate in these policymaking meetings and sessions that go on, that are usually general officer only you see.

They won't be on equal footing because many of their counterparts are two and three-stars, but at least they'll be GOs [i.e., General Officers]. And I think that's one of the things I'm most proud of I was able to do on this watch, was to get, elevate four positions on my staff with field involvement. The field did the board, and the people from the field got to apply. This initially was seen as a way of "rewarding" people at the Bureau, and I said, "No." We need horsepower in these positions, these key positions like Operations and like Logistics, like programs, XP, and the chief of staff position of course. So that's almost completed now. We have one more position to promote to. It's been selected, but to promote to.

DR. GROSS: That leads into, well really goes into one of my other questions. Could you explain briefly, or elaborate if you want to, the history of these additional general officer billets that you've directed, or that you've added here during your tenure? You know, you've addressed most of that.

LT GEN JAMES: Yes, I think I did. What happened was, just as I pointed out, the most important part of the process that we get involved in has to be the front end, okay. Because what will happen typically is it will be staffed, and then it will come to you from the Air Staff or the MAJCOM [i.e., major command] and you're asked to sign off on it, to concur with it. Then, therefore, in doing so, to implement it.

This reminds me of what I was talking about, that I'd forgotten about earlier. There's a tendency to bring folks in a room, explain to them why you have to take these cuts or why you have to divest iron, show them a lot of statistics -- I'm talking about the TAGs now -- this is what the Air Staff did, senior leadership did. And because they

had a group of TAGs in a room, they “splained” it to them, as they say in the vernacular, about three different occasions over the beginning of this process. They misunderstood that as involvement, when in fact --

DR. GROSS: Now you're telling me what to do. That's my involvement.

LT GEN JAMES: That's your involvement.

DR. GROSS: Yes.

LT GEN JAMES: That never quite got across. It was they were not involved, and they weren't endorsing. They were just being informed. So they misunderstood information, the informing process with the involvement process, and therefore the endorsement process and supportive process. That's why they were very puzzled and frustrated, as senior leaders, that we've had these guys in on this from the beginning, quote “in on this.” Yes, you have showed them what you have to do and why you have to do it. You haven't showed them exactly how they're going to be affected by it and what's quote “in it for them,” and how they're going to be able to maintain those flags and their states with different or new missions. That part wasn't very well -- didn't have a lot of fidelity to it.

DR. GROSS: Yes. Where's the on ramp?

LT GEN JAMES: That's right, exactly. So that's why there was a very understandable level of -- it wasn't really confusion -- but it was a bit of mistrust in the field toward the idea of this plan, of going forward with new missions and what have you, because they didn't see the fidelity, didn't see the on ramps. The Air Staff is going “Hey, we've had these guys in from the beginning. Why are they going to

these hearings and saying these things now?” Why? You know that goes back to that statement I made to the staff meeting that you remembered about being a bit frustrated, because I got both sides that think I didn't stand up for them and do my job, and that was a bit frustrating. But, as I said, that played out a little differently in the long run. But that's why there was big questioning type of stares and statements from senior leadership, to why the TAGs responded like this. Nobody questioned it when we had them in the room. Nobody raised their hand and asked a bunch of questions.

Well, if you have a three or four hour meeting, and you spend the first three hours and 25 minutes with introductions from the Secretary and introductions from the Chief or the Vice Chief [of Staff, U.S. Air Force] and a big, long briefing about Future Total Force from the XP [i.e., Deputy Chief of Staff, Plans and Programs, Headquarters, U.S. Air Force] or the XPX, and then you have the systems and analysis people stand up and tell you here's how much it costs and this. So by the time it's time for them to throw the BS [i.e., bullshit] flag, they've got about 25 minutes to get to their airplane. They go “This dog ain't going to hunt. This is ridiculous. We'll talk about this amongst ourselves later.” And that's what happened.

DR. GROSS: Okay, okay.

LT GEN JAMES: That's in fact what happened. Now we're past that now, because [Chief of Staff of the Air Force] Gen. [Michael] Moseley -- I won't say we're past that, but I will say that there have been improvements made in trying to keep the TAGs informed *and* get them involved, by placing general officers and TAGs on the General Officer Steering Committee, on the GOSC, bringing more folks into work projects on the Air Staff. We're not quite there yet. We have had a habitual relationship that says “Hey, before we do these numbers, or before we go down this road, let's get our Guard guy, whether that be the 265, the full colonel that's working

on their staff, in, or let's get the director or the deputy director or the A-3 [i.e., Directorate of Operations] or the A-1 [i.e., Directorate of Manpower and Personnel] from the Guard, or the -- you know -- and bring them in.

So when we're doing this brainstorming and putting these options and courses of action together before we brief the general, and have their general in there and, you know, the Air Force A-3 in there and saying "Well, here's how we're going to solve this absorption problem" and having me say "Well, I don't think it's ready for prime time." That's frustrating for I'm sure everyone involved, because we say it could have been done easier. It could have been done with more involvement, and I'm sure it's frustrating for the briefer, because they think they've got a good course of action. I'm sure it's frustrating for the A-3 because he goes "Well geez, you know. Why am I just finding out that you've got objections to this now? You've got issues with this now?"

Well you are because we really weren't in there. If we were, our inputs were either noted and ignored, or just outright ignored. Therefore, this course of action goes down a path that I can't concur with, because I didn't see other courses of action really seriously considered.

DR. GROSS: It's been a tough time.

LT GEN JAMES: Yes, it has been, and not the "woe is me," but this has probably been one of the most turbulent times that I can remember, and I've been in the Guard now for twenty -- it will be 28 years. As a matter of fact, my retirement date is actually one day short of 38 total years. This is, in my memory, one of the most turbulent times, one of the most challenging times for the Air Guard.

DR. GROSS: I can't remember, just as a historian, any times quite like this.

LT GEN JAMES: Yes. You're the historian, and if you can't remember anything quite like this, it's probably true.

DR. GROSS: Yes. One quick question on those additional general officer billets here on the staff. Where did they come from?

LT GEN JAMES: Those billets were billets we did not fill in the ANG Assistants Program.

DR. GROSS: Oh, okay.

LT GEN JAMES: I wasn't fortunate enough to get Title 10 [United States Codes (USC)] billets from the Air Force, because they had head space. We scrubbed all of our ANG assistant positions and some of them we downgraded from one star to colonel, or from two to one-star, so we'd have the head space. So these folks are not tour folks. They're actually traditional. They come off of the stat tour and then take a job as a traditional general officer, and they boarded and they selected the individuals who went and apply for that.

There's no guarantee that the funding will be there in the long run yet. But we are pretty sure we can sustain them by renewing their 179-day tour after a break, so that we will continue to have that kind of representation. Then hopefully we will get that head space that we need, and that's something I'm working on and [LTG H Steven] Blum's bought off on this. Not just bought off; General Blum's pushed this, the Deputy Director of the Air Guard should be a two-star.

DR. GROSS: Right.

LT GEN JAMES: When they [i.e., Congress] elevated our positions to three-star, they should have elevated the deputies to two-star.

DR. GROSS: Is that -- but that requires legislation, does it not?

LT GEN JAMES: Yes, but it's not impossible to get.

DR. GROSS: Okay. Well, speaking of General Blum, that was my next question.

LT GEN JAMES: You're running out of time.

DR. GROSS: Okay.

LT GEN JAMES: We'll have to do this some more --

DR. GROSS: Yes. Can we pick up there?

[Whereupon, the interview was concluded.]

LT. GENERAL DANIEL JAMES, III
20 MARCH 2006

DR. GROSS: I'm Dr. Charles J. Gross, Chief of Air National Guard History in the National Guard Bureau. Today's date is 20 March, 2006. I will be resuming our oral history interview with General Daniel James, III, the Director of the Air National Guard. The interview will take place in his office in Crystal City, Virginia in the National Guard Bureau [headquarters in the Jefferson Plaza 1 building].

DR. GROSS: Okay, good to go.

LT GEN JAMES: Lieutenant General Daniel James, III, Director of the Air National Guard and Vice Chief [Air] of the National Guard Bureau.

DR. GROSS: Vice Chief?

LT GEN JAMES: That's what General Blum [Lieutenant General H Steven Blum, Chief, National Guard Bureau] wants this called.

DR. GROSS: Vice Chief? For Air?

LT GEN JAMES: For Air? Yes. He wants to change the title, but in law right now I think it says Director, Air National Guard. It doesn't say Vice Chief.

DR. GROSS: I think [Maj. Gen. Winston P.] Wilson was vice chief or something for air at one point in the 50's.

LT GEN JAMES: This is a continuation of the interview?

DR. GROSS: What we were talking about. Yes, on I think the 3rd of this month? Yes. I think it was General Blum.

LT GEN JAMES: So the last question --

DR. GROSS: Well, we were talking about various transformational type stuff, and you had been talking about the blended wing and Joint STARS and that kind of stuff, and I had a few other questions, unless you have some other thoughts about how transformation is going for the Air Guard.

LT GEN JAMES: Well, you know, one of the reasons we looked at these new structures and associations is because when you look at the sheer number of aircraft that were going to be procured in the future by the Air Force, and the number of aircraft that we have in the Air National Guard now, and you look at the need for the Air Force to maintain its

dominance in air and space, and this nation to maintain dominance in space in terms of the executive agent for space being the United States Air Force, and you saw where our missions were shifting and fewer aircraft will be bought, it gives you an idea that you've got to look to other missions for the Air National Guard if we're to be relevant, to remain relevant.

Because if we lose that relevance, we're not needed and therefore eventually we will not be used, and eventually our very existence will be challenged. So we looked at the numbers of aircraft and said "Well, how are we going to continue to participate in new weapons systems, and not just get the legacy systems, which we maintained very well because of our stability of our maintainers and our operators." But then we looked and we saw the need to try some different types of organizational structures. The integrated unit in Georgia was one that was put together kind of fast, because I wasn't Director at the time, but I know that the Georgia TAG and the governor were concerned that the B-1s were going away so fast, and they hadn't identified a follow-on mission.

So when they identified the JSTARS mission, the governor and the TAG looked at that as a National Guard unit, whereas the commander of ACC [i.e., Air Combat Command] and some others in the leadership saw it as an Air Force unit. So from

the very, very beginning there was a difference of perspective as to how this unit would be viewed; who would command it, what percentage the command chief would be and what percentage of the Guard to active officers, etcetera. So we got to work through that as it's evolved.

Operationally, it works very, very well. We still have some administrative issues to work and we're working those through Memorandum of Understanding, Memorandum of Agreement to follow. So a lot of people were very skeptical about the integrated model, and because it came together so quickly, it had a lot of things to be worked out.

Now there are other models out there that are more of an association model.

DR. GROSS: Right.

LT GEN JAMES: That were because of the Guard's unique command and control, excuse me, command structure, i.e., the governor as the commander-in-chief in most cases until Title 10 [United States Code] activities [i.e., federal] kick in, we had to be able to give the governors, through their TAGs, a comfort level about the administrative control of these officers, excuse me, of these airmen and civilians.

