

AN INTERVIEW WITH CHIEF OF POLICE JOSE ARMANDO ELIQUE

BARBARA TABACH

JANUARY 17, 2018

REMEMBERING 1 OCTOBER

ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER AT UNLV LIBRARIES

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PREFACE

José A. Eliqué is Chief of Police & Associate Vice President of Police Services for UNLV. He assumed leadership of UNLV police in June 2000. On the night of October 1, 2017, he oversaw the response of his team to secure campus and to provide for the needs of those seeking refuge at Thomas and Mack Center.

During this interview, he recalls personal thoughts as he drove to campus that night with his lights and sirens on. He arrived to an emotional scene at Thomas and Mack Center of festival evacuees and his team taking their places. He addresses the university response and takes pride in the reactions during and after October first event.

Chief also talks about the role of campus police, coordination with Metro Police, purpose of the Fusion Center, command post, Emergency Operation Center for business continuity, and preparedness for urgent situations and active shooters.

Chief Eliqué reflects on his path to becoming a police officer. He grew up in Puerto Rico and New York City. After serving in the US Navy as a radarman aboard the destroyer USS Purdy during Vietnam War, he entered law enforcement. He became the highest ranking Hispanic police officer in the history of the Port Authority Police Department in New York City. Prior to coming to UNLV, he served as the University Director of Public Safety for the City University of New York (CUNY).

He is a graduate of Adelphi University and of Northwestern University's Traffic Institute of Police Administration and the Police Executive Research Forum's Senior Management Institute for Police.

Appendix: Chief's Summary Report of October 1, 2017

ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER AT UNLV



Remembering 1 October

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Barbara Tabach 1-17-2018
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Today is January 17th, 2018. This is Barbara Tabach and I am sitting with Jose Elique.

Jose, would you spell your name for us?

E-L-I-Q-U-E; that's Elique. My first name is Jose, J-O-S-E, not H-O-S-E. I've seen that a couple of times. J-O-S-E. My middle name is Armando, A-R-M-A-N-D-O.

What is your position?

I am the Associate Vice President and Chief of Police for the Department of Police Services at UNLV.

How would you describe your responsibilities?

My overall responsibilities are to maintain a safe environment so that the UNLV community can go about its business, which is educating and learning. In order to do that we have a full-fledged police department on this campus, and by full-fledged I mean that they are category one peace officers by law in the state of Nevada, very similar to the Nevada Highway Patrol and to Metro; in other words, their authority is parallel except that our jurisdiction is primarily of the university and all of its properties and all of its satellite campuses, et cetera. So our job is to keep people safe. It's the type of job that is not quantifiable because unless something happens we can't generally respond to it. We can prepare for as many eventualities as we might want to anticipate or can anticipate. It's an impossible task. It's a very fluid task. It's ongoing all the time. What we do is we practice a lot. We patrol on the campus. We respond to all calls for service. If you report that you're the victim of a crime, either a property crime or hopefully not a personal crime, a crime against you in particular, we would respond to all of those. We take a report. We hand it over to our detectives and one of our detectives will contact you within twenty-four to forty-eight hours after you sign it, even if it's just to tell you that we have it and that we're looking into it, and we will follow up with you as the case progresses.

We're also responsible for crime statistics on the campus as per federal law, the Clery Act, which is a law that mandates all institutions of higher education that are receiving federal funding, which obviously UNLV is, to report all incidents of crime. There is a very strict parameter of what those crimes are and where they can occur and we have to report it by October one to everyone; we have to make those statistics available to everyone, including policies that we have not only to prevent crime, but to address incidents of public safety. That's a major job that we have to do. We go back three years, so each report does the previous three years. Every October one, for instance, this October one we reported on 2016, 2015 and 2014. This coming year we'll do '17, and it progresses like that.

Our mission is pretty much what we try and do every day, which is create an environment where all you have to worry about if you're coming to this campus is going about the business of either teaching or learning and research. Whatever it is that you want to do on here, you shouldn't be worried that, whoops, I'm going to get mugged today; someone is going to steal my car today; we're going to have an active shooter on the campus. We're all human, so we're all going to worry to a certain extent, but it's my job to worry about it every day and think about all the measures that I can take to at least, if not prevent it from happening because no one can prevent all crime, there's no police force out there that can do it, but to respond as expeditiously to those events and quell those events with a minimum of damage to either personal or property loss or whatever. We're responsible for the emergency plan for the entire university.

Like I said, we're everywhere. We have a police force, which is gradually changing. I always like to say that we're always understaffed because the university is growing. We have to grow along with it. Now we're doing patrols at Shadow Lane, at the new medical center, and at Nevada State College. We're kind of spreading out and that takes resources and certainly staffing

resources, manpower, which falls back to we've got to find a way to pay for it and that's one of the challenges. It's a challenge to bring it to the mind of the powers that be here, the people that allocate the funding once we get the entire university that, A, we're different, and although we're not creating widgets or anything that you can quantify, we're trying to prevent or respond to that incident that only needs to happen once and then if we're not sufficiently prepared, then all the Monday morning quarterbacks come in and then it's sort of like you can provide me with the resources now or you're going to pay dearly later both in reputation, financial, et cetera. We've seen it happen October one with these hotels. I don't know whether they were fully prepared or they weren't fully prepared because that's an incident that never happened in the history of the United States, but, yet, they're being called upon, criticized and evaluated. People are looking at it with a fine tooth comb—what did you do?—as if that could have prevented it. It may have not prevented it, but maybe they could have done some other things to make their people better prepared. I'm not speaking for them. I don't know. There but for the grace of God go I. It's the type of thing that if anything keeps me up at night, it's always that. I'm always thinking of, what if this happened right now? If I got that call like I got on October first at eleven o'clock at night on a Sunday or something, what do I do now? How do I start motivating my people or getting them?

Right. Let's go to October first of 2017. What is your recollection?

I recall that I had just arrived back after a five-hour drive from Long Beach where one of our daughters lives in California. We were just having a quick dinner at home, watching TV on a Sunday night, and all of a sudden my cell phone started to ring repeatedly. I got text messages and all that stuff. I called in and we got the information of what was going on, on the Strip. I put on the TV and saw that. Then I got on the phone right from any house. I started to get ready. I

was coming in. Something of that magnitude, at least initially, it would seem like every law enforcement agency in the valley is going to respond and assist in that, and we can because we have that jurisdiction statewide. We just primarily have our jurisdiction here on campus.

I started calling my senior staff, my assistant chiefs, my lieutenants, my detective sergeants and all that and have them physically come in and then we're going to meet at our communication center and see how we're going to activate the rest of our people and where we're going to send them. We also have a detective assigned to the Fusion Center at Metro. He was involved. We called him in and he responded back to the Fusion Center and ultimately he responded actually to the scene. But we quickly got word from what we call the tour commander and the incident commander at the hotel that they didn't really need any more police officers to respond there because even though we practice under a unified command, this was just too many commands coming in there and it was very hard to manage that. They were doing it mostly with Metro, Nevada Highway Patrol, some of the constables and the like.

But what we found quickly that we did need- and then we got back to them and told them it was happening and what we were going to do—was that people who were escaping from that incident were walking, a lot of them in a daze, walking east from the Strip, from Mandalay, and working their way to Tropicana, continuing walking, trying to just get away from the scene, but they were coming into the university. For whatever reason they were coming in there. Plus, we have that big sign that says *UNLV* in big red, lit up right on the Thomas and Mack. So we opened the Thomas and Mack. Our police reached out to the Thomas and Mack folks and said, "We need to open this place." Then we notified Metro that the Thomas and Mack was open. We provided some basic water and the like. We wanted to provide the Metro detectives and the FBI with a place where they could come and interview these individuals who technically were witnesses and

in some cases victims.

