

The Role of the Army Reserve in the 11 September Attacks: The Pentagon



OFFICE OF ARMY RESERVE HISTORY

HEADQUARTERS

**UNITED STATES ARMY RESERVE COMMAND
FORT McPHERSON, GEORGIA**

The Role of the Army Reserve in the 11 September Attacks: The Pentagon

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**Office of Army Reserve History
United States Army Reserve Command
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2003

FOREWORD

On 11 September 2001, unimaginable horror came to our country as terrorists turned airliners filled with innocent people into lethal weapons. As one terrible blow after another hit in New York City, at the Pentagon and in Pennsylvania, ordinary Americans -- citizens and citizen-soldiers -- responded heroically to these extraordinary events.

We in the Army Reserve are particularly proud of our own who displayed the highest qualities of courage and selflessness on 11 September, whether that meant rushing into the World Trade Center, regardless of personal safety concerns, helping injured comrades out of the burning Pentagon or organizing rescue and recovery activities.

We especially remember those we lost on 11 September. There were the five citizen-soldiers of the 77th Regional Support Command who were members of the Fire Department of New York. They, along with hundreds of their comrades, died saving the lives of thousands of others at the World Trade Center. There was the 77th RSC Judge Advocate General officer, also at work in his civilian job, who died in Tower Two of the World Trade Center. There was the retired colonel, a security chief for an investment company in Tower Two, who got all but six of his firm's 2,700 employees out safely and then lost his life when he went back to find those still missing. And there were the Active Guard Reserve (AGR) colonel and the retired AGR colonel who were at their appointed place of duty in the Pentagon at the time that place of duty became the point of impact.

These are the names of those we should never forget, our first casualties in the war on terrorism:

- Warrant Officer 1 Ronald P. Bucca, fire marshal, New York Fire Department (FDNY), killed during rescue efforts at the World Trade Center.
- Staff Sergeant Frederick J. Ill, captain, NYFD, killed during rescue efforts at the World Trade Center.
- Retired Colonel Ronald F. Golinski, Department of Army Civilian, killed while on duty at the Pentagon.
- Captain Michael D. Mullan, fireman, NYFD, killed during rescue efforts at the World Trade Center.
- Lieutenant Colonel William H. Pohlmann, lawyer, working on the 91st floor of Tower Two, killed at the World Trade Center.
- Sergeant Shawn Powell, fireman, NYFD, killed during rescue efforts at the World Trade Center.
- Retired Colonel Rick Rescorla, director of security for Morgan Stanley in Tower Two, killed while helping others escape at the World Trade Center.
- Colonel David M. Scales, AGR officer, killed while on duty at the Pentagon.

- Captain Mark P. Whitford, fireman, NYFD, killed during rescue efforts at the World Trade Center.

These were not our only heroes on 11 September, nor did the Army Reserve's response end after the initial attacks. It was only beginning. Army Reservists on site in the Pentagon and New York City areas took immediate action to help the injured, to try to reach other survivors, and to assist other rescue workers.

Even as rescue workers fought the flames, the Army Reserve response grew, all across America, with crisis action teams standing up and in full operation in every major Army Reserve command headquarters within hours. Military Police units quickly took up station at key facilities.

In New York City, the 77th RSC reacted swiftly to the disaster, quickly appropriating and delivering hundreds of support items in short order to assist in the disaster recovery effort. Equally quick to respond and critical to the rescue and recovery operation were the Army Reserve Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officers in the New York City area. They arrived on the scene immediately to facilitate support requests from civilian agencies as quickly and effectively as possible.

Thousands of trained and ready Army Reserve men and women came forward, first as volunteers and then in response to the partial mobilization ordered by the president on 14 September, just three days after the attacks. Among the first soldiers to move out and begin operations was the 311th Quartermaster Company (Mortuary Affairs) from Aguadilla, Puerto Rico. Seventy-two hours after the call went out for volunteers from the 311th, they had deployed to the Pentagon and were searching through debris for the remains of victims. By the time the unit was mobilized a week later, it had already been "at war" for a week.

Two of our Military History Detachments have worked hard to capture the events of 11 September and the weeks that followed from the perspective of the Army Reserve. The 311th Military History Detachment from Fort Totten, New York, commanded by Major Robert Bensburg, and the 90th Military History Detachment from San Antonio, Texas, commanded by Captain Suzanne Summers, were called up soon after 11 September. The 311th was assigned to cover the New York City story and the 90th covered the Washington, D.C. area. The soldiers of these two small detachments gathered information and material, documented what had taken place and conducted numerous oral history interviews with participants. In doing their mission, they had to go into the damaged section of the Pentagon and also look out over what is now known as Ground Zero in New York City. They interviewed survivors of the Pentagon attack and others who had performed the grim task of recovering those who had not survived. They talked with heroes and those who supported the heroes.

The monographs they have produced provide a flavor of what it was like on the scene at one of the greatest days of tragedy in American history, told mostly from the points of view of those who were there. A day of tragedy to be sure, but also a day when the best of America

came through loud and clear. What you will read is the first chapter in the story of the Army Reserve's role in the global war on terrorism, the beginning of what was and continues to be a decisive and extraordinarily rapid response to a national crisis. This is the start to a story that will not end until the United States achieves the inevitable victory over the terrorists.

The Army Reserve was on the front lines of this war when it began on 11 September. We will be there at the finish, too.

Thomas J. Plewes
Lieutenant General, U.S. Army
Chief, Army Reserve
21 May 2002

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

When the Army Reserve called us to active duty we never imagined we would write the acknowledgements to a publication. Traditionally military history detachments (MHD) collect and preserve data for the Army's historical record. They accomplish this task by conducting oral history interviews, taking photographs, examining documents and records and then selecting the historically significant ones and archiving them, by searching for artifacts of historical value to be added to one of the Army's many museums, and a myriad of other tasks. While MHDs collect the data this is the first time, along with the 311th MHD writing about the Army Reserve role in New York, that a MHD used the information it gathered to produce a publication.

Therefore we believe it is appropriate to first thank Brigadier General David Zabecki for suggesting that the 90th and 311th MHDs go beyond their traditional roles and write about the attacks in New York and the Pentagon and the Army Reserve response to them. The Office of Army Reserve History provided the framework, guidance, and support to make such an endeavor possible. They also served as the initial editors of this report and as frequently occurs between those writing and those editing there were differences of opinion but the process of working through those differences led to a better product, a stronger work relationship, and friendship. Our thanks to Dr. Lee Harford, Dr. Kathryn Coker, and Ms. Deborah Foster-King whose efforts, patience, and dedication are appreciated.

The 90th MHD operated in the Military District of Washington and was assigned to the Office, Chief Army Reserve, who we are heavily indebted to for the support they provided. MHDs operate in three person detachments consisting of a commander, photojournalist, and administrative specialist. All too often when a three person detachment is attached to a larger organization it seems to be on the low end of the priority list but that was never the case at OCAR. There, the motto "It is never not my problem" was a reality and it was with sadness that we witnessed this organization's reduction as the Army reorganized its staff and headquarters. No doubt those who continue working at OCAR, will ensure that it remains a quality organization and those who left OCAR will make their mark wherever they go.

Regrettably, space limits us from mentioning all of the people who supported our efforts, otherwise this would look like a roll call of the CAR support staff. We can only provide a sampling of those who ensured our needs in Washington, D.C. were met. Some of these are the same people you will read about in this report. This list includes Colonel Malcolm Bruce Westcott, Colonel Mitchell Bisanar and Colonel Cary Threat; Lieutenant Colonel James Sample, Lieutenant Colonel Charles Hash, Lieutenant Colonel Stephen Ackman, Lieutenant Colonel Jerome Duncan, Lieutenant Colonel Sue Jones and Lieutenant Colonel Lawrence Collins; Major Will Flucker and Major Gregory Martin; and Chief Warrant Officer 5 Donald Garlow. Master Sergeant Larry Ledbetter; Sergeant First Class Mark Jackson, Sergeant First Class Silva Porter-Deal, Sergeant First Class Maria Gonzalez, Sergeant First Class Chris McCreary, Sergeant First

Class Karen Henderson, Sergeant First Class Ronald Kelly and Sergeant First Class Monica Morris provided noncommissioned officer support. Despite being a three-person unit, an MHD must attend to the myriad of details that the Army requires of it. These soldiers provided administrative and logistical support, training and advice, and solved supply, funding, and pay issues, which helped us meet Army standards.

OCAR civilians also supported our endeavor. Ms. Susan Plummer ensured we never ran out of office supplies. The computer support staff's assistance was unwavering and always prompt, even when we delivered a last minute request, which happened more often than we or they wanted. The ones who handled most of our issues were Ms. Dawn Zacherl, Mr. Robert Wilson, Mr. Thomas Jordan, and Mrs. Theresa Lathom. Ms. Debra Martin reserved conference rooms for our interviews.

Colonel Randy Pullen, a public affairs specialist at OCAR, especially earned our gratitude. He and the Office of Army Reserve History, though they did so separately, urged Brigadier General Zabecki to call up two MHDs to cover the Army Reserve role at the Pentagon and New York, which led to the mobilization of the 90th and 311th MHDs. When the 90th MHD arrived in Washington D.C., he provided a list of reservists who contributed to the Army Reserve's efforts at the Pentagon on 11 September 2001. Furthermore, he edited our monograph, answered any questions we had, and contributed photographs that are included in this publication. We also received photographs from Corporal Nathaniel Penn (United States Marine Corps).

The Center of Military History and two MHDs, the 46th and 305th, which recorded the Army's role at the Pentagon on 11 September, also furthered our project. Mr. William Epley, Mr. Stephen Lofgren, and Mr. Frank Shirer offered advice based on their experience with conducting oral histories and they used their resources to transcribe many of our interviews. The 46th and 305th MHDs were our friends and often a source of information as we shared experiences. The 46th MHD consisted of Major Keith Dover, Master Sergeant Donna Majors, and Specialist Kelly Strand, who provided us copies of the unit's photographs, which are in this report. The 305th MHD included Major Robert Smith, Sergeant First Class Dennis Lopic, and Corporal Austin Shellenberger. Corporal Schellenberger went out of his way to answer questions and assist us on special projects.

The 90th MHD currently operates at the USARC in Atlanta. We are indebted to the staff here including Major Mark Young, Mr. Steven Farmer, Mr. David Moyer, Mr. Bill Choate, Ms. Ovetta Robinson, and Mr. Orlando Castro. Command Sergeant Major Nicholas Piacentini, Sergeant Major Wilbert Thompson, Master Sergeant Norah Rentillo, and Staff Sergeant Mike Robinson. Our unit has been combined with the 311th MHD, consisting of Major Robert Bensburg and Sergeant First Class Christina Steiner, whose ideas and experience benefited this book. Finally, thanks go to all of the interviewees who used their valuable time to participate in the interviews and our friends and family members who supported us and reminded us of the

reasons why we serve. The 90th MHD has learned that the effort behind a book goes beyond what the author writes and to everyone mentioned and unmentioned: Thank you.

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INTRODUCTION

The morning of 11 September 2001 began like any other in the Washington, D.C. area. Army Reservists headed off to work with their thoughts on the business of the day ahead. Despite the appearance of normality, this day would end like no other in living memory. According to the *Washington Post*, the Washington, D.C. region suffered more casualties on 11 September than any day since the Civil War. The death toll at the Pentagon alone stood at 189. The dead and missing included both military and civilians.¹

At approximately 9:40 a.m., an American Airlines jet, Flight 77, hijacked by al Qaeda terrorists, flew directly into the Pentagon, symbol of American military power since its construction during World War II. The plane, scheduled to fly to Los Angeles from Dulles Airport, initially traveled west, but then executed a sharp turn, aiming the plane toward the White House and into restricted airspace. Watching the plane travel at full throttle, horrified flight controllers at Dulles warned their counterparts at Reagan National Airport of the unauthorized flight headed toward the White House. The plane then turned a sharp 270 degrees to the right, falling below radar level and off controllers' screens, heading directly toward the Pentagon instead. The rapid pace of events that Indian summer morning precluded military aircraft from intercepting the flight.²

According to one account, "The jetliner hit the Pentagon low and diagonally, first striking the renovated section of wedge 1 before passing into an unrenovated area of wedge 2, which was being prepared for renovation." When it struck the Pentagon, the impact left a hole in the building stretching between 75 and 100 feet. The Boeing 757 carried 10,000 gallons of fuel. The explosion generated by the crash resulted in the outbreak of fires and the collapse of the affected wedge. By the end of the day, a section of the outer ring located in that wedge of the

¹ Articles, Jamie Stockwell, "Crews Approaching Heart of Pentagon Crash Site," *Washington Post*, 15 September 2001; Carol Morello and Steve Vogel, "Slowly, Signs of a Return to Normalcy," *Washington Post*, 18 September 2001 and Steve Vogel, "12 Remains From Pentagon are Identified," *Washington Post*, 20 September 2001, Operation Noble Eagle Collection (90th MHD), United States Army Reserve Historical Research Collection, Office of Army Reserve History, United States Army Reserve Command. Unless otherwise noted all records are part of this collection.