So we have another association that we used in the 55th Reconnaissance Wing at Offutt Air Force Base, [Nebraska].

DR. GROSS: Right.

LT GEN JAMES: I just recently visited them last week, and the commander and the folks involved in that, the commander of the wing, the commander of the squadron, are all very comfortable with that association, where you have an administrative line of control and you have operational people, people that are operationally integrated into the other units.

There's a lot of different ways you can do this, one is to look at each case as it comes up, as to how we're going to associate.

Well, one of the things we have to be very careful of is taking a mission, accepting a mission that doesn't play into the demographics of the area where the other mission is going away, okay. When you look at some of the missions that we take on, you have to be careful, because some missions play very well into our Guard culture because of the reach-back nature of that mission, like Predator.

But if you don't put the Predators in the right location, and you don't have the command and control done properly, then the demographics say it won't support them. Whereas you have,

for example, in Arizona you have two large population areas, Tucson and Phoenix. If you have a unit that can be staffed by people who come from one or the other or in between both or something of that nature, then you will be able to recruit, retrain and recruit and retain folks.

So you have to be careful where you put these units, and what missions that you select for them, because everything that looks good maybe on the surface may not necessarily be working.

DR. GROSS: Okay. Well, let me ask you about one of those missions which we touched on, but really didn't go into in depth, and it's, you know, I guess it's really in its opening stages is the movement of the 192nd [Fighter Wing] down at Langley [AFB, Virginia] to work with the 1st [Fighter] Wing, flying the [F-22] Raptor and maintaining it. What's your assessment of that situation and how that's going now?

LT GEN JAMES: I was just at the commander's conference in Offutt [AFB, Nebraska] for ACC, there at the Dougherty Center, and there was some mention about that. People seemed to be comfortable. That two pilots trained, I believe; another pilot in training. We have some 20, I think 23 maintainers identified to be trained. I think 16 possibly have already been trained. I'd have to look at my line up on that.

One of the things that helps us here is that our new, what we call A-3, which used to be the Air Force, the ANG XO, excuse me, was one of the people who was involved at the state level, and some adjutants general for air or chief of staff, I can't remember exactly, but at any rate, he's a traditional Guard member, a brigadier general who was involved in this when he was a colonel. As a matter of fact, I believe he was a squadron commander at one time and so he's pretty familiar with some of the challenges and some of the great opportunities that this bring us.

Of course, this is a perfect example of how you get involved in a new weapons system that the Air Force right now appears to procure less than 200 of those airplanes, and therefore if we are to be a part of that, we have to move away from the model of the unit equipped.

Now I still think there are some places and there will be some opportunities where we in fact will have unit equipped aircraft, like the ones that we have in Jackson, [Mississippi] with the C-17 new weapon system. But that's a unit-equipped, UE, and all that seems to work there. Again, demographics. It rolled in behind the strategic airlift, and it fit very well and demographics support it and so forth.

But I think the 192nd experience with the 1st Fighter Wing, the way they look at it is we want to see our Guardsmen involved in the full range of what that mission takes on.

If in fact they're going to have one of the squadrons, because of the few aircraft they're able to procure, one of the squadrons will remain an F-15C squadron, and I would imagine some of the folks will end up flying F-15s. And then move flight (inaudible) pointing to the Raptor, as the re-up, as they fill out the wings.

The decision to do, just the two squadrons instead of three complete squadrons was that it allowed a squadron of Raptors to go some place else geographically in the world or in the states that we felt it was necessary to have the right footprint.

DR. GROSS: Taking a look back, what impact do you think the Future Total Force, I think it is now [called] Total Force Integration, BRAC [i.e., Base Realignment and Closure] and other things like this is going to have on the organizational culture as well as military roles and capabilities of the Air Guard in the long run, particularly the cultural question?

LT GEN JAMES: The culture question -- when we talk about culture, we're not talking about an outdated way of [long pause] participating, a very autocratic, autonomous, make our

own rules, wear hats if we want to, that type of thing.

When we talk about the culture, we talk about the traditional Guard member, an organization that has around 60 to 70 percent of traditional Guard members who have other full-time occupations, professions and so forth, that we maintain the idea of the citizen soldier as it's embedded in the culture of the National Guard period. And so on as we look at the Air Guard.

Now when you talked about those things that BRAC and Future Total Force, which now we have Total Force Initiatives that have been generated, and we worked with the Air Force -- worked with the states, first of all, to get some initiatives from the states. We felt that we'd have better buy-in from the states if we could get their initiatives, knowing and understanding the demographics of their state and what they can and cannot do, what their range situation, air space, etcetera.

So we worked with the states. We got inputs from the states, and then we worked with the Air Force to come up with some initiatives that will show, as I said, across the full spectrum of the new missions that the Air Force is going to be doing, and some traditional missions. And to look for ways to associate or integrate where it made sense, and have a reverse or active association, where the active comes onto a Guard facility and participates. And we've done some of that in small initiatives

like the one in Burlington, [Vermont at the Air National Guard's 158th Fighter Wing] and I think we'll see more.

I think the Guard over the next five years is going to be very interesting to see it transform from all units, unit-equipped aircraft, varied wings platforms-centric as opposed to more balanced in the future, and two or three different types of associations.

Now BRAC, the way it was put together for the Air Force submission was very complicated. The submission was, I think, more complicated than it needed to be. I think that what has happened in trying to -- the Commission trying to fix BRAC for us as -- there's some language in there that makes it very challenging for us to do the kind of things that they've asked us to do, and have these organizations manned when they plussed [up] the BRAC, for example, and not being able to move manpower.

And I know that they were trying to do something to help protect the Guard presence in those communities. But I think the Air Force would have been much better served to just present an infrastructure BRAC-type submission rather than trying to roll in through BRAC law something that could not be undone.

I think we would have been better off just saying “These are the locations that we think need to close, and as far as moving iron and as far as people, that's something that the Guard Bureau should be charged with deciding.” You know, we work zip codes not the active Air Force. Fortunately, we have leadership now that believes that, and says “No, you guys. We'll agree on the missions and you decide where you think they ought to go.”

So it was a very challenging time, probably one of the most challenging. I'm not looking for sympathy here, but it's probably one of the most challenging times that I can imagine. I'm sure everyone thinks their watch, their particular stint as the Director was the toughest. But when you look at QDR [i.e., Quadrennial Defense Review] and BRAC and Future Total Force, and now some of the program budget decisions that we're going to have to deal with, it's probably one of the most challenging times that I've seen in my recent memory.

So the effect that they all have? We'll have to get a lot of language agreed upon, that what it really says we can and cannot do, and the lawyers are looking into that now. We'll have to work even closer with the governors than we ever did before, through their adjutants general, their leaders, to try to come to some kind of consensus as to what's going to go where and what they're willing to give up, and what they're willing to

take on and so forth.

DR. GROSS: Looking back on your tenure here, sir, as Director, what's your assessment overall of the -- I don't know how to put it -- the willingness and ability of the Air Force to make available appropriate missions and adequate resources to the Guard on a timely basis, to help affect this transformation that we've been talking about?

LT GEN JAMES: Well, it started out a little slow. Many of the things that we talked about really were -- they were not programs that had matured. They were not relationships that were matured. There were not things that were easily identified, have been identified as offsets manpower-wise.

Our biggest challenge became one of manpower and then equipment available. But the biggest challenge that still looms now is where we are going to get the manpower we need to do the new missions that we see coming down, and to do the associations that we've got on the books right now. That's the one factor I think is most problematic.

So at first, it was one of those, we were both going through the kind of unusual types of changes, and we had to start looking at things from a different perspective, and we're working even closer together than we ever had before. Before, it was kind of

“Okay, this is the Guard stuff. This is all their stuff. They get it.” Then we always -- they get it at this time, and these are the airplanes they're going to get, and these are going to leave and these folks are going to go to school, and you're going to keep the unit about the same size. There was no big challenge there other than making sure you had school slots to retrain your people.

Because we always went from one weapons system to another. Now sometimes it was drastic change. You know, you'd go from the O-2 in Stewart [International Airport, New York, formerly Stewart AFB], I think, from the O-2 all the way up to the C-5, you know. I think in Sioux City, Iowa, they went from the F-16s to the KC-135s. That's quite a change. But still it was an aircraft on the ramp, X number of them. Therefore, X number of people and there was very little changes in that regard. Some MILCON [i.e., military construction].

Now we're going through a much more dramatic changes, and it causes us to have to think a little differently. Both the active Air Force, coordinate even closer than we may have had to in the past when we had our stand-alone units with a pretty predictable future, pretty predictable missions.

The need to have participation by the Guard and the AEF, you know, like they say, doing some of this work is like trying to

fix, work on a car while you're driving it. I mean you participate in an AEF. We're trying to transform. We have BRAC, language that we have to get worked out.

We're looking at how big is the Air Guard going to be in the future. Right now, there's a program decision memorandum that says the number is going to be somewhere less than 100,000, probably closer to 93, [000] or so. When you look at the missions that we've been asked to do and that we've always stepped up to do, between FY '01 and even today, you can see that there's about 2,000 more people in the Air Guard doing new stuff for the Air Force than there were five years ago.

Which is not necessarily bad. It's just something we have to come to grips with, we have to cope with, because we can't afford to stop the car. We've got to keep -- but we can't afford not to fix the car. So it's real challenging.

DR. GROSS: Okay. One last transformation-related question. I believe last year you established an Office of Air Guard Transformation in CF [i.e., Office of the Director, Air National Guard], reporting directly to you. Why did you establish it there and what were your expectations for it at the time?

LT GEN JAMES: Okay. It became very apparent to me that my deputy and myself could not -- just having two general

officers here, just to go to the functions, the meetings and the conferences and appearances and stuff that we have to go to, could not focus on this very, very delicate process we talked about, of establishing a relationship with the states, establish a relationship with the MAJCOMs, establishing relationships with the Air Staff and so forth.

So we needed some place, a focal point to just do the business of transforming, transitioning and then ultimately transforming the force the way it looks today, as it looks today, to the force of the future.

So we brought in a general officer whose job it was, and I put it in CF because it needed to be tied closely to me and my deputy. I didn't want it to be a separate operation out there somewhere, because what will happen is you won't have the focus, you won't have the access, and if you put it as a part of XO, there will be XO issues that will creep into it or part of XP, or as we call it now our A-3 and our A-8 [i.e., Directorate of Programs and Analysis], that will creep there and be distracting.

So I wanted people that could just focus solely on that. I did something similar with the diversity. I established an Office of Transformation and Diversity, because again, I wanted it directly reporting to me so I could make sure that my vision

and my goals were known by the person running those branches, and people in the field or in the [Air] Directorate would see that this is very important to the Director, because it reports directly to him and he's watching its progress and he's getting constant visibility over these issues.