We didn't find anybody that was shot there, but I can tell you that people were coming in with their clothes soaked in blood. At first we thought it was their blood. It was maybe the person next to them or someone who they had left behind over there. They were really shaken up. Once Metro knew that this was the place, they started then diverting people over to the Thomas and Mack as they were exiting because they couldn't get their cars. The people over there couldn't get their cars because all of that was a crime scene and secured.

At that time we were relatively sure as the hours went by that there was only one shooter and that he had been put down by his own hands, but that there was no two or three. I keep hearing all these rumors that there were two or three shooters and all that. We took those rumors seriously. So as people even came and they were seeking refuge and shelter with us, which we were willing to provide, our officers were then actually patting down the people before they went in, searching them, because what if one of them would have been in a crowd and there was a shooter? This is in a matter of hours, but you can't imagine how—it's bedlam in a way.

So we brought them inside. We put the word out that that was the place for people to come. Then the community, once they got the word, they began to provide us with lots of water and blankets and all that. They came of their own volition, these people, and they were out of the goodness of their heart really providing. In the wee hours of the morning, I just said, "No more. This is enough." We had around twenty-five Metropolitan Police detectives, as well as FBI agents, as well as a couple of our detectives inside their talking to all of the victims. *What did you see?* Then once we finished and cleared them, we just documented who they were and let them go. Some of them couldn't go, not because they were infirm, but they couldn't get to their cars. They weren't from here per se. A lot of them then waited there to get either Uber or all sort

of things. By the way, Uber that night, they volunteered a lot of their drivers and they sent a lot of drivers over there to take people away from the Thomas and Mack. So it was a community effort, not that we planned it that way, although the Thomas and Mack has always been in our emergency plans. It's always been a place of shelter and unfortunately even in the case of a major tragedy, it's going to be the morgue until the people come and identify them.

You had training or strategies in place.

Oh, yes, we have a lieutenant who was here. We called him in. We have a lieutenant that's assigned full time to the Thomas and Mack Center to provide police services, surveys, to bring in extra cops, because that venue is always busy with a lot of people. So he was here and we just had to tell him, "Open that place up." It's happening, anyway. You don't want them hanging outside or in a parking lot. So we did; we opened it up. Then he got the civilian people within the Thomas and Mack who opened up some of the—well, clearly the water stands, soda, maybe even coffee stands and some of the places where they sell food. They have snacks, candy bars or whatever. But they opened that up and it kind of settled the people down a little bit from what had happened. You can't fully recover from these things, of course, ever. So we did that. I think in total we had well over five hundred people, almost a thousand people. There were a lot of people out there, but at least a thousand found their ways here. Our staff and Metro along with others interviewed them and cleared them and hopefully made them as comfortable as possible given the tragic circumstances. So we did that.

Then the question came obviously from the president. He wanted to know from me personally. He had events. His Public Affairs Vice President, Vince Alberta, he reached out to me and says, "Jose, is it safe to open the schools?" That was going to be Monday. I said, "From a police perspective, yes. There isn't a second shooter." I said, "If you do, I think you have to put

out a notice not only that it's open, but that people should give themselves a lot of time because some of the roads accessing this place may be closed, so they have to find alternate means, and we don't exactly what those roads will be, so people should just give themselves extra time to get here, and that some of the parking spaces might be taken up by emergency service vehicles and personnel." Like I said, we had twenty-five, thirty detectives and they were parked in those parking lots in front of the Thomas and Mack. But by the time the school opened, a lot of those vehicles had cleared out and primarily almost all the people had already left the Thomas and Mack. So it didn't impact on the operations, if you will, of the school or on his decision as to whether—if you were going to base that decision on just public safety issues, then was it safe? Yes.

Another issue, I know he got criticized significantly afterwards from an empathy point of view. *You shouldn't have done it. You should have seen that everyone in the valley was affected traumatically and they were scared.* We had some...not victims, but people at that location—we actually had two that were slightly injured—students and all that. He got a lot of criticism for not showing empathy in closing the school. The letter to everyone that went out, all the information that went out, the communication that went out from his office seemed to a lot of people just kind of cold or un-empathetic or unsympathetic. He followed up with it later, but it was too late then; the impression had been made and the criticism had been levied. We have since—and he is receptive to it—since, we have changed our notification procedures. The police I'm talking about, we have what we call an emergency notification system; we manage it here. If you work here, you can get alerts either using the Rebel Safe app or just on your phone because it's an opt-out system. If you come to work here or to study here, when you're applying or filling out your initial forms, you've got to say, "I don't want to be in it." Then they ask you again before

you finish, "Are you sure you don't want to be in it?" If you say *no* two or three times, then you won't be in it. But most people, why shouldn't they?

That is the text messages that I get on my phone, like if the parking lot is flooded or something like this.

Right. Usually it's for more serious than that, but it can be for that, and now we've lowered the bar, if you will, on the type of notifications that we make. Now we're doing anything that could significantly impact the university within a two-mile radius of the university, which is more than I would have done it; I would have lowered it to a mile.

There's two types of notifications. The emergency notification system, I wanted to just use for emergency notifications, real emergencies, because what happens if you start using it for other kinds of information that isn't really an emergency, it becomes almost like crying wolf and after a while people go, *oh, another one*, so they won't look at it; *oh, it's just a drill*, and they go about their business. I wanted to limit that. Now we're doing two types, different verbiage, but using the same system, one for real life and death emergencies, and those I don't have to get permission from anybody to put out; that I do as soon as I know about it if it's something like that. The other messages, let's say there's a road blocked a mile away because there's a hostage situation a block east of Maryland Parkway or something, that one we would send to Vince, to the communications, and they would make a decision whether they wanted to put that out using our system and just ask us to do it and then we'll do it, or maybe not, maybe just a few people need to know about that.

The bar has been lowered, perhaps not as low as I would have liked it to have been, but I can understand the president wanting to respond to those individuals who had concerns and were critical of not having known enough or not doing enough, basically not having all the

information in their hands so that they can make a decision as to whether or not they wanted to come. It was sort of like, the school is open; you should be here. That was silent; the "you should be here" part was silent. But so was the part silent, you decide whether you want to come; that was silent, too, because you didn't address it in light of...Now, like I said, he's very receptive. I believe I have a good working relationship with him. He understands and he's trying to help us make the university safer.

I remember the next day—well, a couple of days afterwards because then we had another incident that was a serious incident just coincidentally a week after that where a girl got taken out of the Cottage Grove garage. She was sexually abused off the campus. She was a student, but they got her in the Cottage Grove garage real early in the morning. Then after that he called me up and he said, "I want you to put an extra cop on every shift, one extra one primarily in garages and all that." I said, "Sure."

So I started to gather them from our reserve officers, which we have only maybe ten, and even from CSN I borrowed some officers from there. Like I said, we have people at Shadow Lane and we have people at Nevada State College, just small contingents.

How many officers total do you have?

About fifty. The department is about fifty if you consider all the sworn ones and reserves. Then we have an additional twelve or so dispatchers with the supervisors because we also run a nine-eleven emergency communication center here. If you pick up that phone there and hit nine-one-one, you're going right to our dispatchers, not to the one in Metro. What that does, at least while you're here, that expedites the response to you. We have done studies. We can respond, pretty much, to almost any incident. Generally speaking—I won't say a hundred percent of the time—within two, two and a half minutes of you make the call, you'll have a cop at your

door in about two minutes, two and a half minutes if you had an issue like that.