² Articles, Serge Schmemmann, "Hijacked Jets Destroy Twin Towers and Hit Pentagon," *New York Times*, 12 September 2001; Marc Fisher and Don Phillips, "On Flight 77: 'Our Plane is Being Hijacked,'" *Washington Post*, 12 September 2001; Michael Grunwald, "Terrorists Hijack 4 Airliners, Destroy World Trade Center, Hit Pentagon; Hundreds Dead: Bush Promises Retribution; Military Put on Highest Alert," *Washington Post*, 12 September 2001; Bradley Graham, "Military Alerted Before Attacks," *Washington Post*, 15 September 2001; Bradley Graham, "At the Pentagon: Response Hampered by Confusion, Lack of Preparedness," *Washington Post*, 16 September 2001 and Carol Morello and Steve Vogel, "189 Believed Dead in Pentagon Attack," *Washington Post*, 14 September 2001.

five-sided fortress had collapsed from structural damage caused by the intense heat generated by the explosion of jet fuel.³

The War Department, predecessor of today's Department of the Army, built the Pentagon, one of the world's largest office buildings (it has 6.5 million square feet of space), during the early years of World War II under the guidance of Brigadier General Brehon B. Sommervell, chief of the Construction Division of the Office of the Quartermaster General. The Pentagon represented Sommervell's solution to the War Department's need for additional office space. Ironically, defense officials held the groundbreaking ceremony on 11 September 1941, exactly sixty years before the plane crash that would destroy a substantial part of the building. On 15 January 1943, at a cost of \$2.2 million, officials dedicated the new star-shaped structure, although workers had occupied parts of the building since 29 April 1942. In all, the Pentagon complex occupies 583 acres of land with the actual structure covering twenty-nine acres, in addition to an open-air center court totaling five acres. Although it includes 17.5 miles of hallways, its unique design ensures that one can travel from any point in the building to an opposite location in seven minutes. Normally, the Pentagon houses approximately 26,000 military and civilian employees and about 3,000 non-defense support personnel.⁴

By the afternoon of 11 September, however, normality seemed like a distant memory. Rescuers described a scene resembling "something . . . out of a movie" with concrete boulders and collapsed metal beams. Army Staff Sergeant Brock Bowman said, "Think of your worst nightmare. Everything is knocked down, ripped apart, torn up. It's pretty much the worst thing you could imagine seeing." Commenting on the wreckage, one firefighter noted, "I was speechless. I have been on the job for twelve years. I have never seen anything like this."⁵

The section of the Pentagon affected by the crash housed a mix of Army and Navy offices.⁶ These included the Department of the Army's Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, which had recently relocated into the wing that was hit. Construction crews had just completed a three-year renovation program of the wing containing wedge 1 of the venerable building at a cost of \$258 million. These improvements, which included installing windows made of safety glass, as well as the use of steel beams and Kevlar cloth, ultimately saved many

³ Articles, Larry Flynn, "Pentagon emerges from rubble," *Building Design & Construction*, October 2001; D'Vera Cohn and Steve Vogel, "Black Boxes Recovered at Pentagon," *Washington Post*, 14 September 2001 and Robert P. Mader, "Tougher Pentagon to Rise," *CONTRACTORMag.com*, July 2001.

⁴ Articles, United States Department of Defense, "About the Pentagon," 16 January 2001; "The Pentagon: Facts & Figures" 2 March 2002 and Defense Technology Information Center, "Welcome to the Pentagon: General Information," 2 March 2002.

⁵ Articles, Statement by the Chief, Army Reserve [Lieutenant General Thomas J. Plewes], "Attack on America – 30 Days Later," 11 October 2001; Lieutenant Colonel Randy Pullen, "'A First-Class Outfit' – The 311th Quartermaster Company on Duty at the Pentagon," 12 October 2001 and Gary Sheftick, Defense Technology Information Center, "Soldiers Lift Rubble, Hope for Miracle," 14 September 2001.

lives. Fortunately, two-thirds of those working in wedge 2 had already moved out in anticipation of renovations due to begin there. The casualty figures would have been much higher otherwise.⁷

As horrific as the physical destruction was, the human toll was much worse. In all, the crash took the lives of 125 people inside the Pentagon and 64 aboard Flight 77. The rolls of the dead included one current and one retired Army Reservist, Active Guard Reserve officer Lieutenant Colonel David M. Scales (posthumously promoted to Colonel) and Colonel (Retired) Ronald F. Golinski. Their presence in the Pentagon symbolized the integration of the Army Reserve into the Army's structure. Both men worked in Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA).⁸ Since May 2001, Lieutenant Colonel David Scales served as the personnel policy integrator at the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel. Previously, he served in the Forces Management Directorate at the Office of the Chief, Army Reserve (OCAR) in nearby Crystal City in Arlington, Virginia. Described as "an extremely professional, dedicated officer," Lieutenant Colonel Scales gave his life for his country two weeks before his 45th birthday. He left behind a wife and twelve-year old son.⁹ Colonel (Retired) Ronald Golinski also worked for the Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel. He retired from the Active Guard Reserve program in 1996, but continued his connection with the Army in his civilian career. Another Army Reservist, Sergeant Janice Ann Jackson, worked in the Pentagon as a civilian contractor. Jackson, who received severe burns after the crash, managed to escape the burning building. Drawing on her Army Reserve training, she helped to pull a wounded co-worker to safety despite her own injuries.

On 23 October 2001, the Army leadership gathered at Fort Myer, Virginia, to honor those who had put their lives at risk to aid others at the Pentagon crash. Seventy military and civilian recipients received awards ranging from the Purple Heart and the Soldier's Medal, the Army's highest award for non-combat bravery, to the Defense of Freedom Medal, given to civilians who were wounded in the attack. Several Army Reservists received awards that day. They included Lieutenant Colonel Victor M. Correa who received both a Soldier's Medal and the Purple Heart, and Sergeant Janice Ann Jackson who was awarded the Distinguished Civilian Service Medal for

⁶ Articles, D'Vera Cohn, "Pentagon Fire Out; Interim Morgue Set Up," *Washington Post*, 12 September 2001 and Mary Beth Sheridan, "Loud Boom, Then Flames in the Hallway," *Washington Post*, 12 September 2001.

⁷ Article, Steve Vogel, "New Pentagon Pays Off," *Washington Post*, 23 September 2001.

⁸ Articles, Richard Whittle, "Pentagon honors those lost in terrorist attack three months ago," *Dallas Morning News*, 12 December 2001; Michael P. Bruno, "Pentagon Efforts Turn to Recovery," *Washington Post*, 13 September 2001 and D'Vera Cohn and Steve Vogel, "Black Boxes Recovered at Pentagon," *Washington Post*, 14 September 2001.

⁹ Articles, Lieutenant Colonel Randy Pullen, "Lieutenant Colonel David Scales: 'A Good, Professional Army Reserve Officer,'" OCAR website, 18 September 2001; transcript, Colonel Malcolm B. Westcott, interview by Captain Suzanne L. Summers and Sergeant William L. Miller, tape recording with transcript, OCAR, 7 November 2001 and Email, Lieutenant Colonel Randy Pullen to Captain Suzanne Summers, "The Army Reserve Response at 9-11 Plus 50," 31 October 2001.

Bravery.¹⁰ Active Guard Reserve officers assigned to the Pentagon, Lieutenant Colonel Correa and his colleague Lieutenant Colonel Isabelle Slifer, pulled a number of injured people out of the burning building.¹¹

Active Guard Reserve officer Lieutenant Colonel Sean Kelly and Captain Darrell Oliver lifted a desk off of a secretary. Captain Oliver then put the woman on his back and carried her out of the Pentagon. For his actions, Captain Oliver received the Soldier's Medal and the Purple Heart.¹² Colonel Junro E. Wakayama, an Army Reserve Medical Service Corps officer on a one-year tour of duty with the Director for Operational Test and Evaluation, Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), received the Soldier's Medal on 6 March 2002, for his actions during the 11 September attack. Colonel Wakayama re-entered the Pentagon three times, despite the danger from raging fires, heavy smoke and the threat of additional attacks, leading several people to safety. He continued his efforts until smoke and heat forced him to evacuate. After he made it out of the building, he spent the rest of that day and the following nine days working more than twelve hours a day and providing medical assistance on site.¹³

Other Army Reservists in the National Capitol Region (NCR) also played vital roles in the hours and days after the attack. Retired Army Reserve Colonel William B. Croom, assistant deputy, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Logistics, and Active Guard Reserve Lieutenant Colonel Douglas R. Thomson, the executive officer and assistant for Army Reserve logistics, were both in their Pentagon offices when the attack occurred. The force of the impact was so great that it flung people against the wall or out of their chairs. Croom and Thomson went into action immediately. Their concern was to get people evacuated and to secure the area. For seven hours after exiting the building, Croom and Thomson assisted medical personnel as litter bearers, moving injured people to a safe place, setting up triage sites, and comforting victims. "I was just feeling like I needed to be there to do whatever I could," Croom said later.¹⁴

After he and his wife, fellow Active Guard Reserve officer Major Desiree Wineland, located their children at the Pentagon daycare center, Captain Calvin D. Wineland, assigned to OCAR, transported a wounded soldier suffering severe burns to a hospital in Washington, D.C.

¹⁰ Email, Mr. Tom Ryan to Captain Suzanne Summers, 29 October 2001, "Pentagon honors its heroes" and Article, "Answering the Call – Individual Accounts, Lieutenant Colonel Vic Correa," OCAR website, 20 September 2001.

¹¹ Article, "Answering the Call – Individual Accounts, Lieutenant Colonel Vic Correa," OCAR website, 20 September 2001 and Email, Lieutenant Colonel Randy Pullen, "Army Reserve Response at 9-11 Plus 50," 31 October 2001.

¹² Email, Lieutenant Colonel Randy Pullen to Captain Suzanne Summers, "The Army Reserve Response at 9-11 Plus 50," 31 October 2001.

¹³ Email, Lieutenant Colonel Randy Pullen to Captain Suzanne Summers, "Army Reserve September 11 Hero Decorated," 6 March 2002, Executive Summary.

¹⁴ Email, Lieutenant Colonel Randy Pullen to Captain Suzanne Summers, "The Army Reserve Response at 9-11 Plus 50," 31 October 2001.

A Navy sailor on a motorcycle acted as a guide, leading Captain Wineland and his party to the hospital.¹⁵ Master Sergeant Jacqueline Gopie, a medical policy noncommissioned officer at OCAR, employed her training as a medic to assist litter teams moving casualties.¹⁶ Major Eugene Swisher, an Active Guard Reserve officer, had already out-processed from his assignment at the Office of the Secretary of Defense and was preparing to move to a new assignment in New Orleans when the plane hit. After witnessing the plane crash, he stopped by the Navy Exchange gas station/convenience store where he found the store manager emptying shelves of food, water, and soft drinks to send to the site for support of the firefighters. He asked Swisher if he could help transport the items to the Pentagon site. Swisher found himself involved in coordinating the logistics for the vendors in support of firefighters and other first responders at the site.¹⁷

Despite the attack, command and control of the nation's armed forces never lapsed. The Chief of the Army Reserve, Lieutenant General Thomas J. Plewes, was working in his office in the Pentagon when the attack occurred. Key defense leaders, including General Plewes, participated in the building's evacuation before they were whisked away to Site R, also known as the Alternate Joint Communications Center, a secure location on the Maryland-Pennsylvania border. For a time, General Plewes was the ranking military official at the site, considered to be the "back up" command and control center for the Pentagon.¹⁸

On the morning of 11 September, Brigadier General Karol A. Kennedy, the commander of the 99th Regional Support Command, headquartered in Coraopolis, Pennsylvania, also found herself at the Pentagon for a meeting of senior Army Reserve leaders. After the attack, she dispatched military police from her command to provide security to Site R. Although they were not federally mobilized, they served on extended active duty for training orders.¹⁹

Army Reserve senior leaders played special roles in commemorating those who died. Two Army Reserve general officers, Major General Sue B. Dueitt and Major General Robert Diamond, both of whom serve as individual mobilization augmentees in the Pentagon, delivered

¹⁵ Article, "Answering the Call – Individual Accounts, Captain Calvin D. Wineland," OCAR website, 20 September 2001.

¹⁶ Article, "Answering the Call – Individual Accounts, Master Sergeant Jacqueline Gopie," OCAR website, 18 September 2001.

¹⁷ Email, Lieutenant Colonel Randy Pullen to Captain Suzanne Summers, "The Army Reserve Response at 9-11 Plus 50," 31 October 2001.

¹⁸ Lieutenant General Thomas J. Plewes, interview by Captain Suzanne L. Summers and Sergeant William L. Miller, tape recording with transcript, 29 April 2002 and Article, "Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists," *The Bulletin* [Internet], November/December 2001, Operation Noble Eagle Collection (311th MHD), United States Army Reserve Historical Research Collection, Office of Army Reserve History, United States Army Reserve Command.