Because that's the only way you'll really be able to move through in the organization the organizational changes that you need to have happen in the period of time that you have as a director. That's why I established it there.

DR. GROSS: Okay. Well, just looking at each of those organizations, what's your assessment of each of them to date, how it's worked out for you in the case of transformation and diversity?

LT GEN JAMES: Well again, transformation has been difficult because of the amount of factors. You know, in a perfect world you have a QDR, right. Then from that QDR, you have your national security strategies and your national security objectives articulated through the department, in the form of a national military strategy.

The QDR would look at “Okay, those are the requirements then.” The QDR would say “Okay, we need to have this kind of balance in the different services, and these jobs will go to

this service. This job, these jobs to this one and this one.” So in this review, you would look at your forces and their capabilities, based on the requirements themselves.

In a perfect world you could go from them toward looking at what type of systems that are out there, that will give you these capabilities. Then you look at it from a point of view of “And how many bases do I need to batten down this force?” If it's not going to be projected, not going to be stationed forward, then it's going to have to be very mobile in some ways that we can project it forward quickly. And that look at your infrastructure and where that now goes is called a BRAC. As we know, these things, all of these things are kind of happening simultaneously instead of in a linear fashion, which is what makes it so challenging.

But all that being said, I think establishing the Office of Transformation is the right thing to do, and I'm happy with its progress. I know that the state knows where to call and who to talk to and what they're thinking, and I know what they're dealing with, because I get reports on it. As a matter of fact, I'm going to get back brief very shortly from General Lodrige [i.e., Brig. Gen. Duane Lodrige, Chief, Office of Transformation] and General Ickes [i.e., Brig. Gen. Charles Ickes, Deputy Director, ANG], because they went over to brief General Blum on the progress, what's red, what's yellow,

what's green.

We've got a chart and we have each state, and we can color-code it for MILCON or for equipment or for training, how we're moving toward this idea of evaluating, assessing and then deciding to do something in a state, and then trying to figure out in a reasonable amount of time that it would be [initially] operationally capable, IOC. So that we can give the states and the MAJCOMs for that matter, and therefore the Air Staff too, what they really want, and that's predictability. They want to be able to say, because what causes us the most turbulence in organizations, any organization, is not being able to predict what the next challenge is going to be and therefore how you're going to meet that.

So I think they're working well. Diversity also -- I picked the right person. [Lt. Col.] Bruce Stewart is the chief there. He's a very bright young man and has a great future ahead of him. He is working on his Ph.D., as a matter of fact. I don't know whether you knew that but --

DR. GROSS: No, I didn't.

LT GEN JAMES: Yes. He happens to be working on his Ph.D., and he sees the need for diversity become something that we don't have to focus on in one day because we will do it,

not just because people are telling us to do this, but because it's the right thing to do as a combat multiplier, a diverse force that takes in an office, the office positions throughout the organization, for people of any background, where they have the opportunity not only to serve but excel. That is the kind of force you want.

That force, when it's seen as one that gives opportunity, that rewards performance, and will be a much more efficient and effective combat force. That's the vision that has to be projected to the folks out in the field, because right now, they're working on that car that's running. It's like, "Oh, you're going to put something else on our plane? Yes. Well, I know this is important, but we'll get to it."

But if they understand that I have -- the expression that I always use is when I sit them in a flight room and we're looking at attacking a target, and if we all came from the same backgrounds, had the exact same experience, grew up in the same type of communities, with the same school, we would all have probably agreeing upon how we're going to do that.

But you take some people with diverse backgrounds and have them approach a problem, and try and get solution sets, and you're going to have four or five maybe different solution sets, and you're able to pick the best one. Now you have to be

careful about putting all four weapon school graduates on the same flight because they'll never agree on what the best weapon is.

DR. GROSS: I'm sure.

LT GEN JAMES: But I think they're working well and I think it's definitely the right thing to do. You have to sometimes structure the organization, put the emphasis you need at the particular challenging time that you're going through, to get results.

DR. GROSS: Okay. Well, can we switch gears for a little bit here now? Talk about General Blum and jointness. Before General Blum assumed his post as the Chief [of the Bureau] in the spring of 2003, it was my experience and one of their people told me, and history showed the Directors of the Army and Air Guard generally play a paramount role in allocating resources, setting policies, etcetera, etcetera.

Correctly or incorrectly, the Chief of the Bureau was seen by many as basically as a symbolic figure who largely flew top cover on Capitol Hill and did other things, but he wasn't seen as the person who exercised much clout in the day-to-day policy or operations. This may not be an accurate view, but it was a common view.

LT GEN JAMES: Okay.

DR. GROSS: Around this place.

LT GEN JAMES: Okay. Well speaking to individuals, this is my first tour at the Bureau, so all I know is what I've seen since I've been here. And perception is reality to those people working in the organization that feel that way.

But we've had a very collaborative process. General Blum is a very decisive person. He's got his vision for the National Guard, and he has taken not only the National Guard's image to a higher level, but he has elevated the prestige and the effectiveness of the position as Chief of the Guard Bureau because of the way he engages.

He's read his job title. He knows what he's supposed to be doing, and so if he says if I'm the primary means of communication between the Secretary of the Air Force and the Army, and the leadership of the Air Force and the Army and the states, then that's what I'm going to be. Now he will delegate those Army Guard-specific and Air Guard-specific matters to us, to run on a day-to-day basis. But that by no means means that he doesn't want visibility and information, and the ability to impact those decisions and where they're

going.

So he's been a very assertive boss with a great vision about understanding how important it will be to have joint structures in the states, so that these combatant commanders like NORTHCOM [i.e., Northern Command] who will have the responsibility of providing homeland events, can reach out and see an organization and interact with an organization that looks somewhat like they expect to see in terms of jointness and like to work with the big joint staff [in the Pentagon].

He's seen the need to have a joint staff in the Guard Bureau. And so he has been more visible, more hands on. But that doesn't mean by any means that he has overshadowed our ability to help formulate policy and processes. Not at all. He's trying to help us in making sure we have everything that we need to do that, but also some good guidance from the boss. That's what he gives us.

So I think he's balanced it off quite well, and I'm very pleased at what he's been able to do with not only the organization but the position of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau. If you look at the size of the National Guard, if you add the Army and Air National Guard together and the civilians, you've got almost a half a million people. That's a big organization.

DR. GROSS: That's a very big organization.

LT GEN JAMES: Before, the Directors were somewhat autonomous, and just kind of kept the boss informed. Now he's fully engaged with us, and when he needs to get engaged in an Army Guard issue, he sits down with Clyde Vaughn [i.e., LTG Clyde Vaughn, Director, Army National Guard (ARNG)] and as he did before with Roger Schultz [i.e., LTG Roger Schulz, former Director ARNG] because as he points out, he said "You know, as Chief of the Guard Bureau, I can say things that you can't say. I can give you direction and you can then go forth and say to the leaders of the MAJCOM or the Air staffers 'Hey, this is what my boss told me he wants. I'm just doing what my boss tells me.'"

Then if there's pushback, at certain times we say to him "Sir, it's time for you to go in and sit down and have a discussion with the Secretary of the Air Force, because this is the kind of guidance he's given and these are his expectations, and they're not going to be met based on the direction you just gave me. So I think you need to sit down with him and articulate those to him."

DR. GROSS: Can you give any specific examples of that that you can recall during his tenure here as Chief?

LT GEN JAMES: Yes. One specific example was the concept of having a -- when he had to go and talk to the Chief of Staff of the Air Force was the Deputy [ANG Director] position elevated to two-stars. The other very recent example, when he had to go in and talk to -- when he felt it necessary --

(Tape change.)

LT GEN JAMES: Just recently, when it came to announce that some of the states were kind of getting out ahead of the process and making the announcements. Recently, he wanted us to know that the Guard Bureau should be making these announcements, and the Secretary agreed. However, on this recent Total Force Integration Phase II, where we had more finality on some of these initiatives, the Air Force said "You'll make all the announcements." General Blum says "it's not time to announce these as a group. I need to work on some of them individually a little longer with the states, and when I'm ready, some of these things will be announced state by state."

I said "Well that's not what the Secretary of the Air Force is expecting. So I think it's gotten to the point now, sir, that it's time for you to sit down with him and explain to him the logic of your process, because the letters, drafts were already out as to what was going to happen, and it had already been briefed to the TAGs." The TAGs had the -- I think it was about three or

four pages of initiatives that they had looked over. The Hill had already seen it. So to make a public announcement about it like it was some brand new, not seen before today was kind of, in General Blum's mind, overcome by events.

He made a good point, where you saw where he worked very closely with the Missouri delegation, to make sure that this announcement about us being involved in the strategic long-range strike business, losing aircraft from St. Louis but getting more involved at Whiteman [AFB, Missouri] in strategic long-range bombing—global strike as we call it today.

The timing of all that has to be just right. So learning from that experience and others we've had, he said “I need to be the person who decides not only what will be announced but when it will be announced, and how it will be announced.”

So I said “It's time for you to talk to the Secretary, because he has a different expectation.” Because when you're working with different agencies or working with different parts of these agencies, the Department of Defense, its timing and information are critical. If you miss-time something or you don't have all the information you need, you'll miss an opportunity to manage people's expectations.

DR. GROSS: Oh, OK.

LT GEN JAMES: So if you don't manage or come up to people's expectations, then that gap between what they think you're supposed to be doing and what you think you're supposed to be doing becomes a danger zone that, depending on how large it is or what critical part of your evolution as an organization or as a leader, could cause people to be dissatisfied with how you're doing your job. So if the Secretary has an expectation that the Chief of the Guard Bureau is going to do something, and the Chief says I have an expectation that I'll be allowed to do it this way, you have to manage that expectation gap there.

DR. GROSS: Okay. Well, how has the role of the Chief or the changing role of the Chief under General Blum impacted on your relationship as Director, and your relationship with Headquarters Air Force?

LT GEN JAMES: Well, you know I would almost have to ask the two chiefs of staff of the Air Force "Did you like it this way?" I think there was a reluctance on the previous chief's part. He says "I have a Director of the Air Guard who was a three-star. That's the person that's an extension of my staff." And I think that General Jumper saw it as "Why do I have to deal -- I have Danny here to deal with. He's my Guard guy," quote.

General Moseley's taken a different approach. General Blum says "I want to be involved in this. I'm the Chief of the Guard Bureau. If you have a Guard issue, you need to come talk to me. There's a time when Danny can't speak for me. Sometimes, he's not going to be able to speak for me. I want to speak on this issue. Now it may not be in line with what you're expecting Danny to do."

So I think it has moved along the line of one that was used to dealing with the old type of system, -- the previous system, where the Director spoke for the Air Guard, and the Director spoke for the Army Guard, and the Chief spoke on some issues that concerned both, but wasn't really as actively engaged on a day-to-day basis as the Chief is today.