That's what we primarily did that night. I have a listing of specifics as to who those police officers were that were here and what they did. I'll leave that with you at this end of this thing, too. I provided it to the university and all that. Anything that I might have missed, it's going to be in here.

That's great. We'll have an addendum for sure. When you physically got to campus, what did you see? You described some of that. And what did you feel? I know you're a professional, but, at the same time, you're a human being and this is horrific.

Oh, absolutely. From the time that I got the call as I'm driving in—and it was driving in the middle of the night and lights and sirens all the way—my mind kept on, *what do I need to do?* At the beginning it was like, *I really hope it's only one shooter.* Then as people started coming over, then I'm really hoping that if it was more than a shooter or someone complicit in that heinous act that they weren't trying to hide in that crowd that was coming to us. I won't say in a warped sort of way, but I guess in just a human sort of way, I felt two things. Number one, I felt really, really bad for the city of Las Vegas; that this has happened while I'm living here and remotely associated or associated with the law enforcement services, a piece of the valley. I felt for the sheriff, Joe Lombardo, who I know. All of the chiefs, we meet every week pretty much. So I felt for him. Then on the other side of the coin, and I felt a little bit guilty about that, I was relieved; that "thank God it wasn't here" type of relief. Close, but it wasn't here. Then I felt then kind of bad about that. You're asking me how I actually felt. Those are the things I felt.

I was in the Navy in Vietnam. I remember that if one of the sailors or marines got killed or injured or something, they would put him back on the destroyer where I was assigned and we transferred them over to the hospital. The first thing is you say, "Oh my God, this poor kid." But

we were all kids. I wasn't even twenty-two at the time. We were all kids at the time. First you felt, *God, how could this happen?* or, *This is horrible*. Then you felt, *I'm glad it wasn't me. I'm glad it wasn't me*. I've talked to a lot of marines that were actually in foxholes and stuff, same thing. They have the guy next to them that they just had lunch with or whatever or were eating K rations with and he gets killed, a bullet to the head or blown up or whatever, and first thing is, *oh my God*. Then immediately after that, *whew, it wasn't me, God, thanks*. So I had all of those emotions, but mostly what I was feeling was, *I hope that I can do everything possible based on my experience and the resources that I have at hand to be able to address and help as many of these poor people as possible and be able to notify*—also, in a political sense, my boss is the president and my vice president and all that—*so that they'll be able to speak to what was going on at the university level and what we had done*.

I won't say it was nervousness because I wasn't shaking or anything like that. It was one of these constant, *oh my God*. Then it was like, number one, *I'm glad it didn't happen here; but, despite the fact, it happened closely enough that I hope I can do everything; that if anyone is affected from here that we can help them as quickly and as expeditiously as possible*. I didn't want to make any mistakes, and if I did make them, I wanted to blame the mistakes on either a lack of resources, like—it didn't happen, but I was thinking, *what if I can't open up the Thomas and Mack?* Then I said, *I'll tell the cops to break in*. So these are the types of things that you're going through and this is split second, one after the other.

This is all while you're driving to campus.

While you're driving, yes. Then when you get here and you say *open it*—but once I gave the order to open the place and to tell Metro that we're opening the place, then immediately you say, *what if there's nobody there to open it? Oh, we're going to open it one way or another*. But

luckily, it didn't come to that because my lieutenant that's assigned there, he had access to ways to open it and all that and he did. Then he also got civilian personnel to come in from the Thomas and Mack even though he's not their boss. But the administrators from Thomas and Mack, a few of them came in, also, and they were able to provide that service.

We felt pretty good afterwards at the fact that we could provide that for Metro, give them a safe place and a place where they could get away from some of the bedlam that was going on over there and calmly sit down. *Okay, I've got some water. Tell me what happened, ma'am, or, tell me what happened, sir.* A lot of them were hysterical. People would get off the buses and hug our cops. That was emotional. I may seem like an old cop in a business suit and that's it, but I can't stand to see women or babies cry. A lot of women have taken advantage of me because of that over my life. Babies, no. I can't handle accidents with little kids in the car. As I think back on it and what I saw and the way they were—it wasn't just crying, it was this deep-seeded—they were terrified. They were terrified. Even to think back, it makes me a little bit...If I relive it—I try not to—you said we're all human and we all respond to these things in a different way, and all my life I couldn't deal with that. When I was back in New York as a policeman, I used to handle traffic accidents when I was a rookie, and the ones that were the most painful ones were the ones where little kids were either hurt or thrown out of the car or all that.

Anyway, but that's how I felt. That's mostly what we did. Then the rest of it was documenting what we did and having either a time line or as much information as possible for the questions that I knew would come afterwards.

What kind of questions were going to come afterwards?

Basically almost what you're asking. What did you do? With the exception of, how did you feel when you were doing it? Nobody cared about that. I'm glad you do.

Absolutely.

Nobody cared about that. They just wanted to know, what did you do? How quickly did you do it? How effective do you think we were? Were there any lessons learned? Yes, there were some lessons learned because when we made notifications, sometimes we had the wrong person on notification lists, which maybe had either perhaps not been upgraded or the information that was put in there was erroneous. Now we check it every six months, every semester, because people leave and they come back. Those are the questions that they ask you. What would you have done differently?

I'm not one of those police administrators that every problem can be solved with money. Every problem requires money at some point in time, but you've got to have an effective solution to spend your money on. You know the difference, right?

Got you.

The one thing that jumped out at me—and this was the week after because we were still smarting, taking care of this, and then that young woman got basically kidnapped from our thing and that happened. We made the arrest in three days.

Yes, that was quick.

Yes, yes, but not too many people care about that as much as they did...People think that you can prevent crime. The police can't prevent crime. There have been numerous lawsuits all the way up to the Supreme Court that have affirmed that. The only way to prevent crime is to assign a policeman, and maybe not even then, to every single human being in the United States, 323 million cops, plus another 323 million. You just can't do it.

It's not possible, for sure.

What I was trying to get back to, when the president said, "I want you to put an extra," I said,

"First I have to borrow it." And then quickly I told him, "That's going to require twelve policemen, what you want to do. It sounds like you're asking for one extra. No. It requires twelve more cops, two sergeants, 1.2 million dollars including benefits and all that—that's for all of them—and even if you gave me 1.2 million dollars today, you won't see them on the street for a year." Because I've got to post the job, recruit. They've got to pass backgrounds, all kinds of testing mechanisms that we have. Then we've got to send them to the police academy for almost six months. Then they come back here and they do three months of what we call field training, which is getting familiar with the thing under the watchful eye of a field training officer to make sure they're going to work. There's not even any guarantee until they finish their first year. But after that first year, now they're by themselves and now you'll see them. You'll see them when they're an FTO, but they'll be doubled up; it will be like seeing two people, but it's only one post, one car. That's the kind of stuff.

By the way, I still don't have the 1.2 million. They gave us a lot of money for one-time expenditures on increasing the number of cameras and emergency phones and all that throughout the campus. This Friday we're going to go and tell NSHE what we're going to use. They provided us with about seven million dollars, but it wasn't just for police. It was for the university. The university gave us, I would say, two and a half, three, but that's a one-payment deal. You need a new computer. Okay, we bought a computer. It isn't like I've got to pay the computer benefits.

It's not going to sustain a new position.