¹⁹ In civilian life, General Kennedy serves as the deputy chief of financial management at OCAR. Major Paul Guillot, interview with Major Robert Bensburg, tape recording with transcript, 22 March 2002, Operation Noble Eagle Collection (311th MHD), United States Army Reserve Historical Research Collection, Office of Army Reserve History, United States Army Reserve Command.

eulogies and words of comfort to family members and friends suffering painful losses in the aftermath of the plane crash.²⁰

The events of 11 September shocked residents of the Washington, D.C. area for whom the Pentagon was a familiar landmark. Nevertheless, the men and women who work in and near the Pentagon demonstrated their resiliency in the days after the attack. On 12 September, one day after the crash of Flight 77, approximately 10,000 to 11,000 workers, almost half the normal Pentagon workforce, returned to work in the fire-scarred structure in a show of their resolve to carry on after the tragedy. Late that afternoon, President George W. Bush commented as he toured the site, “Coming here makes me sad on the one hand. It also makes me angry.”²¹

On 14 September 2001, President Bush ordered a partial mobilization of reserve forces to protect the home front and to prosecute the recently declared war on terrorism. This was the first partial mobilization of the reserve components since his father, President George H. Bush, served as commander-in-chief of American forces during the Persian Gulf War in 1991. Although the first call-ups of Army Reserve units did not occur until 22 September, many Army Reservists had already been called to or had volunteered for service in a training status. The Army Reserve Personnel Command, located in St. Louis, reported that by 12:00 p.m. on 14 September, more than 1,900 reservists had called to volunteer.

By 22 September, when the first units activated under partial mobilization status received their call up, the Army Reserve already had seven units, one installation, six facilities and approximately 2,300 personnel supporting Operation NOBLE EAGLE, the protection of the domestic front.²² These units included the 311th Quartermaster Company (Mortuary Affairs) from Aguadilla, Puerto Rico, part of the 65th Regional Support Command. The 311th Quartermaster Company played a critical role in the recovery effort at the Pentagon. When the call for eighty-five volunteers came, unit members quickly responded. By 15 September, the first unit members arrived at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware and made their way to the Pentagon site. One such soldier, Private Wilnette Perez-Padilla had just finished her advanced individual training at Fort Lee, Virginia, on 28 August, but when the call came, she raised her hand. “It’s a sad situation,” she remarked, “but I’m extremely proud to be here to help our

²⁰ Email, Lieutenant Colonel Randy Pullen to Captain Suzanne Summers, 29 October 2001, “Army Reserve General's Elegy Honors Active Army Soldier Killed in Pentagon Attack.” Major General Sue B. Dueitt serves as the assistant deputy chief of staff for personnel (individual mobilization augmentee), while Major General Robert Diamond is the special assistant to the administrative assistant to the secretary of the Army.

²¹ Article, Steve Vogel, “Defiant Workers Return to Posts at the Pentagon,” *Washington Post*, 13 September 2001.

²² Email, Lieutenant Colonel Randy Pullen to Captain Suzanne Summers, “The Army Reserve Response at 9-11 Plus 50,” 31 October 2001 and Email, Colonel Stephanie Jeffords to Colonel Ronald Logsdon, “Noble Eagle Update,” 16 September 2001.

nation.” On 17 September, when she and her fellow unit members showed up for duty at the Pentagon, President Bush thanked them for their service.²³

Public organizations responded quickly to the recovery effort at the Pentagon. The Red Cross and Salvation Army, along with local vendors, set up a tent city called “Camp Unity” where rescue and recovery workers, including members of the military, firemen, policemen, and FBI agents working at the site could find a hot cup of coffee, a meal, warm clothes, and a chaplain as they set about the gruesome task of recovering the dead and their effects. Inside the camp, a street sign read “Home Town USA.” People from across the country sent their messages of support and solidarity to bolster the morale of Pentagon workers.²⁴

Army Reservists also sought ways to assist those working in the recovery effort at the Pentagon. Their experiences left them changed people. They also illustrated the value of their training as soldiers. “I just knew that day that I wanted to be over there to help. I’m a soldier. That’s where we should have been,” reflected Major Michael J. Coughlin, deputy legal counsel at OCAR.²⁵ Colonel Malcolm B. Westcott, the Deputy Chief, Army Reserve, whose office was on the first floor of the Pentagon, close to the crash site, reflected on his experiences. “I think mentally most soldiers are prepared for this,” he noted. “Your whole career you are preparing for it and you’ve seen this kind of thing before. What was different in this is that it happened on our soil, in Washington, in the Pentagon.”²⁶

A day after the crash, Lieutenant General Thomas J. Plewes, Chief, Army Reserve, reflected the shock and outrage of a horror-struck world. “The tragedy was so heinous,” he observed, “that a day later, the numbness has still not worn off.” Speaking of Army Reserve capabilities, he promised, “We have a variety of capabilities and experienced personnel which can and will be made available as part of the federal response, helping our fellow citizens in the best traditions of the citizen-soldier. . . . The men and women of the Army Reserve will do all that the Nation expects of us in this national crisis.” Thirty days later, reflecting on the tragedy,

²³ Article, Lieutenant Colonel Randy Pullen, “‘A First-Class Outfit’ – The 311th Quartermaster Company on Duty at the Pentagon,” OCAR website, 12 October 2001.

²⁴ Articles, Janet Chismar, “Salvation Army Serves at ‘Camp Unity’ Pentagon,” *Crosswalk.com News Channel*; Pattie Stechschulte, “Pentagon Workers Find Relief at Camp Unity,” *Today’s Chiropractic* [Internet]; Hannah Mack Lapp, “A Visit at Camp Unity: First Person Reflections,” *Footpaths* [Internet] Winter 2001 and Anita Parlow, “Reflections from the Pentagon,” *RedCross.com* [Internet], 5 October 2001.

²⁵ Major Michael J. Coughlin, interview by Sergeant William L. Miller, tape recording with transcript, 5 November 2001 and Article, “Answering the Call – Individual Accounts, Major Michael J. Coughlin,” OCAR website, 18 September 2001.

²⁶ Colonel Malcolm B. Westcott, interview by Captain Suzanne L. Summers and Sergeant William L. Miller, tape recording with transcript, 7 November 2001.

General Plewes noted, “On the front lines of this new war [on terrorism] from the very outset, Army Reservists went into action immediately.”²⁷

The bulk of those mobilized in support of Operation NOBLE EAGLE were helping with the recovery from the attacks or engaged in the defense of our homeland. The missions undertaken by Army Reservists included: force protection and security at installations and facilities; intelligence and investigation support; training and training validation; headquarters augmentation; garrison support; and legal support; communications, postal and personnel support; engineer support; historical documentation; and logistics and transportation operations. The Army Reserve also sent units and soldiers in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, the military action intended to destroy the al Qaeda network centered in Afghanistan. About ninety units and 2,300 citizen-soldiers supported this phase of the war. These mobilized forces included public affairs, military intelligence, civil affairs, medical, and other combat support and combat service support specialties.²⁸

Many Americans share the sentiments of President George W. Bush: “And so, on behalf of an entire nation, I want to say thanks to the men and women who wear our uniform, and thanks . . . for your sacrifices and your support of our great land.”²⁹ In the pages that follow, some of these Army Reservists share their memories and experiences of 11 September, a day that changed not only their lives, but the lives of all Americans.

²⁷ Articles, “Statement on the September 11, 2001 Tragedy by the Chief, Army Reserve,” OCAR website, 12 September 2001 and U.S. Army Reserve Press Release, “Attack on America – 30 Days Later,” OCAR website, 11 October 2001, Statement by the Chief, Army Reserve.

²⁸ Lieutenant General Thomas J. Plewes, “9-11 Plus 90, Statement by the Chief, Army Reserve,” OCAR website.

²⁹ Email, Lieutenant Colonel Randy Pullen to Captain Suzanne Summers, 23 January 2002, Remarks by the President at Reserve Officers Association Luncheon.



Lieutenant Colonel Isabelle Slifer

Chapter 1

Lieutenant Colonel Isabelle Slifer, Active Guard Reserve Officer, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel, HQDA

On the 11th of September, I actually started my sixth day with the DCSPER [Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel] section. I went to work with any kind of apprehensions that any new person has, i.e., okay, what is my function, let me read the files that the person that I replaced left me. . . . I walked in the building. Again, nothing unusual. Security checks were given as they are. It was nothing like we're enduring now since the 11th of September.

[She talked to her husband who is the first to tell her about the World Trade Center. Then the office staff starts talking about the first plane to hit the World Trade Center, though one office report says it is a helicopter.]

By the time the majority of us got into [Brigadier General Harry B.] Axson's office to watch the television, we witnessed in actuality the second plane going into the Trade Center. As everybody would say, a surreal and almost movie-like production [existed]. It was one of those dazed situations. . . . The majority of us walked out of General Axson's office back into our cubicles, and I know for a fact that a couple of my colleagues were making phone calls home. And I started to, when I heard from a Lieutenant Colonel [Reginald] Jordan that the Crisis Action Team had stood up. Being new to the area and the duty position, I thought maybe I should hang around and find out what is needed. . . . That was probably around 9:36 [a.m.] when Lieutenant Colonel Jordan made this sort of announcement without alerting everybody, but the people that were in earshot. . . . Two minutes into this . . . spontaneous conversation about the Crisis Action Team, the building violently, violently -- and I can't say it, I can't emphasize it enough -- shook. Almost as fast as you could snap your fingers, while it was shaking and at the same time Lieutenant Colonel Deborah Fix shouted, "Get down." The momentum of the sway of the building didn't throw you down. . . . [The] force of her body made us all get down. . . . The only way I can relate it to you is like a flash tube went out. Some people say there was a fireball. Coupled with that and even before the flash was this freight train sound. When I hear people report on . . . how a tornado sounds, well, I heard the freight train sound with a mammoth whoosh at the same time, that light sensation. And, of course, things were falling. Of course, that was the collapse of the ceiling. We were almost, I don't want to say on top of each other, but we were in close proximity to each other. I believe it was Sergeant Major [Tony] Rose who shouted from a near vicinity, "We have been hit. Move out. Move and move out now. I repeat, we've been hit. Move and move out now." . . . We all began to low crawl. I'd say we low crawled maybe about forty feet. I sidebar that remark by saying that if anybody told me at my age that I could low crawl as fast as I did, with the combination of I'm sure the almighty God and my adrenalin and, of course, former military training [I would not have believed them].

When we got to the door that led us into the fourth corridor I remember looking to the right, i.e., looking down to E ring and seeing this avalanche of smoke coming towards us. It wasn't black at that time. It was more of a golden brown. When I explained that to someone else later after the incident they said that's because the fire was still inside that smoke. I also want to say that when we got to the fourth corridor, there was a yellow haze, so my first thought was we'd been hit by a chemical missile. The same thing when we got to that double door or that door leading into the fourth corridor. We got up off our feet and we made a daisy chain. I remember grabbing onto [Master] Sergeant . . . [John] Frazier's belt buckle. . . . We were holding hands. Someone was holding my backside pants. It reminded me of when my two boys were small. I don't know who that person was, but it was comforting to have people near you.

We got up off our feet and we kept low with this daisy chain effect. Someone recognized the fact that we couldn't . . . get out of that corridor because the firewall or the fire doors had already closed. So someone in the front (I was only about three or four people -- no, actually two or three people from the front) led us into an office that was next door to us which got us out to the fifth corridor. Getting out to the fifth corridor, it was probably the most beautiful sight in the world, because at that time I realized . . . whatever had happened was now behind me.

The emotions that I had going through that experience -- you could have told me it happened in one second, you could have told me it went on for thirty minutes, which I know it didn't. I say that because time stood still. My emotions were not scared, not panicking, but I felt calm. I was with my fellow comrades. I mean by that, soldiers. I felt the buddy system was in place. I knew I was going to get out okay. That's why after we were told how many were actually missing, it just seemed, how could that be. It's not supposed to happen. At least it's not supposed to happen at the Pentagon.

Running out, which I believe was the fifth corridor, I remember looking at people. . . . They were carrying things out because I guess they were informed it was a bomb scare or it was a bomb. They were looking at us because we were shouting, "We're okay, we're okay." I think they were probably wondering why we are shouting. But at the same time, people had already gotten to the center court of the Pentagon and . . . they saw the smoke that was bellowing up from wedge 1, which was hit. So, I know there was confusion going on. We knew what happened. People in the courtyard didn't know exactly what happened but could see smoke rising. But the people leaving the building looking at us running toward them probably were in a very confused state of mind.

[Once outside, Lieutenant Colonel Slifer led a small group in prayer. She estimated that there were about 10,000 people in the courtyard.]

In just military training, we seemed to rally together, and we started to look out for each other. . . . "Have you seen so-and-so?" Names just start coming out. People would give yes answers, of course, if they had. And if you didn't, well, of course, you didn't answer.

[Police led the group out of the courtyard into the north parking lot because no one knew what would happen next. A SWAT team in the parking lot provided instructions. Once outside,

Lieutenant Colonel Slifer spotted a co-worker whose hair was singed and was a "bundle of nerves," shaking frantically. Afraid the co-worker might go into shock she took her to a triage spot where she was diagnosed as being okay.]