So it has changed, and I think neither situation was bad, but I will tell you that what we do today and the way General Blum engages and on the levels he engages at are really critical, because what's going on now with all these other influencers, as we talked about: QDR, BRAC, program decision memorandums and others that are out there that will affect us, it's really important to have your boss to come in, to enter the discussion, conversation and policymaking parts of this, at the level that he can enter as the Chief of the Guard Bureau.

In other words, when I get to a certain point where I know that I'm not -- I've tried to articulate the Air Guard's position, and I find that I'm not making headway, and nothing is necessarily changing, then I let General Blum know and then he goes to a level above the one I was discussing, and engages at that level. He will engage with the secretaries of -- not only that. He'll engage with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs [of Staff], and has on occasion in the past.

DR. GROSS: Once again, can you give us some examples of this kind of scenario?

LT GEN JAMES: Geez. I don't know that he's had to engage recently. I'm trying to remember. Well certainly this idea of a joint staff [at the NGB] was his idea.

DR. GROSS: Right.

LT GEN JAMES: And he had to, in fact, because the joints, the DOD Joint Staff were the ones that determined what joint billets go where and what's approved to this joint billet, and therefore you get credit for it or not and what have you.

So this whole concept of forming a joint staff basically with the resources that we had, was one that he developed and articulated, and I think sold to the Chairman and the Secretary.

I know that he's talked to the Secretary of Defense when he felt it was necessary. He's even engaged the President during [Hurricane] Katrina [in 2005] on his visit down there to the New Orleans area. He went and he took a look at what was going on.

So when it was time for the President to come, he got on Air Force One and talked with him, and tried to make him comfortable with the fact that the Guard can handle this situation as the primary point of contact being that the governor and the adjutant general. He was certain that we could now that we know the seriousness of the situation and what's required, and he basically told us. He said -- I don't know that he was that comfortable with it, and eventually put some more Title 10 forces in there, because he felt the pressure and need to do so. But at the time they were having their discussion, CNN [i.e., Cable News Network] starts showing trucks coming through the water, taking food and supplies to the Superdome and the [New Orleans] Convention Center-- National Guard vehicles. He even says today, you know, I bought us about 24 hours to get some more troops and some more things in that area to help those folks, so that this didn't become a Title 10 operation. I think he influenced that delaying of that decision.

DR. GROSS: Why was it so important to him that it not

become a Title 10 operation?

LT GEN JAMES: Because then you start to usurp the legitimate responsibilities and command authorities of that governor and that adjutant general. The governor and the adjutant general are going to be held accountable for what happens in that state, so you've got to give them the opportunity to delete, and to make the decisions and develop plans and develop organizational structures that respond.

One of the lessons learned, I think we will learn from Katrina is that there was a decision made to put certain command and control equipment at a certain place that got flooded. But it never flooded before. Well, we'd never had three levees break that I know of. I can't remember in my lifetime having three flood control walls that stood on top of the levees be undermined by the water and flood the entire city. I can't remember that happening.

So as a result, we're using an old paradigm and said "Okay, we can operate this." So they lost their command and control. They lost the communications. They didn't have awareness of what was going on, and by the time the water started rising in the city, it was too late.

Then getting -- people were somewhat trapped. So they went

to the high ground where it wasn't really set up for that many people, I don't think. But anyway, the lessons learned from that is you've got to have the governor and state active duty, and then later Title 32 [United States Code], which he convinced the DOD to give us the authorization. General Blum went to the Undersecretary of Defense and said "I need Title 32 authorization for these folks, so I can have the resources available to not only pay them but to do what I need to do."

For me and the Air Guard, it was very critical that he did that, because if you remember, that occurred at the very end of the fiscal year. So most of my units had flown out their flying hour allocation. If we hadn't had Title 32 authorization to continue doing those missions in that status, we wouldn't have been able to respond the way we did.

If we had not responded, those goods and those soldiers would not have gotten there. That equipment, supplies and what-not would not have been there. In a 24 hour period of time, it would not have just been -- the criticism would not just have been about the federal response as in FEMA [i.e., Federal Emergency Management Agency], but the Guard's response overall.

DR. GROSS: Okay. So it was a pretty close thing, then. Sir,

what's your assessment at this point in time of the functioning roles of the provisional -- I guess we can still call it provisional -- joint Guard Bureau organization that General Blum has set up here in the Bureau?

LT GEN JAMES: Some parts of it are working better than others, and some of it's personnel-driven and some of it's the fact that, you know, we've never done this before. So but it's kind of like my Office of Transformation. It's moving along.

We've got to really concentrate on this Joint Operations Center [i.e., JOC], and how in a time of stress and incredible demands on our people in the states like we had in [Hurricane] Katrina, how it interfaces with the two directorates, because we're the force providers for the response, okay, and we've done this before for other things, federal missions, and we pretty much got our, what we call Crisis Action Team (CAT) and General Vaughan's Army National Guard Operations Center, we've got that all up and running and it works well.

We can surge because we've done it before. We did it in 9/11, when we went from, what was it seven sites and 14 aircraft on alert in this country to some 70-something airplanes within hours.

So that relationship between the JOC, I think, showed the most

stress when we were challenged by Katrina. So the Joint Operations Center or, some people look at it and say it should be an information center, because it doesn't really operate anything, the states do that. They can have operations centers within the states, and what the [inaudible] does or as General Blum wants it, the JOC, it really passes information and needs and requirements and when and how many is it where are going to happen, as opposed to a true command center.

Because remember, our unique relationship in this Bureau is that we don't command anybody.

DR. GROSS: Right.

LT GEN JAMES: And because of that, unlike the Air Force Reserve and others, there are certain directions that you can give that you don't have to coordinate - just to coordinate, that you have legitimacy and authority to do that we can't do.

Fortunately, all the TAGs know that when one TAG is challenged like Mississippi or Louisiana, they know that theirs may be next. So they're very willing to cooperate with one another, to get the people and the materiel that they need, and the kind of equipment they need, whether it be helicopters, whether it be generators, whether it be the high water -- the high profile vehicles that can drive through water. Whether it

be engineers, REDHORSE [i.e., Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operations Repair Squadron Engineers] or whoever needs to be there.

They know that it may be them next, and they're very -- most states have an agreement already laid out for the neighboring states, so that they can interact properly when challenged by Mother Nature or by man-made disasters.

DR. GROSS: So aside from the dramatic example of the JOC, what about the more routine things for the ordinary, you know, staff organization and personnel, whatever?

LT GEN JAMES: Well, what we have to do is decide how much you want your joint staff to do, because the expertise is in the two directorates. I think we spent a lot of time developing that expertise.

So how much do you want the joint staff to actually control or develop policies and procedures for? Because that's going to determine how big those staffs will be, and what we will have to stop doing to put people on that staff.

DR. GROSS: Right.

LT GEN JAMES: The way it is now and the way I envisioned

it is the expertise and the bodies, the numbers stay within the two directorates. You have a joint staff that oversees a certain function, whether it be operations or whether it be personnel, for example, or logistics.

You have two very experienced, say, people running that joint staff number one and number two position. But they're almost joined at the hip with their Army and their Air counterpart, ours being out at the [Air National Guard] Readiness Center at Andrews [AFB, Maryland] and the Army's being at the Army National Guard Readiness Center here in Arlington, [Virginia].

In developing that kind of relationship, it becomes a functional relationship. Otherwise, if you don't clearly understand how much of what you want those joint staffs to do, and if you don't use the model that we tried to use in the Pentagon here, where you have the big Joint Staff [in the Pentagon], then you'll have those Joint Staff members borrowing, trying to get down into business at a certain level within the directorates. And quite frankly, it will slow things down, mess them up. There's a chance for people to feel as though you're getting into their business. But if you use as we did and we talked about the states before, the Title 10 versus Title 32 force. If we support them, they don't have to come down and do the day-to-day staff work, and therefore their staffs don't have to be that big. They don't have to have the level of expertise that we are able

to provide, I think it will work.

But if it gets to be a large animal that requires constant feeding, and gets bigger and bigger and bigger, you're just going to be duplicating what you have in the directorates, and then the directorates will get smaller, and you lose the expertise you have. And the people in the field are so used to dealing with the directorates and knowing where that expertise lies, and you'll have some duplication and waste. And what General Blum is trying to do is promote efficiencies.

DR. GROSS: Where are now, in your view, in sorting out those relationships between the Joint Staff and functional folks?

LT GEN JAMES: Oh, I think we're a little more than halfway. As I said, the one that I saw that needed the most work came during the Katrina and that was the JOC, Joint Operations Center.

DR. GROSS: Okay, okay. What about the Joint Force State Headquarters that General Blum has had the states set up? What's your assessment of that innovation?

LT GEN JAMES: I would say that there's some that are functioning very well already, there's some that are moving

towards that, and there's some that just -- that are conceptually, as well as practically, they just haven't figured out exactly how they're going to do this.

They're trying to do it on good will and say if General Blum says this is what we need to do, then that's what we need to do. However, I think they're getting to the point where just like you have different sides, states with different challenges in some of the states, you have different challenges in some of the states in terms of getting that joint headquarters really functioning, really having meaningful work done by that group.

Because remember as I talked about earlier, the reason -- General Blum's vision was that when the Chief of Staff of NORTHCOM needs to know something about a state or something done in a state, he turns and he sees an organization that looks like what he's used to dealing with, so he knows what part of the phone book to pick up to contact who to get what done.

And that's kind of an analogy that General Moseley uses too. That's why he went to the A Staff. Instead of the Director of Manpower and Personnel, he's know his A-1, okay. Well General Blum and therefore the joint staff and the combatant commanders, when they come to deal with the Air Force, they know that the Air Force is going and its concept of an A Staff.

General Blum's done the same thing with the states and with the Bureau, by having a piece of it that is joint. So they know well, you need to talk to the J-3 [i.e., Director of Operations] in the state, or you need to the J-3 at the Guard Bureau, and it makes sense. It's something they recognize.

DR. GROSS: My understanding in the states is that, you know, the approach in the Army Guard and the Air Guard is quite different in some respects. First of all, that most of our full-time resources in Air Guard are usually at the wings.

LT GEN JAMES: That's correct.

DR. GROSS: They're not at the state headquarters. It's quite the reverse --

LT GEN JAMES: One of the things that I think was misunderstood when General Blum first came in, he came in and he started talking about we got this state headquarters. We've got like three headquarters in every state. Well it's not necessarily true in terms of the size. There may have been a division or a brigade headquarters in the Army, and then there was a state area command, which did have a few hundred people in it.

DR. GROSS: Yes, the STARCs [i.e., State Area Commands].

LT GEN JAMES: The STARCs. But on the Air side of the house, through reengineering some years ago -- oh, I think it was at least eight years ago when General Kimmel [i.e., Brig. Paul Kimmel, formerly the ANG Chief Operating Office in the Air Directorate] was here and they went through this reengineering process, they pushed down as much of the full-time allocations as they could from what used to be a state headquarters, so that they would have people in the wings. And that's why we're able to process and mobilize and deploy our people, that in addition to the training resources we get. We decided that we didn't need a very big state headquarters.