That's it. No, no, no. That I'm still waiting for; that other 1.2 million. What I'm hoping for is that Friday when I go to them, I'll tell them about that, but I'll also tell them what we really need is a lot more staff, and maybe they'll provide us at least with the first 1.2 million because it was seven. If they're giving me two, give me 1.2 million now at least for a year; we're good. Then we

could figure out later where we're going to find the continued funding for them. I don't know if they'll buy into that. They have verbalized that they're very receptive to it; that they're prioritizing all of our needs, probably because this is still fresh in their minds. But as I know from Nine-Eleven, every day you forget a little bit more or you take it out of your mind. I don't because those are my guys, but people do.

Yes, it fades. That's probably how we survive is to be able to distance yourself from it a little bit.

Yes, like it's never going to happen again.

Did you ever personally visit the site of the festival?

I passed it, yes. I passed it, yes. It's right up the block. I passed it, but all you saw was crime tapes.

There was no reason for you to visit there.

Go inside the hotel or anything like that because we didn't have any cops over there except for one. We had a detective that was assigned to the Fusion Center.

What is that?

It's set up in Metro headquarters and it's an intelligence gathering unit. What does it have there? It has representation from all the law enforcement, health and safety and even the military. They have someone sitting there; it's like a command post or an information post and it's manned twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, from different members of each police agency or even the medical people and the army. If anything is happening anywhere in the valley, they notify the rest of the people in the Fusion Center, and so people can be prepared, they can provide resources, exchange information and the like. It's a very good center. It's something that they should have done a long time ago.

They had it in New York. They had in number 7 World Trade Center—I remember it because I used to go up there—on the eleventh floor. When Nine-Eleven happened, you think it's just World Trade Center One and World Trade Center Two went down; those are the big two towers. But that was a big complex. That's why there was 7 World Trade, 5 World Trade, 6 World Trade. Everything went down. Where did we have our big start-of-the-art command post for the year 2000, which was built under Giuliani, actually, when he was a mayor there, up on the eleventh floor there? They wound up doing the command decisions and making command decisions for recovery in their emergency operation center, which is what a recovery center is called—we have one here, too; I'll tell you about that in a little bit—they wound up doing it from a basement of a church around the block. Like I said, three floors—the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth, on number seven. So this Fusion Center is okay unless somebody puts a bomb in Metro headquarters and then we'll have to go somewhere else, whoever is left, to work, but it's a good center.

I'm one of the few university police department I'm pretty sure almost in the country, certainly on the west side, that has officers assigned to those types of centers. I have a detective assigned to the Fusion Center and a detective assigned to the FBI Terrorist Task Force, which is really good because I get to know firsthand if there's a threat to the university. We've been applauded by the FBI and a lot of people for doing it. I'm not looking for that. I just want to get the information. I want to have somebody there. I just think it's a smart thing to do or a proactive thing to do before anything happens. It provides us with a lot of information. It lets us know what's going on in the rest of the valley, but most especially if anything is going to impact on the operations of the university, for safety and all that.

I'm kind of proud of him, the fellow that was assigned there. We just assigned him to the

FBI Terrorist Task Force and I'm going to put another detective in from the ones that are here at the Fusion Center, so then I'll have two. Right now the two positions are being held by one and really almost not because once he goes to the FBI Terrorist Task Force, you're outside of the Fusion Center. They have an office somewhere else and they work all over the western part of the United States, quite frankly, or all over the state because it's federal.

It sounds like as a community we should really be thankful for this type of set up of the Fusion Center because that really does—

Oh, yes.

—help coordinate all these different entities that need to come together.

Absolutely. Exactly. They're there. They're in place. It isn't like you're coming together when that happens. It was there. You may not be able to prevent it, but if we have some intelligence that this guy was going to do something or anybody else, that's where it's filtered through.

Just talking, again as a human being, the day after and coming to campus and knowing that campuses oftentimes are targets for crazy people, I did look at my surroundings differently.

Of course you do. Whenever the police get a chance, we talk at the beginning of the semesters and we talk to the athletic people, we talk to the parents of the kids, we talk to the faculty and we talk to the staff, we're always willing to give you a mini seminar of actually physically what you should do if you're confronted with, let's say, an active shooter, which is what is mostly in the news media. What should you really do? Three things: Run, hide and fight. Run, hide or fight, generally in that order. You have to make the ultimate determination. We show you that. If you can do these things safely, then that's what you do. The last one is the worst option; you're trapped to be there and die like a sheep. You've got to fight for your life basically. That's the

worst case scenario, but it can happen. What we do is we provide that type of—because you saw how that incident left that in your mind and you're looking around more. It just makes you more aware. We want you to think about it a little bit. So the next time you come to your office, where is the exit? Little things like that. You don't have to go and walk it. Maybe you go and leave the door open when you're going to get to it, because you're not going to take an elevator. Those are the types of things we try and instill in the community here and it's just at their request. I think we did one here, too, at the library.

You did and I didn't attend it and I've regretted that. That was just sort of silly of me not to.

No, no. Like I said, we're all busy and it's really our job to worry about this. We want to put it in your mind, but not to make you paranoid. But what we do stress is that—we're a small department, I told you, and there are thirty thousand students, FTEs here, and another three or four thousand faculty and staff. I want people to consider themselves almost like our eyes, if not consciously, then unconsciously. You know how you come to work every day and you know what looks normal to you and what isn't. If you come to work someday and that computer is on this screen, but you left it there, oh, why? Maybe you should maybe give us a call. I always tell people, whatever you see that's out of whack, that may be something we might be interested in. Don't say, "Ah, this is stupid; I'm not going to bother the police." Bother us. We're here three-sixty-five days. Dispatch is always there. Policemen are always on duty; we're never off; no holidays, no spring break, nothing. We are always here. Avail yourself of that and we're never going to put you down, *oh, what are you bothering us for?* Nobody is going to answer the phone like that. And if they do, I really want to know about it.

There was something you mentioned earlier. I don't know if you were going to come back

to it. Recovery center.

Oh, Emergency Notification Center. That is a center—and one of them is here, by the way, downstairs—a place where the decision makers come together. It's primarily for business continuity. It's different from, for instance, a command post. A command post is on the scene. Like, if there's a gas leak, we'll go near where the gas leak is, shut down streets and all that. There will be a command post there, mobile generally, a command post of police officers, maybe people from the gas company can go in there and make the decisions and all that. We'll coordinate the effort to handle the immediate...That's a command post.

If, for example, God forbid, there's a fire in one of the dorms and nobody is killed and everybody is evacuated, but the building can't be used as a dorm for a while until it gets cleaned up, restored, whatever; that's what we consider business continuity, continuing to do business as you did before in the dorm. There are certain things that have to happen. That's when we establish the Emergency Operations Center, EOC. What did I give you, ENC, Emergency Notification Center? It's the Emergency Operations Center; that's for business continuity. Everything happens there. There will be a finance person there. There will be a public affairs person there. There will be a logistics person there and people that can make decisions. For instance, an example I always like to site, if that happened, the scenario that I just told you, we should have in place—and I keep getting yes, but I never want to embarrass anyone by saying, "Well, let me see it"—we should have in place an agreement with all these hotels here that they should have set aside a room or two rooms or whatever it is in case I've got to send my students that are here living from out of state and now they're homeless technically because of the fire that occurred here. Those contracts should be in place by the finance people, the purchasing people, whoever from the university. They'll be sitting in the Emergency Operations Center. That's when

you look to them and say, "Okay, we've got this fire. What hotel should they go to?" Hopefully I don't get a, *hum-uh-hum-uh*.

Yes. You trust.

We practice that. No, I don't—

You've got a contract.

I trust, but I'm verifying, like Reagan used to say. I'm trusting that they have a contract; they're telling me they do. But we're going to tighten even that up and the number of rehearsals that we have and training sessions that we have for the members of the EOC because those people change. They've got a title and all that. Their bosses tell them that they're the ones that are going to represent their department or their faculty or their building there, but they don't really know what that means to them. We'll give them a course in that.