There were . . . people telling us to please move from where we were . . . because it was told that another plane was missing from Dulles and may be the second plane into the Pentagon or second attack into the Pentagon. That was the word used. So, of course, having gone through it once, I didn't want to be part of another attack like that. We kept walking away. . . . As we were leaving, I believe that's when I heard . . . [what] turned out to be a fighter jet coming over the Pentagon. My feeling at that point was this has got to be a horrible movie. . . things that you sit through, the Schwarzenegger-type movie, action movie. . . . I don't even like them, let alone sit through it and let alone be part of one.

[At a nearby hotel, an Air Force doctor diagnosed Lieutenant Colonel Slifer's co-worker with shock. The co-worker complained about the burned feeling on her hands. Lieutenant Colonel Slifer reiterated her belief that it could have been a chemical missile.]

I remember saying to the doctor, because I was feeling warm like many other people were, "Was this a chemical attack?" And he said, "No, it was a plane." And that's when I couldn't just put it all together. My mind was just accepting so much.

[She heard about the hijacked plane that crashed near Pittsburgh, her hometown.] I thought, "Now what?" I mean, this is really getting almost out of hand for my mind just to comprehend.

[The hotel staff let people take showers to cool down, which helped relieve the flash burns, many, including Lieutenant Colonel Slifer, had suffered. At that point, everyone was told to go home and that some Metro stations were open. The Pentagon station was closed. Lieutenant Colonel Slifer walked with six or seven others to Pentagon City, a shopping area across the street from the Pentagon.]

I have to emphasize the majority of us, at least the females who carried purses with wallets inside those purses and left them behind, had no money. . . . So, we had no money to ride the VRE [Virginia Railway Express]. When we got to the Pentagon City Metro station, I remember saying to one of the Metro officials, "We're in a circumstance here. We have no money." And he said, "Where do you want to go?" I said probably the best word I could think of, and that was, "Home." And he just was saying, "Then walk right through." We waited for the Metro. And again, it's a surreal experience, because here you are waiting for a Metro like you would any ordinary day

[She talked about her family being worried about her because they knew where she worked and how they feared she died. She received so many emails and calls from friends asking about her well-being, She was humbled and flattered. One call from a World War II vet, who fought at the Battle of the Bulge stood out. She told him that her experience paled compared to his.]

“Well, Isabelle,” [he said,] “let me put it to you that everyday I went into battle, I expected to get hit. You went into your office area at the Pentagon never expecting what you went through, and there's the difference.”

[About two weeks after the incident, she was working the night shift at the Army Operations Center representing the Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel. She walked outside to view the damage for the first time.]

I just looked at the area and felt that I had been violated because somebody who has such a feeling, a fanatical feeling, felt that the only way to express those feelings was to kill people, innocent people. . . . Standing there, I just began to cry because of the emotions that I was thinking of, the feeling of guilt which I had right after the incident when I found out how many of my colleagues were missing and now determined killed, anger because why would anybody do this. It just doesn't make a common sense thing to do. That's saying it lightly. And then [I felt] a little bit of paranoia because who can you trust? . . . Standing in front of that building, all those rages came to -- or those emotions, rather, seemed to come to me and began to just fester and I cried like I hadn't cried since the death of my mother and father. . . . It came from the depths. In fact, a police officer, if I remember, came over to me and just put his arm around [me] and said, "You know, it's going to be okay. It really is going to be okay." I needed to hear that. It was the right time to hear that. I know it's going to be okay.³⁰

³⁰ Lieutenant Colonel Isabelle Slifer, interview by Lieutenant Colonel Robert Rossow, tape recording with transcript, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel (hereafter cited as ODCSPER), 8 October 2001, Department of the Army Center of Military History (hereafter cited as DA-CMH).



Lieutenant Colonel Victor M. Correa

Chapter 2

Lieutenant Colonel Victor M. Correa, Active Guard Reserve Officer, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel, HQDA

[Lieutenant Colonel Correa described how his day started out on 11 September. It began with him turning on the computer and reading through the email. His office area was an open bay with several work areas.]

[On the morning of 11 September, his co-worker, Major John Jessup, looked at him.] “You know sir, we are as vulnerable as the World Towers. If they wanted to they could hit us right now,” or something to those lines. He had not finished saying that when the airplane attacked the Pentagon. First thing that I recall is I got off the floor. I am assuming that I was not at the same area that I was when I stood up, so I am assuming that the collapse threw me. I can’t tell you if it was up in the air or if it was rolling. I was on the floor, and as I looked up I saw a ball of fire come over my head. This is happening within seconds. The windows that were in B ring, I saw them go out [from the pressure of the blast]. . . . I thank God that they invested I heard \$21,000 in each window. So that was their job: not to shatter and spread debris and become projectiles. So it did work. The roof started coming down, some of it. . . . The fire alarm system goes off and it says “Fire has been detected in your area. Please evacuate.” The water sprinklers started coming down. As soon as the ball of fire retreat[ed], a pall of smoke just dropped immediately. I can’t tell you if it was one second or half a second, but that was what I was able to capture in that short period. . . .

I was already on my feet and Mr. Moon [Song, a civilian budget analyst], who sat two cubicles away, was on the floor crawling, half-stunned or dazed. I picked him up and -- I say threw him or led him. He says I threw him to where John Jessup was, so he could show him the way out. A civilian lady came out half-dazed. So I took her and also led her to John. He pointed her to the right direction. Because of the smoke . . . you could not see. I started screaming. First of all, the folks that I saw around me I told them to “Get out, get out, get out!!”

[He then guided them to Room 2C450]. . . . The cloud had dropped very low, so I started screaming, “If you can hear my voice, listen to me, focus on my voice. Come towards me. There is a way out here. I can help you.” I started yelling as loud as I could because I could not go into the smoke, or I could, but I could not go far because it was so thick and you could hardly see anything in front of you. I don’t know how long I did that but -- a couple of seconds and more people started walking out of that area. At that time, I felt I had cleared the area of folks that could make it out. I ran toward the exit, and I looked to my right and there was a person that was badly burned, badly injured. So between four of us . . . we picked him up and carried him to the A ring and dropped him. [We] left him there because there was a group of paramedics there.

[After dropping the wounded off,] I looked and just saw a lot of smoke filling the A ring, going toward the A ring, and I noticed that the fire doors . . . [were] closed. I knew that there were still some folks out there. So the first fire door that I came to, which was on the A corridor . . . the A ring, I pushed it open. Then I went to our corridor and that fire door had closed. . . . So I went and I don't know if I did it by myself. I don't know if there were other folks with me. I am not sure. To this day, nobody has come and said that they helped me or anything. I just opened it and when I opened it more people started coming out. . . . They were coming from the DCSPER [Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel] office. . . . We were like bees. We knew there were folks that needed help so we started yelling some more. . . .

[He said that he did not believe that there were sprinklers on that hallway, corridor 2.]

We took our shirts off and soaked them in a water fountain that was nearby and put [them] around us to help us try to breathe and block some of the smoke away. Again, we started screaming and went as far as we could to help folks come out. . . .

[He followed another group who tried to help and ended up on the first floor toward the B ring. They wanted to enter E ring but could not because of fire and smoke and heat. He did not see fire, just smoke and heat. He wanted to enter a stairwell and come out on E ring behind the fire.]

We made the attempt and found ourselves on the floor and when we looked we saw some huge gaps in the walls. I think that was where the aircraft had gone through.

[He helped some people move a dumpster toward a window so those inside could climb down from the second floor to the dumpster and get out. Then, he followed the other group looking for ways to get in but could not. This was in an alley between the rings.]

When we looked through there *[referring to some holes in the wall]*, we thought it was a series of explosions, that somebody had gotten in and laid different bombs [be]cause we saw the holes and all that. At that time, we did not know it was an airplane....

[He went on to attempt another rescue.] At that time, they were telling us that we needed to evacuate because there was another second aircraft incoming. We were forcefully told to leave cause of the second aircraft. We knew there were some folks back there and we still wanted to attempt to get back there, but we just could not. . . .

[Lieutenant Colonel Correa went to the center courtyard and was again told to leave the area. He then went to the north parking lot.]

As I was walking, trying to find my section or folks that work with me, people were coming up to me and asking if I was okay, and I said "Sure, I am okay." [After] about the third or fourth person I said, "Why do you ask?". . . They said, "You got blood all over you." And I said, "Blood, what do you mean?" When I looked there were blood stains with some other stuff on my shirt. What I . . . assumed happened was that the officer we helped carry . . . was badly burned and that some of it stayed on my uniform, the blood and all that. They were asking for volunteers and they were forming groups. They had already formed a group. Then I said, "I am not going to stay out here." I jumped in front of the line and made myself a member of the group

and just added my name to the list. We went into the Pentagon. . . . Our task initially was to go in and help folks. Then after awhile, the fire department could not control the fire. So we were kept on standby and then it changed to "Okay, we are going to convert you guys to probably recovery."

[Upon first noticing the cave-in in the afternoon, he saw that there was more damage than he had thought.] From the inside, you could not tell how much damage was done. . . .

[Lieutenant Colonel Correa remained at the Pentagon until the Third Infantry got there and relieved the volunteer litter teams. Then he went home.]

The shower started up, and I was going through what happened that day and that was why I started crying. . . .

[Later, lying in bed, thinking about what happened during the day, he felt a sharp pain down his leg and started to limp.] . . . In the initial blast when I was thrown, I landed wrong and then since my mind was focused on trying to help other folks and all of that the adrenaline rush kept that blocked until I got home. . . .

[Believing others needed medical treatment more urgently than he did, he did not go to a hospital for treatment. At around 10 or 11 p.m., he returned to the Pentagon.]

I knew they had all the help that they needed, but it was more trying to deal with it, because I really did not have time to think about what had happened with everything that had gone on. My focus was on how could I help?. . . Yeah, I knew there was a lot of damage, but I did not focus on the details of things. Could I have done more or could I have done something better?

[He wanted to go back to work and did. Superiors had said if people needed time off, they could have it.] . . . For me, it was more personal. I was not going to let these terrorists think that they stopped us from functioning. . . . Even though they hit us hard, that was no reason for us to stop showing to work, to scare us away from what we love to do, from what we enjoy in life. I have been working since [except for] a couple days off here and there. . . .

[Lieutenant Colonel Correa was asked about lessons learned.] Your military training will always kick in naturally, because we train, we train, and we train until it is something that comes natural to us.

[Later, he met Lieutenant Colonel Phil Smith, one of those he rescued. He came up to him.] "Hey, I owe you my life." I don't remember . . . carrying him or dragging him or any thing like that. He said, "It was your voice. If it had not been [for] your voice, I would have probably made the wrong turn and landed into the fire. . . ." Now when he sees me it is not a handshake, it is a hug. . . .³¹

³¹ Lieutenant Colonel Victor M. Correa, interview by Sergeant First Class Dennis Lopic, 7 November 2001, DA-CMH.



Lieutenant General Thomas J. Plewes

Chapter 3

Lieutenant General Thomas J. Plewes, Chief, Army Reserve

INTERVIEWER: What we would like to do this afternoon, sir, is to ask you about your recollections of 11 September.

PLEWES: I was in the building [the Pentagon]. Earlier that morning, I had a meeting with the deputy chief of staff for logistics of the Army in the immediate area of where the attack took place. I was there about 0800 and I returned to my office.

At the time of the attack, the first attack on the Trade Towers, I was in my office talking about a legal matter with the judge advocate of the Army. We turned on the television set and saw the horrific act there and the plane hitting, of course, the first tower, and then the attack came on the Pentagon. We were both in the office and we heard a concussion, but it was not very loud. The first notification we had of it was the screaming of the people in the hallways and telling us that there was an evacuation. So, we very quickly left the building. . . . I thought it was prescient. I left everything else here, but I grabbed my cell phone. I said, "Well, I am going to establish communication when I get out there." I think that was all I grabbed, and we went out as we thought we could.

One thing that became very evident was that we had not practiced evacuations in the building. It was a very haphazard thing and, of course, evacuations are tough in real circumstances, in any regard. They were especially tough that day. There was no official notification to evacuate. We just knew we had to evacuate when people started yelling and screaming. We saw none of the injured. We were about three corridors away from the blast area, and so we just ran outside. We ran to the site. It just drew us as a magnet.

The word was, as we got out, that a helicopter hit the building. We thought it was a helicopter because that was the location of the helipad. . . . When we got to the site, it became obvious that something else had happened. There were bits and pieces of things that were clearly not a helicopter. I was not able to identify whether it was American Airlines or United or anything like that, but we knew that there was something much larger.

It was basic pandemonium out there. There were about four different things going at once. There was an attempt by many to rush to the scene to see what they could do. Same thing was going on in the inside of the building. We were outside. There was a "Let's get organized. Let's do this." There was a small attempt by the protective police, the Department of Defense protective police, to establish a cordon, but the cordon was not very good. I remember a couple [of] acts of great heroism. I remember, for example, Brigadier General Fuzzy Webster, assistant DCSOPS[Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations], was one of those who organized a party. They

ran into the fire, and they ran back out again because it was just too hot. They could not do anything.