DR. GROSS: Yes.

LT GEN JAMES So when he thought about headquarters in the states, he thought about this thing that was maybe a division or a brigade headquarters. Then he thought about a STARC, and then he thought about Air Guard Headquarters, and he's thinking that there's 100, 200 people in that Air Guard Headquarters too, when in fact there's not. There's about 24.

DR. GROSS: Yes.

LT GEN JAMES: Only about eight of them are full-time.

DR. GROSS: I mean, so there's this thing, and then there's also, at least the perception I have is that, you know, most of the decisions and running and whatever were really made to the Wing headquarters. This is what you're going to do, this is what you're going to follow, this is what you're going to train, and it was the same way in the Army. A lot of decisions were made, I understand from my Army folks, at the STARC or whatever.

LT GEN JAMES: Exactly.

DR. GROSS: So how do you put these things together?

LT GEN JAMES: And the reason why it was done that way is kind of like the difference between what you pointed out between how the states, how the Guard Bureau operated under previous chiefs, with the two Directors being somewhat, you know, autonomous, with a coordination and an informing function. Very little coordination; just doing and informing, to moving to one where it was more interactive.

Well, the states, remember most of the TAGs were Army TAGs. So in addition to being -- and their position physically located was in the STARC headquarters, although they had a

deputy who ran the STARCs for them, ran the staffs for them. But they were the boss, and they sat there using the STARC headquarters, and they were Army GOs. So everything came down from them, and they had oversight of all that. And they kind of let the Air Guard run itself as long as there was no problems, you know, as long as there was no embarrassment or anything caused. But now that's all started to change. It started to change back when I was a TAG, and now it has evolved to having a more joint outlook, and a more joint structure.

You'll see in the states now in some of these joint forces headquarters, the ones that have really got it figured out and are working pretty smoothly, you'll see that sometimes the deputy of the Joint Force headquarters is in fact the Air Guard, the senior Air Guard officer or the operations chief is the Air Guard officer. So the structure and the integration of the blue and the green in the states is occurring, I think, more than it ever has in the past. But in the past, you operate more autonomously or separately, let's at least say, because at the time this may sound like you're being insubordinate. You operated more separately, independently is the word I'm looking at. Independently is what I'm looking for, and not interacting. So we've gone from what the SECDEF's [i.e., Secretary of Defense] vision is of deconfliction, independence, interaction, to the next phase will be interdependence.

DR. GROSS: Okay, okay. Okay. But this kind of brings up a question that's been lurking in the back of the Gross noodle for a while. On the Title 10 part of the Air Guard and the Army Guard business, the war fighting business, my understanding of Air Force doctrine and practice is that, you know, the Air Force presents or provides forces to the joint commander in Europe, SOUTHCOM [i.e., Southern Command], CENTCOM [i.e., Central Command] , you know, and they could be Guard, Reserve or active duty. I mean it doesn't -- how do I say that? I'm having trouble understanding how that jibes with jointness here, because you know as far as the Title 10 responsibilities and training and preparation, I mean does that get in the way of that?

I mean, you know, the Air Force doesn't look for a joint package of Army and Air Guard stuff to present to the commander in Europe or CENTCOM or something. They look for any Air Guard, some people with blue suits, and then they integrate them or present them in Europe or in the Middle East or in --

And so how does this jibe with the path we're on in the Guard Bureau?

LT GEN JAMES: So you're trying to say are we on the right track?

DR. GROSS: Yes, and how does the Air Force see this?

LT GEN JAMES: I'm not sure how the Air Force sees it. You know, the Air Force is studying its own structure now, and they're going to these war fighting headquarters instead of these structures, these Cold War-type structures where you had these major commands. So in the Pacific, there's the Kenney Headquarters, which is a war fighting headquarters and the former vice commander of Pacific Air Forces now runs -- is that belly button for the force provider, which is the Commander, Pacific Air Forces.

DR. GROSS: But is he still -- he's still a blue?

LT GEN JAMES: He's still blue.

DR. GROSS: I mean it's not purple or anything?

LT GEN JAMES: No, not really. It's not, not really.

DR. GROSS: You don't expect for them to be sort of directing any Navy ships any time soon?

LT GEN JAMES: No, no. That's why you have a CENTCOM commander.

DR. GROSS: Yes, yes. So I don't know.

LT GEN JAMES: I see what you're saying.

DR. GROSS: Yes.

LT GEN JAMES: How do we get around -- when are we going to make that transition?

DR. GROSS: Yes, because here we are. The Air Force has (inaudible), go to war.

LT GEN JAMES: And you go with us, and we're going to go. You're going to provide our forces to this Army four-star that happens to be located in this -- or this Admiral.

DR. GROSS: Or General Jones over -- I guess General Jones [i.e., NATO's commander] over in Brussels.

LT GEN JAMES: Yes, in Brussels. Or right here, Admiral Keating [i.e., NORTHCOM's commander] right here.

DR. GROSS: Yes, okay. Where does that fit in?

LT GEN JAMES: When do we stop being an Air Force force

provider and become, start being a joint force provider?

DR. GROSS: Or will we ever actually be for time of war?

LT GEN JAMES: Well, that's what we have to sort out, because as we build -- we're trying to figure this out. As we build these war fighting headquarters, certainly the Air Force is building blue war fighting headquarters.

DR. GROSS: No kidding, yes.

LT GEN JAMES: But they're laying those out, and they're going to show you where this plugs into the JFACC [i.e., Joint Force Air Component Commander] job.

DR. GROSS: Right, okay.

LT GEN JAMES: He has this belly button to push for space and information, intelligence and reconnaissance, okay, and he has -- this belly button he can push if the commander, combatant commander says "I need to know what's going on in this part of my—"

What we have to try to make sure that he doesn't do is say "I need two Predator orbits for this part of my AO [i.e., area of operations]." Because as an Air Force, there's different ways

we can provide him with the information he needs.

DR. GROSS: Right.

LT GEN JAMES: We don't want him to be so specific that he tells us what platform he wants it from.

DR. GROSS: He tells us what he needs --

LT GEN JAMES: Tells what he needs.

DR. GROSS: We tell him how to get it.

LT GEN JAMES: And we'll get it to him.

DR. GROSS: Yes, okay.

LT GEN JAMES: And eventually we will evolve in the military to the point where he may not come to the Air Force. He may just lay that out there, just like you'd lay a bid out, and say "I need this," and the different services will say "Well, we can provide this," and the other -- Navy says "No, we can do that. We already have something set up to do that, and here's how we do it."

So we're making that shift from these, I think what we call

pretty rigid stovepipes or tribes, into more joint operation. But when does the commander of Air Combat Command, who's a major force provider for shooters, stop being blue only, or is that not his job? Is his job juts to make sure he has the best-equipped, trained and led shooters that happen to wear blue suits, and let the CENTCOM commander decide?

DR. GROSS: Yes. I think what's what his job is now, isn't it?

LT GEN JAMES: That's what his job is now basically. It really is.

DR. GROSS: Well, this was puzzling for me.

LT GEN JAMES: It's very interesting. It's where we're going and how this is going to work. We'll eventually do away with major air commands, and have AFNORTH and AFEUROPE.

DR. GROSS: AFCENT.

LT GEN JAMES: And they will do what -- you see originally, when the Air Force looked at it, they said "Well, the actual fighting stuff will be from the war fighting headquarters, and all the support stuff will be done at the MAJCOM.." Then they said "Well really, do we want to do it that way?" How do you decide which? -- it blurs that line between support and fighting.

So they're going through, I think, a process of trying to evolve.

(Interview was concluded.)

LT. GENERAL DANIEL JAMES, III
24 MARCH 2006

DR. GROSS: Today's date is 24 March, 2006. I'm Dr. Charles J. Gross, the Chief of Air National Guard History in the National Guard Bureau. I will be interviewing Lieutenant General Daniel James, III, the Director of the Air National Guard in his offices in Crystal City, Virginia.

DR. GROSS: General James, why don't you identify yourself first, and then we'll press ahead with your comments?

LT GEN JAMES: Lieutenant General Daniel James, III, Director, Air National Guard, and this is our third session with the historian, Dr. Gross.

We were just talking about one of the things that we covered in a previous conversation, and he made a comment, that [Maj.] Gen. [Donald W.] Shepperd [ANG Director, 28 January 1994- 27 January 1998] characterized this job as "like herding cats." I said well, you have to practice the art of persuasion, and try to build credibility through communication and inclusiveness. Because the minute you lose any credibility and trust with the TAGs, the job becomes really, really difficult to do, because you don't have command authority. The governors have command authority over the TAGs. You don't regardless of the fact that they now have the positions at the three-star. The TAGs know that and you know that, but they generally will respect you if you're honest and open with them. Any time you start to lose

credibility, it will diminish your ability to be effective.

There was a period of time when we were under great stress as we were going through what we called Future Total Force and BRAC and now QDR [i.e., Quadrennial Defense Review]. I think my credibility with TAGs has risen again, because they've seen how difficult work this is. But at one time there, I think, I was suffering from some criticism because they didn't think I was being open with them. There were some deals being made with individual states, and I wasn't dealing with this across the board. So it is a difficult position. These are probably the most difficult times that I can remember being the Director.

DR. GROSS: Okay. Well thank you sir. The last time we got together earlier this week, you had discussed at some length the additional general officer billets that you added to the staff here. Before that, General Blum and his emphasis on jointness in the Bureau and your joint state headquarters. Are there any additional thoughts or comments you'd like to make on those two subjects before we press on?

LT GEN JAMES: Okay. The additional billets, we had to use part-time general officer positions, positions that we harvested from the ANG Assistant Program because what was happening was my two digits were out horse-powered, outgunned by rank, outranked simply by their contemporaries that they were having to meet with.

So I'm sending a full colonel, an 06, to a meeting, to talk about XO [Directorate of Operations] or DP [i.e., Directorate of Personnel and

Training] or XP [i.e., Directorate of Plans, Programs and Manpower] or any of those issues, LG [i.e., Directorate of Logistics], that are very, very important, and the level of that two digit on the Air Staff was a three-star.

So even if his deputy's conducting the meeting, you're having a colonel talking, trying to have dialogue with a two-star. So it was just an inequity that I tried to offset by at least getting these four individuals to the rank of a flag officer, and by using some head space from the ANG Assistant Program. So far it's worked better for us. Actually, there are five positions that I've moved, been able to move up. I think when I look back on what we've accomplished here, I think that will be one of the things I'll be very satisfied with being able to make happen.

DR. GROSS: What about -- well, speaking of general officer positions, what about the elevation of rank of your deputy, [Major] General [Charles] Ickes. How did that come about and what was the process or the thinking behind that?

LT GEN JAMES: Well, it was to try to correct, and I think we're going to have to go back and have it corrected by statute also. But it was to try to correct an inequity again. The deputies for the three-star positions on the Air Staff are two-stars.