We've been kind of taxed, if you will, with other duties, primarily training for the active shooter. We have it in place, but that's going to be really updated because we decided on an emergency manager. After fifteen years that I've been here asking for it, we finally got one. That's a civilian person that will be in charge of making sure that all of the emergency plans are up to date; all the notification systems are up to date; the Emergency Operations Center, all the people who are assigned there, do they know what they're doing there? Do they know why they're there? That's going to be him in and he's going to do that certainly once a quarter at minimum. He comes onboard the end of this month. In a couple of weeks he's coming onboard. We've got a good guy. His name is Yuri Graves. He used to be the emergency manager for the City of Henderson, so he knows all the players and that was another plus. He knows all the players in the county. His counterparts in the county, he already has a working relationship with them and now he's coming over here. That's what that Emergency Operations Center does and

it's going to even do it better. It's going to be more effective with the hiring of this gentleman.

Let's talk a little bit more about your background personally. How did you choose this line of work? And then incorporate how you got to Vegas.

I got to Vegas in 2000. This is my third police job. I told you I was in Vietnam in the Navy.

After I got out of service, I wasn't too sure what I wanted to do. I went to college on the veterans' GI Bill and the like, but I wasn't really too sure what line of work I wanted to go into. I first went to work for a company called Retail Credit Company. It was out of Atlanta, Georgia. That is now Equifax. I was an insurance investigator. You'd get a pile of cases. If someone claimed that they were either out on workman's comp or injured and all that, whatever kind of insurance that was, we'd go talk to them, kind of snoop a little bit, too. If I went to your house and you were up on a roof fixing stuff, but you weren't at work, we documented that, too. But we interviewed the people and verified the information on their application and all that. But you had to go to a lot of places and in New York City that's pretty much on foot. You'd get an area in one of the five boroughs and you go on foot.

Anyway, when I'd go, sometimes you knock on people's door at the apartment and they shut the door in your face; they didn't want to talk to you because they didn't know who you were. That began to bother me. Then sometimes you're traveling by and you see something going on, on the street. In the street there was usually one of these crime tapes or barricades or whatever that was, cops and then a lot of people behind the barricades looking, including me sometimes. I remember thinking, as many years as it was...Everybody was saying, "And I wonder what's happening there?" And I said, "They know what's happening there, the policemen. They know." Either I was nosey or curious or tired of having doors slammed. I said, "I think I'm going to explore the possibility of me joining that." So I did. Way back—I don't even want to tell

you when that was well, you already know my date of birth. That was in 1970.

In 1970, I took three exams, one for the Port Authority Police, one for the New York City Police, and one for the Transit Authority Police—four—and one for the Housing Authority Police. They were all in the city of New York. The first one who called me was the Port Authority Police. I went into the academy. I think I was in the academy about two weeks. They pulled me out of the academy to do an undercover job with them. There were only two Puerto Ricans in the academy class; they were mostly Irish and Italian back then. They pulled me out, gave me some preliminary extra training, and then I went undercover for my first year without having even finished the—

Because you're Puerto Rican.

Correct. I was going to rat on my own, but they were bad people.

You speak the language.

Yes, and I speak the language. I fit right in. Most of the year was a big car theft ring at John F. Kennedy Airport and at LaGuardia Airport. It was really the workers that were collecting the parking fees that were bringing in their friends from the outside and stealing the cars and what have you. Anyway, I did that. At the end of about a year there, well, about twentysomething people went to jail and they never knew until the day in court when I showed up with a badge hanging, like you see on television, off the lapel. They never knew. But anyway, twenty people got convicted with that. It was a big thing. It was all over the papers in New York. That kind of like made my bones really early.

A couple of years after that I took the test for—well, I finished; I became a patrol officer. Then a couple of years after that I took the exam for sergeant and passed that. I was a sergeant with about three years on the job. Then I had the opportunity to promote.

While I was a sergeant, they sent me out to Northwestern University because now the bosses knew me and I guess they liked me and I wasn't failing; I was passing. They sent me out to Northwestern University to a specialized police administration school for a whole year. They paid my salary and did everything and I moved out there. I had a wife and two baby boys at the time and we all went out there. While I was out there, I didn't have to worry about—

This is in Chicago?

Yes, Northwestern. Yes, I was in Chicago during that time. I went out there. From out there I got word that they were giving the lieutenant's exam back here, but I was still over there. They brought me back and let me take it. I remember I got some tutoring from one of the Chicago professors on how to take a test more than...Because he didn't even know what the test was going to be like. I always thank him for that. I came back here and I remember I scored number one in the lieutenant's exam of all the people that were taking it, all the sergeants that took it. But I didn't get made first because I had to go back to Chicago to finish that course. When I came back, now there were no slots. I was the next one made, but in terms of seniority there were guys, maybe the number two, three and four guys got made before me. Anyway, that's how I started my police career.

Then I gradually went up through the ranks there and I became the number two guy, the second highest ranking guy and the highest ranking Puerto Rican in the history of the Port Authority Police way back then. There I was number two. I did twenty-one and a half years there. Over there, after twenty years, no matter how old you are, they say, "We're going to give you half-pay; if you want to retire, you can." It's twenty years forever; you don't have to wait until you're sixty or fifty or anything like that. I said, "I'm going to retire." Because a lot of guys said, "Yes, but if I stay twenty-five, I'll get a couple more percentage points." It was 50 percent

you got of your salary at the end. I said, "Yes, but what they're really telling you is that while you wait those five years, they're paying you half-pay." Because they're telling you, "You can go home and I'm going to give you half." So in order for you to get the hundred percent—that's the way I looked at it. I said, "So I'm going to get out of here and look for another job."

Then I got appointed by the City University of New York when I retired from there by the chancellor over there. She was looking for someone to actually start a police department at the City University of New York. They only had private guards, twenty-one campuses. I applied for that job. She wanted me. I got appointed. It was Ann Reynolds. She came from California originally. She was hell on wheels, too. Hell wasn't the word they used to describe her back then, but you can imagine; it starts with a B. I went there and I created at the City University of New York a changeover from private guards. I didn't change them specifically. They had an opportunity to apply to become police officers. I left 750, thereabouts, I like to call them Jose clones; they were policemen similar to what we have here, but they were for the City University of New York system-wide, which is twenty schools. That took about eight years. I did that for eight years. Then when I left there, I figured that that job was done and I was looking for a new job. Ann had left, so I figured I don't know who the new chancellor is going to be; let me go while the getting is good, not that he was going to be against me, but you never know. He may want to bring his own guy in or his own lady in.

I still wasn't ready to get retired, to retire-retire. Now I'm up there to almost thirty years in service. I still wasn't ready to retire. When you're a chief anywhere in this country, you belong to this organization called IACP, International Association of Chiefs of Police. You network with all these other chiefs from all over the country. I called up a guy. I put it out there to the International Association of Chiefs of Police that I was leaving New York and I would be willing

to relocate anywhere for a police chief's job as long as they paid me six figures. If they gave me six figures, I'd go to Arkansas; I didn't care, whatever.

Anyway, a guy from California, San Diego, calls me up and he says, "Jose, I think they've got a job in Las Vegas." I had never been to Las Vegas, never. I don't gamble. I didn't even think people lived here. I was one of these snobby New Yorkers. I wondered where they lived. I thought it was just a playground for adults, Disney World for adults. Anyway, he says, "No." I said, "Is it a real job or do they already know who they want?" He said, "Yes, I think it's for real. They have a few problems there, but nothing you haven't seen or can't handle."