The second part was to establish a kind of triage, a little aid station out there where people began to assemble over time. I remember Lieutenant Colonel Sean Kelly coming up to me and saying that, "We have some people there at the aid station." We had a Staff Sergeant [Janice] Jackson who was there.

But by that time, I was trying to get up closer so I could go to the aid station. I was held back by the Department of Defense police who had at that point established, after the initial run in, . . . a cordon. Then a little organization started taking place at the sight. We started to see people with medical skills, some of our own people, [like] Colonel [Malcolm B.] Westcott . . .

INTERVIEWER: Was it your sense that this was something that spontaneously organized?

PLEWES: No, no, there were a lot of people: the local first responders, the fire department, and the EMTs [emergency medical technicians] [who] began to arrive. There began to come some order from this. I don't think that there was any one person, but there was a semblance of becoming organized at that point. There were just various things. There was, I remember, a middle-aged elderly lady who was with a young child. She was clearly in shock, and . . . had to be taken care of. We moved her into the cordoned area. There were other examples like that.

Meanwhile, I was trying to figure out what was going on with the Army Reserve. I was trying to call out with my cell phone. It was impossible to establish any kind of communication whatsoever. I talked to some of the people in the press about what was going on. The word was that there was another plane in the air. That eventually was, of course, the plane in [Shanksville,] Pennsylvania. That plane was headed toward Washington, also. People knew about that. Then anybody who was not immediately involved in the rescue effort was asked to move farther away from the Pentagon. So, we retreated another couple hundred of yards and started to scatter a bit. I talked to various people [and] tried to re-establish what was happening, [but was] not able to do that.

Finally, after about an hour, I was able to establish contact by calling down to USARC [United States Army Reserve Command] headquarters and then having them relay messages back to OCAR [Office, Chief Army Reserve] and to figure out what was going on. . . . It was clear that things were beginning to be organized. I felt that what I had to do was try to figure out now what is happening with the Army Reserve. So, the new Deputy Assistant Secretary, Mr. Richard Whiston, who was with the Office of the Assistant Secretary Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, said, "Well, I have a home here in Rosslyn. Let us go and try to turn that into a little command post." . . . We walked over to the subway, got on. The subway was still running at that point. [We] got on and went to Rosslyn. [We] went to his home and established a little communications zone there.

The first thing that was important for us was to figure out who from the Army Reserve was involved. It was hard. It was easier to do it in terms of the OCAR staff who were in Crystal City. It was hard doing it in terms of folks who were in the Pentagon. In fact, we really did not have a good view on the potential impact on the Army Reserve until maybe twenty-four hours when we tried to figure out are there any soldiers who are on special duty, ADSW [active duty for special work] duty, any reservists who were with other staff agencies, public affairs, the administrative agency, or, of course, the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel Office. We really had a tough time doing that, but that was the first night. Who was there? What was the status of our people? That was our first concern.

The second is: okay, here is a reaction. Now we are going to have to get involved in this. What do they want from the Army Reserve? We were not sure whether or not the Department of the Army was capable of setting up an Emergency Operations Center because the lights were off in most of the building. There was smoke damage throughout

[Lieutenant *General Plewes went home around 2130 or 2200.*] By then we had turned full-time to figuring out who was where and double counting. We had huge gaps in our knowledge of who was there, but every hour we got closer to figuring it out. Then very early the next morning, about 0400, we were back on the site again and again trying to bring some order out of chaos and figure out what the damage was to our areas.

INTERVIEWER: In the days immediately following the 11th, what guidance did you get or what discussions were you present for regarding how the Army Reserve might be called upon to serve?

PLEWES: First of all there were a lot of actions going on that we were just trying to get our hands on. The major points of action, of course, were here at the Pentagon, first of all on an individual basis and secondly as we were trying to organize way ahead, and up in New York City. . . .

The 77th RSC [Regional Support Command], under [Brigadier] General [Richard] Colt, very quickly responded. We had recently provided that headquarters emergency center operations training. Emergency operations center training was designed primarily for following a mobilization-deployment kind of scenario. It had nothing to do with airplanes hitting the Trade Towers. But they had practiced it, and so within a couple of hours they were stood up and operating up there. The people were in full communication. They were responding to requests as the city was identifying what their requests were: cots, blankets, areas to work from. These decisions were made very, very quickly: opening our center in Edison, New Jersey, as an alternate FEMA [Federal Emergency Management Agency], which was not part of the plan; turning over some of our areas up there; establishing almost a medevac facility and then later a kind of overflow morgue facility at the hospital complex up there. So, all those things they were doing as they were trying to gain accountability, also. That was a major site happening. We

kept in constant contact with them. [It was basically], “What could we do for you?” Everything they did was under life and limb, and so we had no issues with what is the proper role and who is going to do what and so forth. Anything you want to do, that is fine.

Here in the Pentagon, there were a lot of questions. Who are going to be the guards? We had some military police units, locally. They selected a Maryland military police [unit] from the National Guard to come in here and control the Pentagon. We are not going to do that. What else do you need? It soon became obvious that what they needed was mortuary affairs and we quickly, working through Forces Command and our USARC folks, identified the 311th Mortuary Affairs Company. Within a day, we had given them an initial alert and within two days had eighty-five people ready to go and three days they had people working, even before the mobilization. There were operations like that going on and again we were trying to maintain Emergency Operations Center capability with a few of our folks here at the Pentagon. A lot of our folks were at Crystal City. The main effort [was] in organizing this down at USARC headquarters, which was unscathed.

So, we did that and then finally, the third activity we had going was diffuse around the country, and that was beginning to stand up a higher force protection as we went to threatcon [threat condition] Delta in some cases and Charlie. There was a need to quickly bring on reservists to protect ourselves, to protect our centers, to protect everything. So we quickly did that. We went into an unpracticed mode where we stood up threatcons we had never seen before. Those were the three major focuses of activity that consumed our first couple of days.³²

³² Lieutenant General Thomas Plewes, interview by Captain Suzanne L. Summers and Sergeant William L. Miller, tape recording with transcript, 29 April 2002.



Colonel Malcolm B. Westcott

Chapter 4

Colonel Malcolm B. Westcott, the Deputy Chief, Army Reserve

INTERVIEWER: Sir, can you begin by telling us a little bit about how your day began on 11 September?

WESTCOTT: It was just a routine day. . . . The Pentagon is the Pentagon.

INTERVIEWER: Your office is in the Pentagon?

WESTCOTT: Yes, there was nothing of consequence, just a routine day

INTERVIEWER: How did you first hear about the plane crash in the Pentagon?

WESTCOTT: I didn't hear about the plane crash in the Pentagon. . . . Some of the staff from next door in the JAG [Judge Advocate General] office came in and said there had been an accident at first in New York City. I turned on my television. I was in the process of watching one of the Twin Towers in flames. I thought it was interesting, that it had to be a large plane, and I wondered how it got that far off course. Then I saw the second plane hit, and I knew that we were not talking about something normal here. This was an actual attack.

INTERVIEWER: Did you worry at that point about your safety?

WESTCOTT: No, I think I've been a soldier for too long to worry about my personal safety. I've always believed that when it's your time to go, you're going to go. And I just put that out of my mind. I wasn't even concerned that while we were at the Pentagon that we would be on the target list. It just didn't register that someone would have the capability. . . . It was funny, but the building didn't shake . . . but there was an effect of movement. People started running down the hall in the corridor where we are. It was different than normal. There was the look of panic, confusion, and dismay. People were yelling that this wasn't a drill and, quite frankly, no one knew what we were talking about at this point. [Colonel] Bruce Kramme who is the executive officer in the [Office of the Chief, Army Reserve] decided to call the Army Operations Center. Only it wasn't an operation center then. It was a peacetime command and control center for the Pentagon. He asked if anything happened and they said "No, nothing." Then it got more stressful in terms of the people running by, so we started to evacuate. . . . We ended up in a place of the Pentagon I had never been to before. . . . At that time, I could smell jet fuel and I knew exactly what had happened. The boss [Chief, Army Reserve Lieutenant General Thomas J.

Plewes] was safe . . . so I proceeded to walk around to the side of the Pentagon. I just kept making turns until I saw the hole in the wall.

INTERVIEWER: What were your impressions at that first glance?

WESTCOTT: It was a small hole. I expected much bigger. When I got on the scene, the fire had not erupted, at least not outwardly. Now that I think back, it had a shape of a plane. There was some notion of wings and pieces of the plane and debris were everywhere. You were walking on littered grass. There was a piece of the tail section that had a big “A” on it. At the time it didn’t register American Airlines, but now that I think back on it that was a piece of it, and lots of aluminum . . . very small pieces, nothing large, nothing bigger than a trash can.

INTERVIEWER: Could you see any movement of passengers in the plane?

WESTCOTT: No, the plane was already in the building. Then the fire erupted, and when that happened, things got a little hectic. It was incredible. . . . I was really looking for patients and casualties. My previous training was as a medic. I knew there would not be enough medical personnel. It was funny that a lot of the older people of my grade and experience all did the same thing. If they were a medic at any point in their career, they came to the crash site. We set up an impromptu medical treatment facility. I wouldn’t say a facility, I’d say point on the ground. As the fire was burning, people started to walk out on their own with injuries. A nurse, whose name I still don’t know, came from the Army clinic with an aid bag. That was all we had, and it didn’t have a lot in it for burn casualties. We saw about thirty people, twenty of those had burns, shock, and then some were severely wounded. I don’t know if they made it or not. . . . We stayed at our impromptu facility it seems about two or three hours. It seemed like a much shorter time because it was happening rather quickly. We stabilized and comforted the patients until the civilian ambulances showed up. . . . I remembered how to start an IV, which I hadn’t done in a long time. We mostly did patient triage. The seriously wounded and those in the greatest pain were evacuated first and everyone else later. While this was going on, the fire department from Reagan National Airport showed up with two yellow aviation fire trucks and started to put out most of the flames at the hole in the wall. At that point, the building collapsed and it made not a large sound, but it did grab your attention from whatever you were doing. At that point, I felt that anyone who was in there was really . . . well, there wasn’t going to be many more survivors, at least on my side of the building. Then the FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation] showed up along with the firefighters. They told us that there was a second plane coming and that we had to move to the other side of the road.

INTERVIEWER: Were they referring to the plane that crashed outside of Pittsburgh?

WESTCOTT: Yes. They said the second plane was inbound and that it was sixty miles away, and we had about twelve minutes before impact. So we moved our patients and all the people that were around the overpass. We set up another patient treatment site. The second plane did not materialize. We did that back and forth thing several times and after that, it finally crashed. There was an all-clear sign. I remember seeing an Air Force F16 fly over and feeling great relief that the good guys were finally on the scene. . . .

We set up stations that were very well stocked. During this time more and more help was coming all the time. The Arlington Fire Department showed up in great numbers, the Red Cross, and lots of military volunteers, which I find funny in that you think of the military or the Pentagon as a military reservation or a military installation. The FBI personnel were telling us we were not to collect military volunteers and press them to serve. All of us got a kick out of that. I was a military volunteer at that point. There were about maybe 125 soldiers, sailors, Air Force, Marines, and [Department of the Army] civilians, and other civilians of other services who would be volunteers for evacuations. That lasted from 11:00 [a.m.] to early afternoon We did that up until about 1400 hours, and then at that point the Old Guard came. They started to take over from the military volunteers. We were dismissed about 1730 hours. . . .

The fire that I described was overwhelming in terms of intensity and heat. There were cars that were on fire. Their gas tanks were exploding. The area was full of concrete from both the rubble and the explosion. The sheer magnitude of the size of the fire, the hole in the wall was very small, but it destroyed a whole section of the Pentagon. The fire literally burned out of control for several hours before the jet fuel, in my opinion, burned out and the fire finally stopped. There was, I found out later, 1,000 [10,000 approximately] gallons of jet fuel in the Pentagon. So it was a pretty horrific sight.

INTERVIEWER: Did you all on the ground hear any of the discussion about potential casualty figures?

WESTCOTT: It was an Army wing, so the Army people knew. . . . Sometimes you're in the right place at exactly the right time. It was a new section of the Pentagon. It had just been remodeled. The walls had been reinforced, the windows were shatterproof, and all the sprinkler systems were brand new. No one was in it. They were in the process of moving offices from other parts of the Pentagon and other parts of the National Capital back in. So I had it in my mind that there could not have been more than 300 people in there, give or take. And that is what happened. I believe the official casualty count was about 188 or 189. We were just lucky they hit the wrong side of the building. It's still a very tragic and significant loss of life, but not as bad as it could have been. Had they turned the corner and hit the other side the numbers would have been in the thousands

INTERVIEWER: What was it like going back to work?