When they elevated the Directors' rank from three-star from two-star to three star, they didn't elevate the deputies' rank to two-star, which they should have.

DR. GROSS: That being Congress in this case?

LT GEN JAMES: I believe it was -- I think it's in Title 10[United States Code]. I believe so, but I'm not sure which section it is in. So the statute will probably have to be changed. We can research that after we finish the interview, and we can correct it for the record.

So basically our deputies were never elevated when we were elevated to three-star. People say "Well, you know, the Chief of the Air Force Reserve's deputy is a one-star." His deputy at the Pentagon is a one-star, but he has a vice commander that's a two-star at Robins [Georgia]. So he has a vice commander -- he has a two-star working for him in Title 10 status or maybe it's [inaudible] status. But anyway, full time.

So I'm not against the deputy of the Air Force Reserve being elevated. I'm just saying that our guy really needed to be elevated from the very beginning. I'm glad this was able to -- again, this is another thing I'll be very happy that it happened during the time I was the Director. General Blum engaged in this with the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, and convinced him that that was the right thing to do.

There was a request by the Chief of Staff of the Air Force to have an Air National Guard assistant two-star that would work closer to him. General Blum said "Well, I don't have that on the Army side. I don't have somebody, a two-star traditional Guard member working as the special assistant to the Chief of Staff of the Army. Why would I do it for the Air Force?" But not wanting to be -- to say no to the Chief of Staff, it

was pretty apparent that he wanted to see this happen, and he had an individual in mind that he wanted. He said -- I think General Blum really said "Well okay. The problem with that is now you undermine the authority of the Deputy Director of the Air Guard, because he's a one-star."

I think the compromise was struck that we said "Okay, we'll elevate your deputy." You see, so if you're really set on doing this, I think the conversation went something like this. I wasn't privy to it; I wasn't in the room. "If you're really set on doing this, then how about finding head space for my deputy director as a two-star." And that's what happened.

DR. GROSS: Okay. This was all in the roll of the active duty Air Force, then, for general officers, these positions?

LT GEN JAMES: Absolutely, yes. Well now, the thing that General Blum insisted upon, he insisted that this special assistant that's going to work with the Chief of Staff, he insisted that this individual really report to him. So he's a special assistant to the Chief of the Guard Bureau, not a special assistant to the Chief of Staff of the Air Force.

DR. GROSS: Oh, okay.

LT GEN JAMES: That was key, because if the chief is not happy with what's going on, he can bring him in and say "Look, you're out of your lane here. Here's what I want you to do and I don't want you to do these kinds of things. If General Moseley wants you doing something else,

then I need to have a talk with him.”

So far we haven't had that, to the best of my knowledge. But I'm going to have to set up a way of routinely having this individual either e-mail me and keep me up to what he's doing, or come in and give me a report, a verbal assessment of how he's being used and some of the things he's engaged in, because right now, I don't have any visibility. He may be doing that with General Blum, but I doubt it. So I'm concerned. I want to make sure there's some structure in how this individual works, in terms of how he keeps General Blum and I informed on what projects he's working on for the Chief of Staff.

Some folks are really good at that. I have some staff officers that just -- some ANG assistants that are really good about letting me know what's going on, even though they're -- technically they work for -- they're selected by General Blum. Uh-oh, my boss is here. Oh, I thought that was Mrs. James. I heard that voice, and I thought there --

DR. GROSS: We can relax now.

LT GEN JAMES: Yes. We can relax.

DR. GROSS: Has the name of this general officer been announced publicly yet?

LT GEN JAMES: Which one?

DR. GROSS: As far as the assistant to --

LT GEN JAMES: General Blum? Yes. His name is Maj. Gen. George Patrick. He's got a really strong background. He's from the stellar unit in South Carolina.

DR. GROSS: South Carolina, yes. I [*sic*] interviewed him a couple of years ago.

LT GEN JAMES: It was pretty apparent that General Moseley had a lot of faith and credibility in this guy, because of the way they worked together before. So I think a lot of it has to do with his relationship as a CENTAF commander, being right there at Shaw [AFB, South Carolina], and General Patrick being right there at McIntyre [ANG Base, South Carolina]. They had a lot of interaction.

So you know, you want to give the four-star a person that they want to work with. That's why when we do ANG assistants, the previous approach to it was we look at the names, we select one, give it to General Blum and then it's forwarded to the MAJCOM, and if they don't like the name, then they can send it back to us. Well, it probably won't work that way. They'll probably take the name and then not use the person. So now I invite the four-stars to let me know if there's somebody in the organization that they have a relationship with, and if they would like to send in a "by name" request after we do our board process.

If this person -- because what I want, would encourage the individual to

do is to put his name in the hat, be nominated by his governor for one of the positions, and compete with the others. Then let General Blum say "Well, he competed, but he didn't come out one or two. If you really want him, I'll reconsider it. But right now, he doesn't have the credentials."

So if the MAJCOM commander wants a specific individual, I would suggest then that he put it in a binding request after the board process, if the individual doesn't come out to the top of the board. Because I would rather -- you see, the reason I say that, people say "No, the board process has to be the only way."

If the individual who we want to send is not the person that the four-star would prefer having, how effective is he going to be? I think the person that the four star would prefer having will be more effective, because usually the reason why they ask for someone is because they have a relationship with them from a previous squadron or wing or what have you when they were on active duty. This was the case recently in one of the MAJCOMs, where the individual said "If this individual's available, I would really like him, because I flew with him back in the A-7 [fighter bomber] days." So it works better that way.

DR. GROSS: Okay, okay.

LT GEN JAMES: So that's a little change in the way we've done it in the past. We still have a board process. We still have an objective process. It's just the four-star has the right to ask for someone.

DR. GROSS: Yes. Well it sounds like your situation with General Ickes, his position could be kind of temporary unless the law is changed.

LT GEN JAMES: Well, that's what we wanted -- we don't want the next person to revert solely to a one-star. That question could be answered very quickly with a quick phone call to GOMO [i.e., the NGB's General Officer Management Office], and say, ask the people in that shop are we entertaining having a statutory change that would --

DR. GROSS: Well, I can do that easily enough after we finish. Okay. Any other thoughts on that question?

LT GEN JAMES: No.

DR. GROSS: Okay. Well, I've got a couple more questions we didn't get to last time. Of course, during your tenure here, the Air Force and the Guard changed in some significant ways in the last four or five years. How do you believe some of these changes, such as the emergence of associate units, more emphasis on non-flying missions, higher ops tempo, have affected, you know, the Guard's organization and its culture?

I realize this is somewhat a rehash of some of the things we talked about before. But how are we different and where are we going as a result of these changes?

LT GEN JAMES: Well, first of all, some of these changes are so new in their evolution. It's so early, it's hard to get a feel for how it will affect the culture, because the culture will be changed over a couple of years. For example, JSTARS has now been in an integrated [i.e., blended ANG/Air Force] unit, and it's been functioning now for about four years.

So if I were to talk to the folks, and you might want to take the opportunity to talk to [Brigadier] General Tom Lynn, who was the wing commander, who's now one of the one-stars on this staff that we referred to earlier, that was elevated -- the position was elevated to one-star. He can tell you how the culture changed within a unit. I know that operationally, they're meeting mission very well. You can't tell. You have to ask people who's Guard, who's active. The only real person on the crew that you could see was --

DR. GROSS: So we were talking about changes in the Guard, and what's going to happen to its culture and orientation?

LT GEN JAMES: I'm sure that there will be some changes. Hopefully the changes will be all positive in terms of the culture. My hope is that these associations will strengthen the strong parts of our culture, and also expose our strengths to the active component.

One of our biggest challenges is we take a lot of time to understand how Title 10 and the active component works. They don't know how we work. They don't spend the same amount of time trying to learn us. So

they tend to go about their business as though we're like them but just more part-timers.

So when it's time to make policy and set guidance and policy and directions for training or for inspection cycles or for whatever, they tend to want to do that and then say "Okay here. Chop on it." Once a person like Major Jeffrey W. Devore, who's been my traveling exec, goes back to an active duty [C-]130 unit like he's going to do over the summer, and becomes the DO [i.e., Director of Operations], and works an association, an active Guard association --

DR. GROSS: Really?

LT GEN JAMES: Yes.

DR. GROSS: Whereabouts?

LT GEN JAMES: In Wyoming.

DR. GROSS: Oh, okay. That's right. We talked about that.

LT GEN JAMES: Then those active duty members who come to that association and learn about the Guard, and then they go back into some other active duty organization or staff, I think it will bring good benefits for us. I think it will tend to be an educational experience. I think it will tear down some barriers, some misunderstandings and misconceptions, and I think it will be positive.

I'm concerned about one of the associations that was proposed recently, because of the absorption problem of the, I'll call seasoning of the pilots. They're not enough experienced pilots in certain weapons systems. So the Air Force is proposing to have us bring them into our units, and that's fine as long as they bring resources, i.e., maintenance and flying time with it.

As long as in the unit that we are in fact robusting, and therefore we won't displace a lot of our people. Now what I'm afraid has happened here is the Air Force sees a problem not only of seasoning their people but also having enough quote "rated people" to go into some of the jobs that right now require rated people, and some of the jobs that are going to require even more, like the TACPs [i.e., Tactical Air Control Parties] that the Army -- we've agreed to have more presence in the Army as they reorganize and get into more of a modular rotation of force like ours.

That being said, I would rather see my force go into flying units that are training missions like the initial pilot introduction to fighter basics and fundamentals, what you call [inaudible] now, or our FTUs [i.e., Fighter Training Units], or UPT [i.e., Undergraduate Pilot Training] bases, and have an association there that would free up experienced pilots to man these rated positions that are non-flying positions.

I'm not saying that we shouldn't do some AOC [i.e., Air Operations Center] work, where we're in the air operation centers and air operations contingency response group and some of those things. I'm not saying

that. I'm just saying that we have to be careful that it's helping the Air Force solve a challenge that they have, so that we don't create even a bigger challenge for ourselves.

DR. GROSS: Yes. Well, I think in the 80's or I'm not sure exactly when, we do have people --

LT GEN JAMES: Yes. We called it Project Season.

DR. GROSS: But the resources didn't come with them, I believe.

LT GEN JAMES: Right, and there weren't many. There were only about three. I was in the unit in San Antonio and we had three, and what happened was almost to a man, in every unit, those individuals left the unit, went to their next rotation, and as soon as their commitment was up, came back to the Guard unit and joined the Guard.

(Simultaneous discussion.)

LT GEN JAMES: So the active duty wasn't very happy with that. We called it Project Season and they called it "Project Treason."

DR. GROSS: Yes.

LT GEN JAMES: But we have a different situation now because of the obligation that you take from pilot training and then from your lead-in course and then your FTU. So our pilots won't be able and go and do --

our crew members won't be able go and do a subsequent three or four year tour and then leave. They're going to be committed for a much longer time.