I applied. I was one of the last ones to apply. Carol Harter was the president here then. I came to two days of interviews and I knew they were serious then. I remember thinking back then, *wow, they want to fly me out*. They paid for it. I saw what the tickets cost. I said, "This is crazy." Because it was last minute.

It wasn't three months ahead of time, right.

It wasn't really about me. That's what they had to pay. They paid me to move out here and all that stuff. But anyhow, I came out for two days of interviews. The second day, at the end of it, I had to be cleared or given the *imprimada* by Carol Harter. I met with her. Lo and behold, she didn't ask me any—it wasn't like a regular job interview. She just wanted to talk about New York. She was originally from there, too. We just chatted, about the Yankees, about all different kinds of stuff. She was telling me her history, how she had gone to the University of Ohio, from New York, she was a president there or something. So I said, "Okay." Then at the end she said, "Well, when can you start, Jose?" I said, "When do you want me?" She said, "I wish you could start right now." And I said, "Well, I can't do that."

I came out on Memorial Day weekend of the year 2000. I got in my car, packed my little

U-Haul that I had. I didn't bring out too much big stuff. That was another personal outlying reason. I had broken up with my first wife and my kids were big. That's why I said, "I can go anywhere." I didn't have to worry about anybody else liking it or not wanting to do it.

My first day, I got here by June first and started on June first of 2000. The rest, like they say, is history. I was only going to come for five years. I remember in my mind, *I'm going to do five*. Usually that's the going rate or the time allotted to chiefs where they can be effective and then they move on. It's proven true for everybody else because all of my counterparts here, they all have changed two and three times. I've been through two or three sheriffs here in town. There's a lot of difference in the City of Henderson, North Las Vegas, different chiefs. They keep changing. Now I go to meetings and they all laugh at me. I'm the old-timer.

You're the consistent one, huh?

Yes. I think I'm the senior police chief in terms of in-service time in the state, for the whole state.

That's interesting.

Right now. But that's just longevity. Here I am. Like I said, I didn't look back. I found this job challenging. At the beginning it was a little bit challenging, getting used to the way they did things. I didn't have to get that used to it. The way that the universities do business is different from the way we do it in quasi-hierarchical settings or quasi-military. But I had gotten a big injection of that in New York City where there were twenty-one administrators that I had to sell on, to have one police department. They liked what they were doing, the way they did it. People object to change and they certainly didn't want the chancellor—I guess it's that way here, too—they didn't want the chancellor to tell them what they had to do, but she did.

On the phone you shared with me, because we chatted briefly about the trauma of this whole project, that you were gone from New York before September Eleventh.

Yes. In 2000, I came here in June. I was here thirteen months.

But the impact. That was your hometown.

Not only that, but those guys worked for me. I've still got that picture—I should have brought it—of thirty-seven guys that died that day in those towers as a result of that including the guy that took over the job that it left. I was the number two guy in the department. I knew exactly what he did because that's what I would have done. As I'm sitting three thousand miles away, I'm listening and seeing this stuff going on and it made my hair stand up on my body. I said, "Wow." It really is fate or whatever because I know that I would have—at the risk of sounding overly dramatic—I figured I would be dead. But more than that, these guys weren't just a name and a rank and a picture on a wall. I really knew and interacted with them, especially the one that took over for me because he used to be my executive officer, Jimmy Ramedo, great guy. They were all great guys, but especially Jimmy, my executive officer. He worked right under me. He was like my number two when I was there. He perished trying to save the executive director of the Port Authority back then, who also died. He was up on the upper floors and he was going up to get him. He couldn't have reached him, anyway, because it was past the seventy-eighth floor or something. That's what happened there and that's why I took that one personally. We all have a tendency to forget some of it, but not that much. For me, I'll never forget it. I'll never forget it.

One thing that I want to do now that it's on my bucket list, I want to go back and see the new Freedom Tower that they built in its place because I know it's got all their names and it's got all the firemen. The firemen took a much bigger hit than we did. Given the size of our department, it was jurisdiction, the same as here. If something happened here, God forbid, of a tragic scale where a lot of cops got killed, it would be mostly my cops. There will be more of us than Metro because they're coming; we were here. It's the same thing that happened over there at

the Port Authority even though there's thirteen different facilities, but everybody was going to the World Trade Center because that was the headquarters of the Port Authority, quite frankly. It was two-state; we had two-state jurisdiction. There were thousands of us. There are a lot more now back there. But those thirty-seven I just happened to know and had worked with for a good number of years, so it was very, very...I always take that personal. You hear about the other stories, about how their wives and stuff reacted to the funerals. I didn't go back for any of the funerals and I certainly didn't go back to try and help there because they had all the help that they needed. They couldn't use anybody from us. I was in contact with them and the priest that did our police, police chaplains and all that stuff, but I didn't go back.

I just want to go back to this memorial now. It took a long time. Unions in New York City, they're kind of tough to get anything done. That's one thing about Vegas, though. Even though they've got unions, here it's all about the money. Once you allocate the money, once the money is there, the job is going to get done. Nobody is going to say, "Whoops, I don't paint. I don't do that part. I just take the light bulb around. I can't paint around the light." Like they do over there. That one is personal. I'd never forget it.

When I look back, now it's forty-seven years in police work. August tenth of 2018 will be forty-eight years. I keep telling myself, "You've got to go." And then things keep happening. I want to stay here because I just feel okay and I still feel I can contribute something; but, on the other hand, I know I'm not going to be here forever. This year I'm starting to look at, at least, benefits or whatever of retiring. I've saved a buck. I've got my pension over there. But I want to leave this place a little bit better than what it was when I came here. I want to leave it running smooth. Although I don't want to hand it over—like we're supposed to move, for instance. That's just my ego. We're moving to Gateway.

Moving your offices.

Yes, yes. The headquarters are moving to Gateway. Well, I keep telling David, the planning construction guy, I said, "Listen, let's get this done because I might be thinking about retiring, but I'm not retiring until I put my seat in the new furniture and enjoy that new place for at least a week. I'm not going to work under these conditions for eighteen years or nineteen years until whenever the time comes and have some guy that never worked here come to state-of-the-art stuff. I want to enjoy it. Get it built."

You deserve that.

I want to do that one before I go. I don't know, if he holds out a lot longer, I might not because I focus on the number of years and it's enough. It's a young guy's job primarily and I believe that there are people there that are as qualified, if not more qualified, to do it given the technology that's out there today and that they're more fluent and conversant in the whole thing. Now I've got a lot of people surrounding me; if my computer breaks, I don't have to fix it. I just say, "Take care of it. What's wrong with this? How come my mouse doesn't work?" I think it's time, but every day I say, "Well, not yet." But I am looking at it. I just signed up on a thing for retirement benefits seminar. Somebody sent it to me on my email. I'm just kind of toying with the idea now whereas before I didn't even...

I understand how it is.

You're torn. Then I also say, but this is all I've ever done all my life.

I have a feeling you'll still be involved in something.

Oh, yes, yes. The other day I went to a show at the Park Theater in Monte Carlo. I went with my wife, my second wife, my current wife. We went to see Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons. I remember when I got my tickets. I told a young girl that had given me my tickets, I said, "You've

never even heard of these guys." She goes, "No, I didn't." The other lady, the gray haired one says, "I did. I know who they are." I said, "I know." The whole audience was like...There were no children in there, no teeny boppers in there. He came out and he looked older, but we all looked that way, so what the heck? What are you going to do? He was good.