WESTCOTT: There were two things that bothered me. First, the personal losses were terrible. [Lieutenant Colonel] David Scales had worked for me for years off and on, so I knew him personally and I knew he was missing. The DSCPER [Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel] of the Army [Lieutenant General Timothy J. Maude] was also a personal friend. . . . You didn't know who was where the first day. I was listed as missing from OCAR because we stayed there and they couldn't verify by personal contact that I was okay. It really doesn't bother you when you are doing something. It bothers you when you think about it. I think mentally most soldiers are prepared for this. Your whole career you are preparing for it and you've seen this kind of thing before. What was different in this is that it happened on our soil, in Washington, at the Pentagon. The immensity of that doesn't sink in for several days. . . . I think the second thing is that not six months before, our offices, the OCAR staff, had been in corridors 3 and 4 right behind the helipad. Had we not just moved to JP II [Jefferson Plaza II in Crystal City], all of OCAR, some 200 people, would have been casualties. When I look at the building, my old office was exactly where the plane impacted. It's just amazing. That's a very sobering thought. To be three corridors away and walk away without a scratch. It just wasn't my time to go. But in the back of your mind you realize it could have been me. . . . Freedom is not free³³

³³ Colonel Malcolm B. Westcott, interview by Captain Suzanne L. Summers and Sergeant William L. Miller, tape recording with transcript, 7 November 2001.



Command Sergeant Major Alex R. Lackey

Chapter 5

Command Sergeant Major Alex R. Lackey Command Sergeant Major of the Army Reserve

INTERVIEWER: Can you tell us how your day started on 11 September?

LACKEY: I was in the office about 7:00 in the morning. I was . . . re-doing the email from previous trips My assistant came in, . . . Sergeant First Class Paul Mantha, and he said, . . . “You need to turn on the TV. There has been a plane that has hit the World Trade Center.” I turned the TV on, and as I was watching the TV, a second plane came in and hit the World Trade Center. I was seeing flashes of the previous one, but when I saw the second one, I knew as well as everyone else that we were under attack. At that time, just a few minutes later, because of the delayed time between the TV and the time here, we started hearing some noise down the hallway. There was an explosion. I personally did not think about it because . . . we have been under renovation for years. . . . I was oblivious to the explosion . . . thinking that it was part of the remodeling.

INTERVIEWER: As you were watching the TV and you saw the second plane hit the World Trade Center, did it ever occur to you that the Pentagon might be subject to that sort of attack?

LACKEY: As soon as it hit, I knew we were under attack. I really did not think of it that moment, but as soon as I observed that . . . within minutes there were people coming down the hallway, and they were yelling, “Everybody get out of the building.” At that time I thought . . . there were no alarms or anything that went off, so I just figured they were evacuating the building in the event of a problem. But as soon as we got to the door, I could see the fear in these people’s faces. . . . If you look at the distance, we are about a . . . football field and a half away from where the nose of the aircraft landed. . . . As I saw these people coming out and the smoke started coming this direction, I knew there was something wrong. We started going out of the building. We cleared the office. . . . At the time I got upstairs and walked out the door, the mall entrance, that was when I knew. I could see the smoke. I knew that we had been attacked, but nothing until then. I did not know what was going on. . . .

INTERVIEWER: When you made it outside, what was the scene that you came upon?

LACKEY: Everybody was evacuating the building. . . . We went directly around the side of the building. . . . I turned with Sergeant First Class Mantha and we went toward the fire.

INTERVIEWER: What was the scene there? Describe that for us. What did you see?

LACKEY: First of all, there were police officers there that did not want to let us go into the area, but we did not allow that to stop us....[A *policeman said*,] “You need to stay away.” “Well,” I said, “people are going to need help . . . we got to get in there.” We got up within a couple of feet of the building and had a couple of other people joining us. . . . People from corridor 1 were taking survivors out. As we were going into a door there was a car. It was some kind of a Nissan 300ZX or something that the guy at the helipad parks his car there everyday. It had a secondary explosion on it and there was also a secondary explosion within the building. We were waiting . . . and when that exploded, we backed up a little bit, and then we were going back in. At that time, the aircraft [the fourth one] was headed this direction and there were some security people that said, “You have to move across the street”

INTERVIEWER: What were you thinking when you saw the Pentagon the first time? What was going through your mind?

LACKEY: I was worried because I knew where it was and I knew who was there. I knew I had friends there and I had Army Reservists there. I was concerned for the safety of the soldiers and the civilians and my friends and getting there to do whatever I could to help out.

INTERVIEWER: My understanding is that the wing that was hit housed quite a number of AGR [Active Guard Reserve] soldiers. Is that correct?

LACKEY: We had about . . . maybe five or six AGRs out in the DCSPER section. Lieutenant Colonel [David] Scales died in that attack. Also, one of our Army Reservists, Sergeant Janice Jackson, who is a TPU [troop program unit] member, was there as a contractor and was severely burned in the building. . . . She is home and out of the hospital. I have not been in contact with her since she went home, but I know she was awarded the [Distinguished Civilian Service Medal for Bravery] as a civilian. . . .

INTERVIEWER: Aside from seeing people coming out, streaming out, what was the scene like? Were there medical personnel on the scene fairly quickly?

LACKEY: When we got there, there were not a lot of medical, just the people pulling people out of the building and helping treat for first-aid and shock. As we got around there and as the scene progressed, yes, there were immediately people on the scene from DiLorenzo [Medical] Clinic [which is housed in the Pentagon]. They were very responsive

INTERVIEWER: What do you think the impact of 11 September for the long run will be for Army Reservists?

LACKEY: I think that it is not business as usual in several aspects. Number one, we did not sign up to be full-time soldiers . . . but we did sign up to be there when we are needed. I think we are needed now³⁴

³⁴ Command Sergeant Major Alex R. Lackey, interview by Captain Suzanne Summers and Sergeant William Miller, tape recording with transcript, 8 November 2001 and Article, “Answering the Call – Individual Accounts, Lackey-Mantha Team,” OCAR website, 20 September 2001.



Sergeant Janice Ann Jackson

Chapter 6

Sergeant Janice Ann Jackson, Civilian Contractor/Army Reservist

JACKSON: My office was Information Management, which was [Room] 1D520.

INTERVIEWER: Where were you located in relation to the attack?

JACKSON: I was located in the D ring. Where the attack took place was in the E ring, which was less than 100 feet away from where the incident actually took place . . .

INTERVIEWER: Did you have any indication of an impending attack upon the Pentagon?

JACKSON: No.

INTERVIEWER: Please describe what happened upon the impact of the aircraft.

JACKSON: We were sitting at our desks and we were . . . looking at the computer. We were looking at the stuff that was on the Internet in reference to the attack in New York. I'd say less than five minutes after that [there] was this loud explosion. It happened so quickly. The only thing that we actually saw was fire. . . . It's like a fireball that just . . . came through. It just threw us all over the place. . . . All I knew was that some heat was over my head. I didn't realize that my hair was on fire until a co-worker of mine, whose name is Stuart Fluke, said, "J.J., . . . your hair is on fire." So he took off his shirt, and he put the fire out on my hair. My hands had already got burned from the flames just coming that way. . . . Wherever we ended up at, there was a baby, and they were pulling the baby out. I was trying to get across the rubble . . . and stuff in there. As I was going out, I said to one of my coworkers . . . "I can't hardly breathe." He was saying that he couldn't hardly breathe either because the smoke was so thick. It was really, really, really thick. It . . . was really kind of hard to breathe.

We managed to walk out. . . . It was looking like there wasn't any way out of there. But what we noticed is there was a . . . large hole . . . in the far right corner. . . . Some of our coworkers there [said] . . . "Come this way. Come this way." So we managed to cross some of that debris and to climb over that way. . . . As I [was] walking out, there was a coworker of mine, Racquel Kelly. . . . I guess she spotted me, because she was down low. . . . She was stuck up under all that debris and all that rubble and stuff. It was stacked up on top of her. She was saying, "J.J., please help me." And so what I did was I pulled her out. I managed to pull her out, because it was really stacked up on her and it was really heavy. Once I pulled her out, she was able to walk some on her own. We had to climb up all this other debris [to] . . . where the hole

was in the wall. We had to actually climb up a lot of stuff in order . . . to get out of there. But we managed to get out. It was really stacked up really high.

INTERVIEWER: Did that put you on the roof of the building or just into another section?

JACKSON: It was right where the actual impact took place . . . where the helicopter was. . . .

INTERVIEWER: Now you said you were blown down the hall. Did the force of the blast blow you there?

JACKSON: Yes, it just threw us all over It threw us . . . further down into another ring. There was no way that we were still in our office, because in our office were computers, computer systems, PCUs. . . . You couldn't see that. There was nothing there anymore. The only thing you could see was debris. . . . I think the second floor caved in because I know something fell on my back. So, that's how I got the burns on my back

INTERVIEWER: Do you have any idea how long it took you from the time of impact until you got out of the building?

JACKSON: Well, to me, it seemed like it was . . . more than twenty minutes, but I know for a fact it had to have been less than five minutes.

INTERVIEWER: Once you got out of the building, what happened next?

JACKSON: Well, when I . . . got out of the building, I was pretty blown away. I was hysterical. . . . I was kind of out of control because my hands felt like they were still on fire here. My whole body felt like it was still on fire. So, I was doing a lot of crying. . . . They guided us out to the edge . . . of the grass because everybody was coming. . . . So they had us lay down, and they were pouring some cold water on it to cool it off, because it was just that bad. . . . I'd say we had to wait there for about twenty minutes because the traffic was so bad. It was all backed up, and the ambulances were trying to get in. So it took awhile for the ambulances to get in. So what they did was they tried to pick out . . . the victims that were the most . . . wounded. . . . I know we waited for about twenty minutes. And in between that, they came over and tried to console us. The chaplain came over and talked to us, read verses out of the Bible . . . to keep us in high spirits, because it was -- it was just horrifying.

INTERVIEWER: Once you were put in the ambulance, where did you go? Where did they take you?

JACKSON: To the Arlington Hospital. *[She talked of her hospital treatment.]* I was in the emergency room briefly, but . . . because I had smoke . . . they had to send me to the ICU [intensive care unit]. They gave me that . . . ventilator . . . to clear out my lungs. . . . They gave me two treatments of that because I think I had a lot of smoke at the time. I think I stayed in the ICU for about three days. I think I stayed in there until Thursday.

[On Friday, 14 September, she was transferred to Walter Reed Hospital.]

When it . . . [the plane crash] first happened, I actually didn't believe it. Actually, the honest truth, I thought I was dreaming it. So it took a few minutes for it to actually set in and I actually felt my legs moving. That's when I actually felt that it was really happening. What came across my mind . . . (because I'm also in the military, I'm in the Army Reserve) . . . were two things. One, I know I had two kids and I was going to get out. And the other thing that crossed my mind is the military always taught us never give up. So those were the two things that strengthened me to get out of there.

INTERVIEWER: You are in the Army Reserve?

JACKSON: Yeah. *[She is an E-5 (sergeant) in the 55th Maintenance and Materials Center located on Fort Belvoir where she works in supply and automation.]*

INTERVIEWER: Did anything else come out of all your training that you think helped you?

JACKSON: Yeah, I think the overall training . . . of how they . . . instilled in us . . . how to fight and not to give up. I think all that leadership training . . . kicked in. . . . It made me want to fight. I said, "I'm not going to die in here. I'm getting out of here." That's what I said.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember any sounds from the impact of the plane?

JACKSON: That was the first thing. It sounded like a bomb. I thought it was a bomb, because, I guess, maybe it was because the impact was so close and . . . it hit so fast. It's like you didn't know what hit you. When it hit, it just threw us. It just threw us all over the room. And right after that, at first, it was fire. Then, after that it was a big thick patch of smoke. That's all you saw was smoke, and everything you touched was . . . like fire. Everything you touched, and stuff was falling all over me. It was really, really, really, really terrible. . . . There were seven of us. From what I know one of the guys didn't make it that was in the office. . . . He was nowhere to be found.

[She discussed her efforts to pull a co-worker out of the building.]....Well, the only thing I thought was striking is that I was able, as a soldier, . . . to pull her out and to help her.

INTERVIEWER: You went into military mode?

JACKSON: Yeah, I went into military mode, because she weighs way more than I do....But I was able. . . even though my hands were all burned up, badly burned, . . . to pull her out.

INTERVIEWER: What about the pain? Were you numb?

JACKSON: I didn't feel the pain . . . especially because she was crying for my help. There was no way I would have left her there. There's no way.

INTERVIEWER: How long did it take before the pain hit you?

JACKSON: It was like, all before, I was . . . numb or something. I guess it really. . . hadn't hit me yet. But once I stepped . . . through that hole, that's when it hit me. Everything just hit . . .³⁵

³⁵ Janice A. Jackson, interview by Frank Shirer and Beau Whittington, 19 September 2001, DA-CMH.



Lieutenant Colonel Sean Kelly

Chapter 7

Lieutenant Colonel Sean Kelly, Active Guard Reserve Officer, Quadrennial Defense Review Office, HQDA

[In September 2001, Lieutenant Colonel Kelly was finishing the Quadrennial Report that was due 11 September. He described the morning of 11 September.]

I finally sat down at my computer when I got knocked down on the floor. I felt . . . I got moved about ten feet to the right along with all my office furniture, got knocked into a wall. I heard a big loud noise. It . . . sounded like a noise coming from a long way away. It was very, very loud. At the same time the lights went out. . . There was a lot of dust in the air.