DR. GROSS: Oh, okay. So I don't think it will be...

LT GEN JAMES: So I don't think it will be -- the migration won't be as easy or as large as it was before.

DR. GROSS: So the challenge is still the resource issue to go with that -

LT GEN JAMES: The challenge is the resource issue, and the challenge is much of we are -- some of our units will say "Hey, you've given away cockpits." Our people come to the Guard because they want to fly.

If they leave active duty and they want to come to the unit and you don't have an opening because you've got all the folks that you are absorbing into your system to season, give experience, that's a person that we could have turned into a Guardsman that wants to come off active duty and join the unit. Now we don't have a cockpit for him. That's one of the criticisms of it.

So we have to be careful that, as I said, that we don't -- that's part of the culture that says people join the Guard, "A" leaders join the Guard to fly. They don't join the Guard to go sit in AOC, in large wholesale numbers.

So if there's a person who's senior in their Guard unit, who wants to

make lieutenant colonel and there's not a slot there for him, and he has an opportunity to participate in another mission like an AOC, and he's ready to stop flying per se but he doesn't want to leave the unit, they can take that expertise to a position that's in a command center, then fine, fine. You free up a cockpit for someone coming off active duty that wants to fly. People join the Guard and come off active duty to go into the Guard for a reason, and that reason is to fly and not to go right into a non-flying billet in most cases.

DR. GROSS: Are we still getting most of our new pilots from the active force or how does that work? I mean historically, we've recruited almost -- well, a large percentage of our pilots from people leaving active duty for various reasons?

LT GEN JAMES: True. I think so. I think the majority of people that come to us, especially the pilots that are captains, we grow our own, we have folks that we commissioned and sent to pilot training and sent to the lead-in and send to FTU.

DR. GROSS: So-called "Guard babies."

LT GEN JAMES: So-called "Guard babies" that have never been on active duty, and we have a mix. I think it's healthy to have that mix.

DR. GROSS: Do you have any -- well, I wonder what the -- I don't know what the current mix is?

LT GEN JAMES: No. I'm sure that our personnel folks, our [NGB] A1 [i.e., Personnel] folks can tell you that.

DR. GROSS: Okay. Well, this leads into another question I have, a general question for another time. The Guard has overall, not just the pilots, has gone from an organization that certainly through the time I did my dissertation in the 90's, that went up through the Korean War, had about 67 percent of its people coming -- from the late 40's on up to the Korean War, were prior service -- historically.

Now we appear to be shifting that one that has the majority or near-majority of its people non-prior service, particularly the new ones coming in. What accounts for the shift and what impact, from your perspective, is that going to have on the Guard, both in terms of program and how you run a unit?

LT GEN JAMES: Well, the shift, and we see this as an enlisted force more so than -- we don't, we're not assessing as many or transferring from active into the Guard as many non-prior service people. I think you see it more in the Army, and part of it is because of op tempo. One of the reasons that folks left is because the op tempo and rotations got to the point, at least I know in the Army Guard, because the active component op tempo was so hot, to the point where they said "Okay, enough." "So they don't go from the active component into the Guard as much.

In the Air side and the officer side, I think we still get a good number of folks on the officer side, especially on the flying mission. I do know that

we have a shortage of junior officers in the Air Guard, you know, first lieutenant, second lieutenants, first lieutenants. I think they are openings. There are percentages in every unit that would like to fill with more junior officers.

But the shift from non-prior service being in the minority to non-prior service being in the majority, I don't see that that is necessarily anything we should be really concerned about. I think it's just is a result of the times and the tempo, and the desires of folks who leave to continue to do something else. Certainly if they're strong performers -- remember, the outside world, civilian world is looking for people who have discipline, measure up to standards, accountability and have some experience, that have been trained in leadership. So we're competing for some of the same people that the other companies out there are competing for.

DR. GROSS: But has this had any impact on what you have to program for, plan for, either here or your adjutant general down in Texas --

LT GEN JAMES: Well, yes. I would say that the effect it has, and I just had a meeting with some of the authorizers on the Hill [i.e., Congress] to explain to them that in the past, because of the prior service numbers that we got, we could get by. Because we didn't have the kind of security issues we've had post-9/11 on our bases, we could get by with a smaller budget for advertising and for recruiting.

Now, with the turbulence caused by BRAC and having transformation into new missions, and people retiring earlier, our losses have increased.

We had the luxury of having getting by with a smaller budget, so I asked for more funding. I asked for significantly more funding in the next year, and hopefully they will authorize that, and the appropriators will see it the same way.

We did a study, and the study said that if you want to reverse the trend of not making end-strength, you would have to spend about \$50 million. Right now we spend about ten.

DR. GROSS: On what?

LT GEN JAMES: In our recruiting budget, recruiting and advertising budget. You would have to reverse the trend in order to stop it and start it up, spend about \$50 million in the next fiscal year, and then about 20 total. In other words, double your old budget to sustain that, just to get it turned around, because of the amount of advertising you'd have to do.

So I asked for more recruiters or positions for 100 more recruiters, because there will be people who say "Hey, I would have joined you, but I didn't know about you." So if we get more recruiters, but most importantly if we free the recruiters that we have now by bringing administrative assistants in who understand the paper work side of recruiting so that our recruiters could actually go out and make contact. Then we could start a program like the Army National Guard has, that gives an incentive to an individual who brings someone in who completes basic training and tech training, of up to \$2,000. The Army National Guard has been very successful with that. I think that that's

good.

So those are some of the initiatives that we're looking at to help with our recruiting.

DR. GROSS: Has that cost you any more in training, in tech schools and stuff like that as well?

LT GEN JAMES: Well, it will if we can't level off the attrition rate. You see, we were always in the single digits in the Air Guard.

DR. GROSS: It's the highest of any military component in the armed forces.

LT GEN JAMES: On retention?

DR. GROSS: Yes.

LT GEN JAMES: Probably so, probably so. But now, again, with the changing missions, aircraft being retired, migration of -- early retirees and people decided to retire rather than train to a mission.

Now one of the things you just mentioned, the training picture, when you start talking about recruiting folks, you've got to make sure that they don't sit around after you bring them in and have to wait too long to go to training.

DR. GROSS: Right.

LT GEN JAMES: So you've got to synchronize, just like we talked earlier in our discussion, about synchronizing the on ramps and the off ramps. We've got to synchronize people coming in and minimize the amount of time that we swear them in to the time that they go to basic, and then the time between basic training and tech school, because if you don't, you're going to lose them.

DR. GROSS: How has that process been working for you so far?

LT GEN JAMES: So far, we've seen what I consider [long pause] -- for the active component, too long a time between basic training and tech school, and the same trend is starting to develop for the Guard and Reserve. So we have to watch it -- I have to talk to my DP [i.e., Personnel] folks, but they'll tell you the exact target number of months. When you start losing a person from the day you swear them in to the day they head off to basic, how many months, how many weeks actually that can transpire before that person starts to think --

DR. GROSS: What do they do? Because they've been sworn in, they haven't got basic yet even?

LT GEN JAMES: Well, they should still come to the units. The smart units will bring them in and drill. They'll bring them even and get them to meet the people they'll be working with, and just do something there that will help them. The good units will start teaching them the skills that

they need to go through basic, and do a better job in basic training. So now the pressure is relieved in basic training, so when they get the basic training it's not as stressful for them and they have some skills.

DR. GROSS: Okay.

LT GEN JAMES: Then if they're going to go to become a certain type of technician, whether it be engine mechanic or sheet metal or what have you, then that shop will work with them to give them some experience and training, so that when they go off to tech school, they'll do a little better sooner.

DR. GROSS: Okay.

LT GEN JAMES: This is gratifying.

DR. GROSS: Okay, good. What impact has the fact that you're an African-American officer and the son of an officer who was part of the elite of the Air Force had on your military career in general and your career in the Air Guard?

LT GEN JAMES: That's hard to say in quantitative terms. I'll tell you that I was fortunate growing up on a military base. I became enamored with the idea of flying. So at a very early age, I knew exactly what I wanted to do. So it helped me focus, because I knew that in order to be a pilot; in order to be an officer, I had to have a college degree. So going to college was --

LT GEN JAMES: (tape picks up) the pilots on my father's squadron were good officers, good pilots and just very fine Americans, and the NCOs [i.e., non-commissioned officers] were hard-working, very loyal but demanding. So I got to see organization at the squadron level at a very young age, and how leadership could impact that.

DR. GROSS: So we're talking about your background.

LT GEN JAMES: Yes, and certainly I looked up to my father, but I didn't realize what a dynamic leader he was until I got a little bit older and then I saw some of the challenges. I saw his, some of the stress that was imposed not so much by command but by the staff job that he worked in the Pentagon. And I saw the racial tension in the South still played into the atmosphere of the base there at Maxwell [AFB, Alabama], not as much as it did outside the gate, when he was going through Air Command and Staff [College].

DR. GROSS: What period of time was this?

LT GEN JAMES: This was 1956.

DR. GROSS: Oh, okay. Yes, all right.

LT GEN JAMES: So I got to see that aspect of it too. He was his happiest, I think, leading flying organizations, rather than being on the staff. And being the son of -- well, he's an Air Force pioneer. I mean

he's a legend, kind of a legendary kind of guy. He was an excellent speaker, a very powerful motivator and he's a very imposing figure, because he was very big and he had very strong ideals and principles. He demanded that you give it your best. He said it's not important that you get an "A" every time, if in fact you tried your very, very best, that you can tell me you did the very, very best you could and you got a "D", and you gave it all your effort, that you didn't sit in front of the television or play outside, play sports, you know, until dark and all that stuff when you should have been doing your homework. That's not going to cut it. And if you've done all the things that you can possibly do to get the very best grade you can, then if you don't get an "A" every time that's okay. But it's not okay if you didn't give it your best.

DR. GROSS: Okay, okay. How about the racial side of it for you, as aside from your father? Has that impacted your own career?

LT GEN JAMES: No. By the time I came through, there wasn't the overt racism that the Tuskegee Airmen and the my father in the 50's endured. Because when he came into the Air Force, when his first overseas tour after World War II ended, they integrated the squadrons. Initially, there were not many people who would even talk to him when he first walked in the door.

There was one guy, he was a Texan. His name was Spud Taylor, and he introduced himself to my dad and it turns out that he liked music, actually played the saxophone and my dad played the drums, and they had a guy who played piano and they did a little trio. They would

perform for the community, for the special events there at Clark [Air Base, Philippines], you know. They formed a very close friendship and he was killed in Korea when they shipped off to Korea, my Uncle Spud, as I called him, because he was a very colorful guy. I remember he wore these brown cowboy-type boots with his uniform and his hand-made boots at that time, flying boots with his flying suit. He had a big handlebar mustache and he was a real character.

DR. GROSS: Wow. Something out of a movie.

LT GEN JAMES: Yes, exactly. My father obviously thought so much of him that he named my brother Claude after -- his real name was Claude Taylor. But everyone called him Spud.