The point I'm making is they had increased security, big time. You had to go through magnetometers. They had all kinds of security guards, private security. I don't know whether they were armed or not. They had sports jackets on. They were sitting on the aisles so that you couldn't run up on the stage. They weren't looking at the show. They were sitting in the aisles, an increased amount of security. I told my wife while we're sitting there, "I know I can get that job. Maybe I'll come and get the head of security at one of these hotels. They're probably paying pretty good." She said, "What are you, crazy?" Then I thought about it and she's right because that's really working.

But you get a free show. You get a free concert.

Yes, yes, yes, that's what I said. She said, "Yes, but you're never off on the holidays. They're going to be there." Not like now. We work twenty-four seven, but I don't. I'm always on call, but this New Year's Eve I was off. Sunday I was off. Even October one, I was off. But we're always ready—I got a department car, a cell phone and everything—to get there. It's just one of those things.

Any other stories you'd like to make sure you share with me about October First in particular?

Just that I will tell you that I was very much impressed, as I said, by not only the work that my guys did—I expect that. They were professional. They didn't hesitate to come in, those that were home. Of course, we had a contingent here. I was very proud of the job that they did. I'm very

proud of the entire community. I don't work for their public affairs people or nothing. They did a pretty good job. I don't think that the president knowingly did anything wrong. That's a perception. And he was out and about on that day, too. It's something that never happened before, so you're never going to get it right in the eyes of people who are looking back on it and who didn't go through it, not a hundred percent. *You could have done more.* All this talk now. *Oh, it's a conspiracy; they're not telling us what happened.* Well, we don't know what happened and we're still looking into it. I'm going to give you a lie? We're not trying to keep it hidden at all, no. That's pretty much it.

The other thing is, one of the up sides, but for the bad reason, is that I feel confident that our needs are being addressed more expeditiously now in terms of resources, equipment, preparedness stuff that we need, not that it wasn't being looked at before; it was. But I think that maybe now they listen with a more prioritized ear.

When you say "our needs," are you talking about the campus police?

Yes, campus police. Everybody.

How about just as a city?

Oh, the city, too. Oh, forget it, those guys can get whatever they want. Even the hotels, like I just told you, the way they've increased security. I never saw that amount of security. Somebody is providing, probably the management of the hotel, with really increased security services in and out, right in the venue itself, leading to the venue. It was like going to an airport. You have to put the bag down just to get into the theater. I think it's been a terrible wake-up call. It's a wake-up from a nightmare, but it's still a wake-up. I think that people are now more conscious of it. I don't want too much time to lapse because human nature, as we spoke, people will forget. But I think that basically it was putting us in a preparatory mind-set as a result of that more so than we

already were. There's an urgency attached to it where we feel like this is truly the type of incident that only can and has happened once. If it happens again, shame on us. We couldn't prevent it, but it's not going to have the impact that's the first one. To me it's the same thing. God forbid, I get an active shooter on this campus like what happened in Virginia Tech. Stuff only happens once. You've got to be prepared for that. You should assume it's going to happen. Go into that with that mind-set. If it never does, great.

Be thankful that it doesn't, right?

Be thankful that it doesn't. But every day you go in there, say, "This could happen tomorrow or tonight or later."

I can't imagine living that way. It's got to be top of mind for you. When you get together with the other chiefs, wow, the conversations that you must have had.

Oh, yes. About this? We got a special briefing maybe a week and a half, ten days into it. What you get a sense of is the volumes of information that they had to go through, oh my God, the camera footage alone. The FBI had to bring in lab folks and have them living here to go and view all of that trying to come up with reason. There is no rhyme or reason for it, but they wanted to see if this guy had any motivation, if there were anything that could have highlighted anyone to the fact that he was going to do that. They're focusing now on his girlfriend because one or two things. She definitely knew he had all these weapons, and it never occurred to her? Now it's like, see something; say something. She certainly saw a lot and didn't say anything. Why was that? Was she in cahoots with him or helping him in some way? Is that why she left the country? He sent her out because he didn't want her to be associated with it, but she really was? Those are the things that are still out there that are being questioned and maybe the public doesn't really...They're not going to talk about it until we have an answer and then they'll come out and

there will be a definitive answer. I know that the public will never accept that we just don't know and we'll never know even if it's the truth.

Yes, there is always—

[In unison] Conspiracy theorists.

Even ourselves with this project—there's two of us doing interviews for it—I'll have not intimate friends, but other people will say, "Well, what are you hearing about the conspiracy X, Y, Z?" It's like, no, it's in your mind. You've got to deal with the facts as they come out.

The one thing I can tell you is that today, speaking just today, people here are as safe as they're going to be. The other stuff, the untoward stuff that is unimaginable, that's why it's unimaginable because we can't imagine it so we can't prepare for it. We try. We imagine different scenarios. We understand, too bad, people don't perceive us as that. People, despite what the courts say, will only think that we can have or should have prevented these acts of violence; that, too, is human nature and that's the nature of this job, so you've got to accept it or get out of the job and become a complainer or whatever. It's almost like second nature to me.

Another reason why I want to retire is because I think I've been very lucky. I was involved in a shooting back in New York when I was a police lieutenant. That was the only time I ever had to pull my gun in anger or anything. It wasn't messy. It was a good shooting. But it was one of those things where, *boy, I hope I do everything right*. Because I killed the guy who later turned out to be unarmed. I said, "Boy, I really hope I did everything right." That day, I also said, was the day after Thanksgiving, many, many moons ago. I said, "This is it. I'm not going up higher." And I did. I did everything. I thought, *that's the end of my career*. Because usually the top guy, the buck stops there. If there would have been some things found to have been done

procedurally wrong or that this person got killed either on purpose or without justification, that's it. Even back then I remember that the chief then back over there called me up directly. He called me a kid. Well, maybe I was back then. "You okay, kid?" Big old Irish guy, Lee; Walter Lee was his name. I said, "Well..." He said, "Just follow your training. Do what you're trained to do and you'll get it right." And he said, "I've got a lot of help"—he meant captains and stuff—"responding to you right now and they'll help you out. Just do your training." I felt good that he called. Oh, boy, I was like this. Then when he called me and told me that I was really appreciative. "Thanks, superintendent." That was that. I didn't care if he called me kid. *Help me.*

I can't imagine that. You've dealt with life and death situations on a daily basis.

Well, it doesn't happen daily, but the potential is still there. The potential of it is there daily and it doesn't make any difference. Years ago up in UNR, before I came here, there was a university police sergeant in UNR who was sitting in his police car on UNR property and somebody came and killed him with a hatchet through the window. The poor guy died. These are things that you can't anticipate. He wasn't responding to a call or nothing. Just some crazy person came and killed him. It's seventeen, eighteen years ago, maybe twenty years ago. They got a new police station. They got everything that they wanted. But it's a shame that sometimes tragedies such as this, what we witnessed on October First, or even in a limited sense there or what happened on Nine-Eleven, those things open up the purse strings, if you will, of the resources, certainly the attention to making sure that the police who are sworn to protect everybody can do the job with the right equipment and all that. If I ask for police cars, I'm not asking for Cadillacs. I'm asking because they're on the road twenty-four seven, every day, so they go quickly.

I definitely appreciate all your time. This has been quite informative and helpful.

I'm glad you enjoyed it. I'm going to give you these. [End of recorded interview]

APPENDIX:
Chief Elique's Summary
Report

UNLV Police Services' response to October 1st Tragedy:

Summary: On Sunday, October 1st at 10:25 p.m., UNLV staff were informed by the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department through the Southern Nevada Public Information Officer (PIO) Work Group that a shooting had occurred on the south end of the Las Vegas Strip. Notifications were distributed to all patrol command staff and technology staff. As department staff started to ascertain what was occurring a few miles away from the campus word was received that many frightened and injured concert-goers were evacuating the Strip and heading eastbound to the UNLV campus for safety.