I heard a lot of noise. But the first thing I heard was people talking to each other, “Hey, who needs help?” I heard that about fifteen to twenty times. “Does anybody need help?” I heard a couple of people say, “Yeah, I am buried under a desk. I can’t get out.” Then, I heard a lot of “Hang on, I am coming to you.” I picked myself up off the ground and the first thing I thought to myself was “Great, I don’t have to do this briefing. There is no light.” That is exactly what I thought. I don’t have to worry about this briefing today. And then I stumbled over to where Colonel [Mark W.] Perrin was, the deputy director [of the Army Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) Office, where Lieutenant Colonel Kelly was assigned]. [Brigadier] General Hartsell, the director, was on leave.

Colonel Perrin was the senior man. . . . The first thing I did, and I was still pretty shocked, I started counting off on my fingers who I had seen and who I knew was out of the building. The soldier’s first thought is accountability. Take care of people. I told him that Major Shelley Wells was out of the building, had not shown up to work yet. I told him that Lieutenant Colonel Harlan Cashdollar [an Active Guard Reserve officer serving as Chief of the QDR Operations Team #1] had left the building to go run an errand. I told him that I had not seen [Lieutenant Colonel (Retired)] Tim Muchmore [a consultant from James Benevuto & Associates, Inc.], and I had not seen [Lieutenant Colonel Ralph] “Rocky” Ebener [chief of the Quadrennial Defense Review Operations Team #2]. And he said, “I know where Tim is, and I have not seen Rocky.” He started yelling out Rocky’s name, and Rocky replied, so he was okay. We got accountability. We yelled out the names of the people we had not seen so we knew who was where and that was when Major Rob Waring [Quadrennial Defense Review operations officer] yelled, “Hey, follow the sound of my voice. I . . . found a way out.” I guess he was outside of . . . the room because our exits were blocked. That’s the main entrance to 1Delta536. He found a way for us to get out and we started pushing.

People started moving out. [Captain Darrell] “Dee” Oliver [Quadrennial Defense Review operations officer] walked by me with Desiree [Duckett, the secretary]. He basically had picked her up. A little bit later he had gotten Theo, the janitor. . . . She was very hysterical. He basically carried her up. There was a wall that was at about a 45-degree angle. That was kind of

an obstacle for us. So, I started seeing people moving out, kind of helping people go. I . . . positioned myself on . . . our side of the wall, so I was kind of pushing people up over the wall.

The next thing I know is Colonel Perrin told me to move out. I guess we were the last ones there. So I went over the wall. Then Colonel Perrin went over the wall. Then we found our way out. The one thing I remember was that there was a Defense Protective Service police officer, right here. When we got out into the corridor, number 5, he was waving at us telling us, "This is the way. Go out this way," . . . right, into the fifth corridor, . . . So we got out and went out to the air and we saw little pieces of metal all over the ground. The fire trucks started to respond.

One of the contractors, Lee Newman, who was a newly commissioned second lieutenant, military intelligence officer, Army Reservist, had said to me, "You gotta help Danny," meaning Danny Jamison. He is another one of the contractors for SAIC [Science Applied International Corporation] "He needs medical attention and he won't . . . he refuses to get it." So I went over to Danny and put my arm around him and said, "Okay, Danny, we're going," and walked him over to the nearest ambulance, which was probably about 100 meters away. . . . He was conscious, he was standing, but he was very much in shock. He was talking to me. He wasn't making sense. He wasn't saying things. I got him over to where the ambulance was and I guess they took care of him.

[Lieutenant Colonel Kelly then went back to the Pentagon. Wondering what to do next, he reported in to Colonel Perrin and heard requests for people to hold intravenous bags and to work as litter bearers. He volunteered to be part of a litter squad.]

After we got outside of the Pentagon, we got dispersed. What happened was I hung around for about an hour or so, maybe half an hour, forty-five minutes. Then, they started with, "There is an airplane in the air, you know. Run away from the Pentagon."

[He then told Colonel Perrin that he would go to his nearby home and call families on the alert roster to let them know it was okay. This was forty-five minutes to an hour after the attack. The availability of telephone service was spotty, but he managed to reach most of the names on the alert roster either by telephone or email. By Thursday, 14 September, the office had set up in temporary space. Everyone was back to work by Friday the 15th. He was asked about the difficulty of setting up again because much of their work was lost.]

I would say that the military people, their training gives them a lot of flexibility. So it was not like they were grumpy. It was like, "Okay, let's get back to work. We got this job we need to get done and the fact that we don't have our coffee mugs or we don't have our pictures on the wall does not really mean much. We still got the information we need and we can still accomplish our mission. . . ."

[He was asked about other people's reactions.] During the event, I saw a lot of calm people. I saw a lot of people just taking care of business. I think we were all surprised. I think we were all shocked. . . . Everybody . . . seemed to be very, very matter of fact, very quick to

react and not to let it bother them . . . I think that we did a good job of taking care of each other and getting each other out. . . .

[*He was asked about his reaction to seeing the damage to the outside of the Pentagon*] I did not see the size of the hole because there was a lot of smoke and flames Somebody told me that it took seven minutes from the time the aircraft hit to the time that the flames, the fuel started igniting it. I think that we got out in about five minutes. . . . When I found out it was a 767 [*actually it was a Boeing 757*], I was absolutely stunned because the pieces of the airplane were so small. I thought it was a small airplane. I did not realize how deep it had penetrated.

I was very impressed with the soldiers in the office. They reacted quickly. They oriented themselves, and . . . we kind of came together for a common purpose, which was to get each other to help each other get out of the office. To me that was a tremendously satisfying, rewarding thing to see fellow soldiers operate like that. No one was trying to beat each other out of the door. Everybody was kind of like “Let me help you out. Let me help you out. You first.” It was rewarding, satisfying³⁶

³⁶ Lieutenant Colonel Sean Kelly, interview by Corporal Robert Shellenberger, tape recording, 1 November 2001, DA-CMH.



Major General Karol A. Kennedy

Chapter 8

Major General Karol A. Kennedy, Commander, 99th Regional Support Command

KENNEDY: On 11 September, I was not a civilian. I was on military duty in uniform serving as a member of the Army Reserve Forces Policy Committee, which is the reason I was in the Pentagon Every quarter for three days the Army Reserve Forces Policy Committee meets. We meet physically in the Pentagon because we have access to Army and DOD [Department of Defense] leaders, both civilian and military. We address issues, policy issues, operational issues that affect the Army Reserve and the Army National Guard, and we advise and consult with Army and DOD staff and then we brief recommendations and concerns to the secretary of the Army and/or his representative and the vice-chief of staff of the Army

INTERVIEWER: Where were you physically meeting in the Pentagon on that day?

KENNEDY: We were meeting in 6E632, I believe. It is one of those cipher-locked meeting rooms along that corridor in that hallway.

INTERVIEWER: How did your day begin?

KENNEDY: Normally. We usually convene at the hotel where most of the members who do not live in the city stay, which is right next door here [Jefferson Plaza II], the Crowne Plaza. Then we are transported over to the building and then go to our respective meeting rooms, which is the scenario we were following that morning.

INTERVIEWER: Were you aware of any of the events that happened that morning, specifically, either of the attacks on the World Trade Center?

KENNEDY: Are we talking at 8 o'clock?

INTERVIEWER: We're talking about as the morning goes along. Were you aware of any of the attacks on the World Trade Center?

KENNEDY: Oh, absolutely, absolutely. I was sitting in the meeting. I sort of joked about this. It was kind of long. Even at that point, I was a little distracted. I have a little pager with a keyboard on it, and I sent my husband a message and said, "How's your morning going?" He responded almost immediately and he said, "Fine. Things pretty normal." Then he said, "News flash. Have you heard . . . ," and he indicated that a plane had hit the World Trade Center.

Almost simultaneously, our committee chair, Major General John Kane, was called out of the room. We had no idea why. Again, it was almost coincidental when as he came back in to tell us what happened, which is why he was called out of the room, my husband's message was "Oh, my gosh! Another plane has hit the other tower." Our committee chair was informing us of that. So I was responding to that message saying, "Oh, how terrible! Could this be an accident?" It didn't seem possible.

As all of that was going on and time gets a little mixed up, we had resumed our meeting. Then we felt the concussion. We just looked at one another. There was a briefer on the platform at the time. It seemed that within seconds the NCO [noncommissioned officer] who basically runs and manages that conference room came in. He had thrown his backpack over his shoulder and said, "We've got to get out of here." Really, that was all we knew.

As we began to exit the building, as soon as you got out in the hallway, there were already security guards trying to channel people [in] a particular direction. Things were fairly unclear. There were sounds coming over the speakers that we couldn't understand. People were trying to stand under the speakers to try to figure out the garbled instructions that were being given. It appeared to me that the best course of action was to follow the directions the security guards were saying to go. Everyone was fairly calm but moving quickly. The guards were preventing people from heading down the hallway, which would have been the significantly impacted corridor, which was only a corridor away. You could already smell something acrid. We didn't know what that was either.

I still had this little pager in my hand. For some unknown reason I couldn't figure out, I had my cup of coffee in my hand that I had just purchased and I had slung my briefcase over my shoulder. It turned out to be a good thing because . . . there were a lot of people in the street later with no money and no Metro tickets. No phones. No pagers. Nothing. So we were able to help one another as the morning ensued. As I was crossing the parking lot, my pager beeped and my husband's message read: "We just heard that a plane hit the Pentagon. Are you okay?" I tried to respond to that.

Of course, I'm sure you have heard from so many people that pagers weren't working initially. Phones weren't working. My aide also had heard and she pages me constantly. She is probably the greatest user of that aid. That's Lieutenant Julie Stolzer. She said, "Ma'am, what a terrible thing," referring to the Twin Towers, then "we heard that a plane just hit the Pentagon. Are you okay?" There were several messages that came in like that. I tried to respond and I thought I was responding but found out later that they weren't getting a response.

As we were exiting the building, trying to find which may be the best corridor to go, that really wasn't clear, I looked out on what we used to call ground zero. We probably won't say that anymore, but the center courtyard of the Pentagon. We could see billowing smoke, but at that time it really wasn't on the inside of ground zero, the courtyard. It was billowing up from the side of the building where the plane had impacted. I thought about going into that area, but then reconsidered. Even though it was outside and it was the closest way to be outside, I thought that

being trapped in that area might not be a good idea since we still didn't know what it was or if whatever had occurred had ended. So I kept going down the corridor, which led us out to the main concourse, which was where the Metro exits and escalators were.

I thought, and I actually did go through this thought process, that [being] a person in uniform and a general officer, I thought the best thing that I could do was follow instructions. If I decided to go a direction that the security guards and uniform personnel were not directing us, that would set a bad precedence, a bad example. People might follow me, which would have been a mistake, because I had no better idea than anyone where to go. But if I stayed calm, followed directions, and kept walking in the direction that we were being guided, then, technically probably more people would get out of the building that way. If we all began to panic and second-guess our instructions, that could lead to some real problems. That exit seemed to me very orderly, although the instructions weren't clear. As I would see people lagging or looking a little concerned, I would say, "Come on, let's go. Let's follow the instructions and we will get out of the building." The guards kept saying, "Everyone will get out. Everyone will get out. Don't run. Don't panic. Just keep moving quickly." Eventually, many of us just flooded out the Metro exits up the escalators and out across the parking lot. People were just trying to gain distance from the building. That pretty much was what folks were being encouraged to do because I think anyone involved in the evacuation, just as us, had no idea if that was the end of it or something else was going to happen. There seemed to be an aftermath explosion, which I heard as conjecture later were the gas tanks at the helipad. . . . None of us really knew what had caused the shudder, the impact, and the evacuation.

So, we all went across the street to the Marriott Residence Inn. They had opened their doors. People were in there, I encountered both on the street and in the hotel, people I knew in various stages of states of shock and disbelief, some with flash burns, some with blood on their clothes. You stop and talk to them. At least the ones I spoke to were not seriously injured. Some of the blood they had on their uniforms was, of course, from others and was not their [blood]. . . . There were people who had encountered someone who was injured or in some cases were cut by something. And there were some who had hasty first aid going on, because at that point where we were, there were no first aid folks at all.

The hotel opened their doors. They brought out . . . bottles of cold water for everyone. They opened all their meeting rooms that had televisions in them. People began to go in those rooms to watch the televisions because we didn't know what happened.

I had my little pager out at that time because I was still trying to communicate with my husband whose message by that time were in all caps: "TELL ME HOW YOU ARE!" People were beginning to try to use cell phones, but they weren't working. When people saw me at a table trying to use the pager, they asked me if I was getting through and I said, "I don't know if I am or not, but do you need to get a message sent?" I don't really recall in the course of hours or so how many messages I sent, but I know I sent one to West Point and another to Egypt and several to people's families here in the immediate area. Some of those messages, I learned later,

got out hours, days, weeks later. Many of them finally got out. They were just "I'm okay talk to you later, love Mom" and that sort of thing. I know the one got to Egypt. I was told later that one got there within hours. Several got to folks in the area. Sometimes that was a real eerie feeling because they would get there hours and days later when they had finally had contact. It was very jolting to get that message. I had those messages on my pager for quite awhile and accidentally I erased them, most of them. I was able to get people to reproduce a couple of them for me. My husband re-sent his message, and my aide re-sent her message. But I can almost remember them. I read them over and over and over again the next few hours and days. When I realized some of them hadn't gone out because there was a symbol that tells you that, I re-sent them. I would just re-send them and re-send them until finally I got a signal that they went through. It was part of the unfinished business of the day.