DR. GROSS: Oh, okay, okay.

LT GEN JAMES: So I didn't endure that. I remember as a junior officer that because of some of the things that was happening, the tension that was happening, we had people that were doing sit-ins on the base in some of the facilities like dining halls, because the young African-Americans who say, who had come from the large metropolitan areas were now in a less populated area, say, in South Texas or, you know, in Columbus, [Mississippi] or whatever.

There were some cases where the airmen showed their distrust of the system, and what they perceived as insensitivity to the needs of African-Americans, that they formed these -- I participated in one at Williams

and when I was in Thailand: The Brotherhood of Black Airmen, and we nicknamed it. The acronym I think was BAMA. But anyway, what it gave a chance to was people to sit in a group and talk about and air some things, and then senior NCOs [i.e., non commissioned officers] or not even senior NCOs, any of the NCOs that had been around a little longer or myself as a young officer, got to say “Well, that's not the reason why it's done that way. Here's how it's done and here's why.”

So if you come into the situation with the attitude that this is what's going to happen, sure it's going to happen. But you've got to realize, this is not happening because the man is out to get you. It's happening because you're inconsistent in your performance or in your time you show up for work, right. What it really was designed to do was let that tension, giving people a place to vent.

DR. GROSS: Why did you decide to leave the active duty and join the Air Guard?

LT GEN JAMES: I saw the Guard as giving me the opportunity to have the best of both worlds. When I was at Red Flag [i.e., air combat exercise in Nevada], and we had to have a different adversaries come in so we could do our training to, or they would come in to participate in training with the weapons school or, as I said, in Red Flag when I was at Nellis [AFB, Nevada], I saw these guys who were -- many of them were airline pilots who were fighter pilots with the Guard.

I thought well, this is the best of both worlds. So they flew -- at the time,

most of them were flying F-100s. Some [F-] 106s and at that time no F-4s yet, [F-] 105s, [F-]100s, [F-]106s. I thought so they fly fighters part-time as Guardsmen, and they fly the airline, and therefore have I thought it would be a really nice mix quality of life, you know, and a compensation that was quite lucrative compared to what we were making on active duty. I thought well, I've been here for ten years. After ten years I decided to go ahead and separate and join the airlines. But I always wanted to affiliate with the Guard, with the Air Force, stay affiliated with the Air Force. So the Guard was a natural for me, and I spent 38 years of my life wearing that suit, either as a part-timer or as a full-timer.

DR. GROSS: How does this assignment here compared with being the Adjutant General of Texas?

LT GEN JAMES: Well, as the Adjutant General, you were in fact the governor's representative. So you had command authority. You were the ultimate uniformed officer in the state, in the National Guard, both Army and Air. So you had a lot of challenges because some of the states were more progressive than others. But you had the authority to carry out your wishes and your programs.

But the best thing you could do was also get involvement of people from different rank structures and civilian employees, state employees, what have you, so that you have a buy-in, you have a group that was inclusive.

The first thing I did was the same thing I did here, was to set up our

division and define the mission and I start looking at the time at quality. The quality movement was still alive. I used quality to bring about change, because the organization wasn't going to change by itself. So I used the quality movement to change the organization. It took a while. There was times when I got frustrated. About the 18 month point, I thought, you know, they're not getting it. My staff would explain to me that it's going to take a little time, and until they see key members of the staff buy in, they're not going to buy in.

So that happened, and we moved right along, and I'm very proud of some of the things we've done there. I see people who were in the unit with me, and I can tell the genuine affection they have for me as the leader at that time and it moved to the next level and it kept moving. It has not regressed. That's important for a leader, because when you see all the hard work and you see an organization start to move back toward the more cliquish, good old boy type of -- or us and them type organization, then it's just a shame, and you hate to see that. So I see my organization there, just as I hopefully will see this organization continue to move forth.

DR. GROSS: What are you most proud of in terms of your tenure here as Director?

LT GEN JAMES: I'm most proud -- I think I'm most proud of our performance in the AEF, the fact that we continue to deliver, when given the mission and saying letting us man it the way we do. I'm most proud of -- as a single event, I think I'm most proud of Air National Guard

response to Hurricane Katrina. It was absolutely awesome.

I mean you look at the numbers and you look at the graph, and you see the numbers of missions we flew and how we made that happen through the system we had here, using the Crisis -- you actually had the Crisis Action Control Center [*sic*] or CAT, as we called it, that we used when 9/11 hit, to bring the fighter force and tanker force up to intercept any airplanes that were going to do harm to our nation and our people.

Well, when Katrina hit and New Orleans flooded and we needed to get supplies and people into those areas where communications were down, air traffic control was sparse, runways were flooded, debris was on runways or taxiways and all that, I think I'm most proud. I think that's probably one of the proudest moments in the Air National Guard as I see it.

The second will be, and it hasn't completed yet, was the fact that we've taken that major step toward transforming. The new missions we talked about earlier?

DR. GROSS: Uh-huh.

LT GEN JAMES: Although it may look different than the Guard that was very aircraft-centric before, we've taken a major step toward transforming and my key focus was relevance for the future. You know, we'll do good now, but if we continue to do just what we're doing now, will we be relevant in the future? Therefore, will we be needed by the

combatant commander to go to the AEF?

So I'm very proud of some of the things we've been able to do with our test center, to bring Litening [targeting] pods and other things on our -- not only our F-16s now but our A-10 aircraft, and working with the active duty to get an active duty A-10 aircraft. I'm very proud of that. That we have maintained capabilities sometimes, in some blocks of the F-16, capabilities that the active component didn't have. Because we've used the off the shelf technology in a very short-term cycle, very short cycle time from concept to employment, through the test center and going and using the ranges at Edwards [AFB, California] and Nellis. I'm very proud of that.

I'm proud of the fact that we now have, instead of just myself and a deputy and basically the XO [i.e., Director of Operations, Air Directorate, NGB] -- we called him the COO [i.e., Chief Operating Officer].

DR. GROSS: Right.

LT GEN JAMES: I'm very proud that now we have a brigadier general that's my deputy really for the operations, for logistics, for transformation and new missions, and my Chief of Staff, hopefully soon will also come up. I'm very proud that I've increased the profile of those folks.

I'm proud that we have worked very closely with the Chief of the Guard Bureau, that we've broken down some of the autonomy that the previous

directors had the luxury of operating under. But in working closer with the Joint Staff and the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, we have raised the profile and the credibility, I think, of the leadership of both the National Guard Bureau and the Air National Guard.

DR. GROSS: Okay. Disappointments? I'm sorry.

LT GEN JAMES: But I'm most proud of my people. I'm most proud of the attitude of the Guardsmen out there that say "Okay, what is it you want us to do and when do you want us to do it?" Then that attitude that says let's figure out how we can do that. Let's figure out how we can do that.

DR. GROSS: Okay. Disappointments?

LT GEN JAMES: I'm disappointed that our story has not been told better, that we didn't have more visibility about what we did in Katrina, that we don't have more visibility about -- there's still people out there in America that think the National Guard just stays at home.

Now that's being broken down by the war, because they're realizing that Army National Guard soldiers, because they're seeing people in their communities coming back that have been wounded and some of them not coming back. So the visibility of the Army National soldier [is not] going away.

But at one time, I remember people saying "You mean you guys leave

the United States? I thought you just stayed in the states.” I'm disappointed that we didn't find a way to tell our story better. If I had anything to talk to my successor about is telling our story, getting a strategic communication plan put together that puts the Guard story out to the community. That not just the Guard PA [i.e., Public Affairs office] in the unit having a good working relationship, but at the national level, “here's what we do. Here's what we're a part of.”

Do you realize that 80 percent of the air sovereignty alert forces in this nation are Air National Guard? Do you realize that over 56 percent of the missions flown right now by C-130 crews in Iraq and Afghanistan are Air National Guard? Do you realize, you know. That story needs to be told, because if it's not told, people will either undervalue you or take you for granted.

I'm disappointed that I wasn't able to influence the strategy that the Air Force took in BRAC. It was a flawed strategy, in my estimation. They really didn't understand the fallout and the ill will and the lack of credibility they would engender by following this plan, by trying to get something in the law that the Guard TAGs or governors or commanders in the units and the states couldn't overturn. So they tried to make sure it was in a law. Well, they said it was because they wanted to use BRAC resources to make these moves, but I will tell you, the other two services didn't do it that way. They did an infrastructure drill and they did very little of tying it into airplanes move here and so they miscalculated, and the bad feeling that was caused by that set our relationship back. So that's probably my biggest disappointment, that I wasn't able to better

influence the [Air Force senior] leadership to take a different approach toward BRAC.

DR. GROSS: Why do you think they wouldn't?

LT GEN JAMES: Well, a couple of reasons. Number one, I think they may have gotten this direction from outside, up above at the DOD level, that said "No, you will cut the Guard too, and I want to see more bases put on the list. I want more, more, more, more." Yet these same people were nowhere to be found when we had to do testimony.

DR. GROSS: Yes.

LT GEN JAMES: So that's one of the things. The other thing was, I think somebody on the staff convinced them that Congress doesn't have the will to overturn this. We'll have this thing done and we'll set ourselves up for the way we want to look for the future, and they forgot about one thing. They forgot, and they heard that the President said, "I will sign it." They kind of did some head-counting and said "Well, the Senate may not sign it or may not reject it --". The Senate is more Guard-friendly they thought than the House. So they thought the House will pass it. So they forgot about the [BRAC] Commission.

DR. GROSS: Yes.

LT GEN JAMES: And see that's when all the stories came out about what this will do to this organization. When Army National Guard

TAGs got up and talked with such credibility about what their Air National Guard C-130 meant to not only the air mission they were doing, but the state mission they were doing and how it would affect the retention of Army National Guard soldiers in that state, because they had airborne forces, special ops forces that needed to do jumps; they had an air medical or an air ambulance [unit]. They had medics that had to trained in that and they used it in transport, or just getting people to drill in training missions that were college students around the state. When they did that in the way that they did it, and it was out in the public forum, I think it was probably my most disappointing moment for the Air Force, because being a Title 10 officer, you know, I couldn't testify and say "I told you so." The people who had the great idea that we should wrap this all up into BRAC and do it this way were nowhere to be found when the sparks starting flying. So that was probably my biggest disappointment.

DR. GROSS: Are there any other things you'd like to talk about today?

LT GEN JAMES: No. I've got my boss over there [i.e., Mrs. James]. I'd better wrap it up.

DR. GROSS: Well, I appreciate it.

LT GEN JAMES: But if we do, you might want to ask the question one more time next week, and just say "Is there anything General James wants me to say to you? Has he had a chance to think about some of the things he wants to add, okay?"

DR. GROSS: Okay.

LT GEN JAMES: Well thanks, Dr. Gross.

DR. GROSS: It's been a pleasure.

LT GEN JAMES: The same here.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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