Initially, concert-goers clustered around Dayton Hall in the residence halls and the Claude I. Howard Public Safety Building. Notification was sent to the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department that these individuals were heading towards the campus. As the magnitude of the event was determined and the crowds grew, it was determined that the evacuees would have to be placed in a large, secure facility. Initially, the Mendenhall Building was identified as the site for this until staff moved to open the Thomas and Mack Center.

As the determination was made that evacuees would be moved to the Thomas and Mack Center, Police Services staff began to mobilize. In some instances, patrol staff stayed beyond their shifts, in others, staff were called in to supplement efforts. In one instance, a staffer worked from a remote location monitoring activity on social media and relaying information to the public regarding safety concerns. The list of staff involved in this effort are attached as part of this report below. Staff took on the following roles during the emergency:

- **Chief José Elique and Assistant Chief Green** - These command officers reported from home to UNLV to oversee Police Services' response to the incident and provide necessary leadership.
- **Lieutenant Stanley Berry, Detective Manuel "Bill" Sigarroa, and Detective Paul Velez** - Lieutenant Berry and Detective Velez were tasked with the critical and necessary responsibility of questioning victims regarding potential leads to ascertain the threat facing the community while simultaneously providing compassion to the victims in their time of need. They were also responsible for acting as liaisons between UNLV Police and the homicide detectives of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department. Detective Velez also served as the on-scene UNLVPD Public Information Officer (PIO). Upon completion of their investigative duties they assisted in securing the facility from any external threat. Detective Sigarroa reported to the Southern Nevada Fusion Center to develop real-time intelligence regarding what was happening on the ground. This included participating in search warrants at multiple locations across Clark County and reviewing incoming tips from the public. He pursued leads in the incident, participated in crime scene investigations at the shooting site, and provided intelligence briefings to UNLV Police Services and Las Vegas Metro. He also assisted in connecting victims with loved ones in the aftermath of the incident.
- **Lieutenant Richard Dohme** - He served as the liaison between UNLV Police Services officers/staff and Las Vegas Metro Police officers.

- **Lieutenant William "Willie" Newman** - He was instrumental in preparing the Thomas and Mack Center to receive over a 1,000 evacuees. The Thomas and Mack Center would not have been prepared to receive these evacuees without his efforts. He devoted himself single-mindedly to the task at hand, and he stayed involved in the operation longer than any other UNLV police officer. His efforts concluded after 2 days of activity.
- **Sergeant Denise Lutev** - She was the on-duty patrol sergeant when the event took place. She was responsible for the initial transfer of evacuees to the Thomas and Mack Center and the coordination of all police patrol efforts throughout the evening.
- **Police Officers James Cesaria, Ghessan Istefan, Stephanie Loffredo, and William "Willie" Singletary** - These officers were responsible for a variety of actions taken during the evening. Some patrolled the campus to gather evacuees and bring them to the Thomas and Mack Center for safety. This included locating any "walking wounded". Others took on the role of evacuating victims from their initial locations in the residence halls and police department to the Thomas and Mack Center. Upon arriving at the Thomas and Mack Center officers assisted with security screening of all incoming victims to ensure no potential threats (assailants) were allowed into the building. Note: At the time it had not been ascertained that there was only one shooter.
- **Dispatchers Diane Cowgill and Mark Sakurada** - Dispatcher Cowgill was the on-duty dispatcher that received initial calls for aid and inter-agency coordination. She was also the individual initially responsible for providing shelter to victims who came to the police department dispatch center. As the office became overwhelmed with traffic, Dispatcher Sakurada was called in and responded without hesitation to provide assistance.
- **Public Information Officer (PIO) 1, Hobreigh Fischer** - PIO Fischer received initial calls from the Southern Nevada Public Information Officer (PIO) Work Group and alerted Chief Elique, patrol command staff, and communications staff with the UNLV Office of Media Relations. He coordinated some of the communications traffic between Metro's PIOs and UNLV regarding evacuees appearing on campus and being moved to the Thomas and Mack. He also provided alerts and event updates to the campus community and local media through the department's social media sites as events unfolded. He provided information regarding concerns he was reading from the campus community on social media to both Chief Elique and Vice President Vince Alberta.
- **Student Security Officers Justin Gomez, Maria Herrera, Adriana Miranda, Marcus Scott, and Termaine Turner** - These student employees provided assistance in securing the evacuees at the Thomas and Mack Center. They stayed well beyond their shift when not obligated to do so only ending their details when instructed to do so.

In reviewing the events that unfolded, patrol command staff determined that all staff performed their responsibilities without hesitation or failure. However, five individuals/groups have been identified as having performed exemplary. Lieutenant Newman was identified as being critical to the opening and successful operation of the Thomas and Mack Center. Sergeant

Lutey was identified as being critical to the initial coordination of police patrol operations in order to successfully mobilize staff to render aid. Detective Sigarroa was identified for his role in intelligence gathering and efforts at uniting evacuees with loved ones. Dispatcher Diane Cowgill was identified for her exemplary and professional behavior under pressure. This was all the more remarkable as she is a relatively new hire to the dispatch center. Finally, all of the student security officers were identified for their commendable actions as they maturely took on responsibilities and duties beyond that which are expected of their positions.

Witnesses and injured persons were evacuated from the Strip and heading enroute to the UNLV campus for safety.

Initially, evacuee groups clustered around Dayton Hall in the residence halls and the Claude I. Hoover Public Safety Building. Notification was sent to the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department that these individuals were heading towards the campus. As the magnitude of the event was determined and the crowds grew, it was determined that the evacuees would have to be placed in a large, secure facility. Initially, the Meridian Building was identified as the site for this until staff moved to open the Thomas and Mack Center.

As the determination was made that evacuees would be moved to the Thomas and Mack Center, Police Services staff began to mobilize. In some instances, patrol staff stayed beyond their shifts; in others, staff were called in to supplement efforts. In one instance, a staffer worked from a remote location monitoring activity on social media and relaying information to the public regarding safety warnings. The list of staff involved in this effort are attached as part of this report below. Staff took on the following roles during the emergency:

- **Chief Jack Elliott and Assistant Chief Sergio** - These decorated officers reported from home to UNLV to oversee Police Services' response to the incident and provide necessary leadership.
- **Lieutenant Stanley Berry, Detective Manuel "Bill" Sigarroa, and Detective Paul Valdez** - Lieutenant Berry and Detective Valdez were tasked with the critical and necessary responsibility of questioning victims regarding potential leads to ascertain the exact timing of the emergency while simultaneously providing compassion to the victims in their time of need. They were also responsible for acting as liaisons between UNLV Police and the homicide detachments of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department. Detective Valdez also served as the on-scene UNLV VED Public Information Officer (PIO). Upon completion of their investigative duties they assisted in securing the facility from any external threat. Detective Sigarroa reported to the Southern Nevada Patrol Center to develop real-time intelligence regarding what was happening on the ground. This included providing a search warrant at multiple locations across Clark County and reviewing incident logs from the police. He pursued leads in the incident, participated in crime scene investigations at the shooting site, and provided intelligence briefings to UNLV Police Services and Las Vegas Media. He also assisted in comforting victims with loved ones in the aftermath of the incident.
- **Lieutenant Richard Polanco** - He served as the liaison between UNLV Police Services' officers and Las Vegas Metro Police officers.