At one point in the hotel, I said, "Darn, I think my batteries are going out." It is starting not to respond. Someone came from behind me. I didn't even know if she heard me or not. She was in a white cook's outfit. She came from the kitchen. She had a package of batteries, and she held them over my shoulder. I turned and looked at her and said, "Thank you." I said I would pay her for these, but she said "No, no." She was Hispanic and said it was not necessary. But these were the kind of things that happened a lot.

Some great images: a soldier in dress blues and one of the guides from the Pentagon tours. Somewhere, he had secured a shopping cart with bottles of water. I don't know where he got them. He was walking up the street like an itinerant merchant handing out bottles of water. Strange image.

The one that I tell people about all the time, though, is the crocheting lady. Not long after we left the building, I saw a woman standing on a grassy slope along the highway. She was standing with briefcases and purses all around her feet, and she was crocheting. So I thought that something was wrong with this. It doesn't look good. So I went over to talk to her. She wouldn't make eye contact, but she kept crocheting. I asked if she was okay and she said, "Yeah, I'm okay." She just continued her stitching. I said, "Are all these briefcases yours, all these purses?" She said, "No, these are the people who work with me. They just left them here so I can watch them."

I said, "Is the crocheting calming you," and she said "Mm-hmm." Then tears started to well in her eyes. This is the hard part to tell. I said, "My mom does that." She has done it all my life. When there is adversity, physical problems, ill health, she still does that. I said, "That is a good step to help you feel better." I said, "You will always remember where you started this piece of work." She said, "Yes, I will." She never stopped that crocheting. She just kept at it. It was probably one of the most significant images.

I stayed around about two hours and finally people's phones would occasionally have a breakthrough and the phones would work. There was a woman I had talked to on the street who had run out without her purse, without credit cards, without Metro cards, nothing. . . . We had exchanged some dialogue, and I said, "How are you going to get home?" She said she hadn't

any idea. She said, "I don't have any money." I asked how much it would take for her to get home. We dialogued a little bit, and I gave her some money. I said that if I never see you again it is the best twenty bucks I have ever spent.

But people were doing that kind of thing for one another. You know, it was just spontaneous. So many people were saying, "You worry about that person. Don't worry about me." The kind of things people were doing was obviously in the ensuing weeks the good that had come out of it.

[There was a lady who] had finally been able to contact her husband. He was on the 18th hole of whatever golf course. She said, "What are you doing?" He said, "Why are you bothering me? I'm just finishing the 18th hole!" And she said (and I won't repeat the expletive) that he should get off the golf course and find a television. A lot of people were communicating with folks because of where they were or what they were doing who were not aware. It was a very strange thing to make that kind of contact and then tell them.

Obviously, that was not the case with my husband because they had television and access to all of that. But once I got a hold of him, I told him to call my mom, get a hold of my brothers. They are all on the West Coast, so they were not aware. They had not gotten up yet. When my husband had contacted my uncle, strangely enough, he said, "You're kidding." My husband said, "I kid you about a lot of things, but I am not kidding you about this." My uncle is a retired Navy chief, so he said to turn on the TV and you need to see what is going on. Fortunately, my mother hadn't awakened yet. I'm glad we got to her before she got to the TV. That would have been pretty bad. She is in her eighties.

I finally decided to try to find a way home. I had a lot of trepidation about getting on the Metro, a lot of trepidation. My car was parked under my office in this building [Jefferson Plaza II in Arlington, Virginia]. I had tried to call people here to see if people were okay, but they had already evacuated. I pretty much conjectured that the highways would be just berserk, if you could get through at all. By then we knew what had happened. We knew, obviously, that it was an intentional attack. It was not simultaneous accidents. So I had some trepidation about going underground on public transportation. Finally, that seemed the only recourse, the only way to get home. So we went down into the underground.

People were packed like sardines in the subway. They would back up and squeeze as close together to try to let someone else on board. That was eventually how I got home. I walked about four blocks to my house. That was not particularly unusual because many days that is how I do travel. I don't usually drive.

When I got home, I called the other hotel where the other general officers were staying. I called every one of their rooms to see if they all made it back. Even the small committee that I was on, once we left the room, we all lost track of one another. I had one of them contact me the next day and several times after saying that he was consumed with guilt because when he left the room he lost track of me and he felt that he had done a bad thing by not keeping track of me. We had a dialogue about that because he was very troubled that he had done that, that we had all just

followed the instructions and all of us had gotten out, but not necessarily kept track of one another.

In many cases, I had to leave messages at their rooms. They weren't there. Almost without exception, they all called back sometime during the day. They made contact, so I knew that they were okay. At the same time, the General Officers Management Office [at OCAR] was trying to locate all of us. They felt they had to have personnel accountability, so they did that as well. So that was the stream of consciousness that I remember

INTERVIEWER: How long did it take you to exit the building that day?

KENNEDY: Gosh. That is something you always think about is how long did it take? I don't think long. When we came out of the conference room, corridor six was the very next turn. It was twenty to thirty feet, I would guess. We just kept a steady flow. I would say about seven minutes, maybe seven to ten minutes. Maybe, but I doubt it was as long as ten

I only conjecture, there were parts of the building where maybe they didn't feel the concussion. It was pronounced where we were, very pronounced. Of course, with the information we [had] just gotten, . . . that gave us some additional proof that something really serious had happened

INTERVIEWER: Which Metro line would have you been on?

KENNEDY: The one I would have been on was not the one that I was on. All of the Metros were re-routed. They would tell you to get on the Metro that was not normally your color that would have taken you home. They would tell you that they re-routed to do this different thing and then you would be able to hook up with your Metro. We were trusting those instructions that they were going to get us to that place by having a high level of confidence. At that point anything that would get you away was okay, because what was re-routed, obviously, were the Metros that would go by the Pentagon.

INTERVIEWER: Did they actually follow the plan that they had?

KENNEDY: Yes, the Metro did. When you got off you could hook up with your Metro elsewhere. I was home in about forty-five minutes, which is about routine. It's just that people were sardined into the Metros. They were terribly crowded, but everyone was very cooperative and made room.

There were a lot of people angry on the street. One woman in that situation . . . was not real rational, but she said, "They won't let me back in there to get my car keys." I said, "Ma'am, be glad that you got out of there. Your car keys are something you can deal with at another time." She was incensed that they would not let her back in. I imagine her house keys were on

the car key chain. I thought about it too after I got to the street, and we began to realize what was really going on there. I'm not medically trained beyond first aid like anyone. . . . I'll tell you, there were security guards and police all over. You could not have gotten back to that building. Even if I pulled rank, I don't think they would have let me back because they were not letting anyone walk back toward the building.

INTERVIEWER: By security guards, are you talking about the Defense Protective Service?

KENNEDY: Everything was out there: the Defense Protective Service, the state police. They came from everywhere. Very, very quickly, they were in front of all the entrances and any of the road entrances to the building [and] any of the footpaths. . . .

There were some really strange and almost surreal scenes. There was one major with whom I work with at the 99th [Regional Support Command]. She is now a lieutenant colonel, . . . Elizabeth Slifer. Some of you may have known her when she was the SGS [secretary of the general staff] there. She was one of the first I encountered in the hotel. She was assisting a civilian who was one of the people I sent a message for. [This civilian] already had a pre-existing back problem. So, she was having problems. . . . She had very long hair. It was both wet and kind of strange looking. I asked if she was okay, and I reached out to feel her hair. You know how when you get too close to a fire and your hair gets all crispy? Her whole head of almost waist-long hair was like that. . . . I take it maybe a fire sprinkler had come on or something. She was also wet. One of her co-workers, a major who was the officer I sent the message to Egypt for because that was where her husband was, was clutching a notebook with a SECRET coversheet on it, just clutching it. Obviously, she was not going to put it down. She had walked out of her office without securing it. A lot of people were worried about that. "I didn't secure my safe. I didn't close the cipher-lock."

[*She discussed the immediate aftermath of the plane crash at the Pentagon.*] There was no organization or sense of command and control. . . . It was . . . informal groupings of people helping people. Medics began to arrive fairly quickly -- I would say within a half hour to forty-five minutes.

Then the hotel brought rollaway beds out into the lobby and cordoned off an area because there was some hysteria. Some, though not physically injured, were emotionally impacted. They were trying to isolate folks and get them calm and let the medics look at them to see if there was a medical situation or just an emotional situation. They just needed to be dealt with. There really wasn't anything to take charge of.

The hotel also opened its gym. They had a workout center so that some folks could go and get cleaned up and wash wounds if they had to. They let them use towels. I cannot say enough for what that hotel did. I haven't been back to thank them. I feel really bad about that. If there was anything we wanted, they had staff meeting people at the door, directing them to

places to go. They did a really, really terrific job. [There was] that kind of control. . . . People [were] doing what they could do, even sending messages on a pager. It's amazing how good that made you feel to be able help someone communicate with their family. When someone found a phone that worked, they started to pass it around and let as many people use it until they lost contact again.

INTERVIEWER: How would you say your Army training allowed you to respond to this attack?

KENNEDY: The Army teaches us to conform in a way that is instinctive. There were uniformed people that were prescribed the responsibility of evacuation . . . and we learned to listen to that. . . . As a general officer, it was not my responsibility to countermand or contradict. Now, if I had seen him [*referring to one of those individuals guiding people out of the Pentagon*] directing someone into a fiery hallway, I would have intervened. But what he was telling folks to do seemed to make sense. It seemed to be working because people were getting close to the exits and there wasn't any panic. The one thing that I was very conscious of was being in uniform. . . . People were probably watching what I was doing. [If] I did something contrary to the instructions and then people started looking in my direction instead of toward the uniformed person from the Pentagon, they may have felt that I knew something better. . . . I could create a problem by doing that. I followed the instructions of the people authorized to get us out of the building³⁷

³⁷ Brigadier General Karol Kennedy, interview by Major Robert Smith and Corporal Robert Shellenberger, transcript, 10 December 2001, DA-CMH.



Major General David R. Bockel

Chapter 9

Major General David R. Bockel, Commander, 90th Regional Support Command

INTERVIEWER: Could you explain what you were doing on September 11th and what your immediate thoughts were?

BOCKEL: I am now the chairman of the Army Reserve Forces Policy Committee at the Pentagon. On September the 11th, I was a committee member of [the] Training subcommittee. We were at the Pentagon for the quarterly meeting of the Army Reserve Forces Policy Committee. We arrived on September the 9th. We had our first meetings on September the 10th. On September the 11th we were having follow on subcommittee meetings.

We arrived at the Pentagon at about 7:45 [a.m.]. My subcommittee was meeting in the Pershing Conference Room on the E ring, the outside ring, directly across from the Deputy Chief Staff for Operations Office, which is between corridors 5 and 6. We had started the meeting about 8:15. About 9 o'clock we received word of the airplanes crashing into the World Trade Center, and we were all a little uncomfortable. We knew that it had to have been a terrorist attack [but] did not know how serious it was. Our intent was that as soon as we had an opportunity for a break, which was going to be probably in about an hour, that we would go across the hall to the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations Office to watch the news on TV.

About . . . twenty or thirty minutes later, I heard a loud explosion. It was apparent that it was not an accidental event. We felt in our hearts that. . . we were being attacked. In about ten seconds we stood up. We went to the door. When we entered the hallway of the E ring there was Pentagon security already in corridor 6. I could see them. I turned to the right to go down corridor 6 where he was directing the traffic. Had I turned to the left I would have walked into where the plane had crashed.

INTERVIEWER: Approximately how far away were you from the plane?

BOCKEL: The plane came in the area around corridors 4 and 5, and we were between corridors 5 and 6. I'm not sure of the exact distance. I would say it was less than a hundred yards from there. Anyway, we traveled down corridor 6. . . .The crowds were converging on that corridor. [We] made our way out from the A ring out to the south area where the shopping center is and where the metro station is, up the escalators, and into the south parking lot. I stopped when I got to the A ring where I could see outside the windows. I could see huge billows of smoke moving in the direction that I was traveling.

When I got to the escalators, I stopped. I stopped several times, because I wanted to take it all in. I wanted to experience it. At one point, I stopped and realized how surreal the situation

was. I felt like I read this. Actually I had read it in a Tom Clancy novel. Also, if you read Nelson DeMille, you encounter this kind of trauma. I thought to myself, "I'm glad that I'm wearing the uniform. If the United States is going to be attacked, I'm glad that I'm still in uniform and not retired or had gotten out of the Reserve." When I got into the shopping mall area where the escalators to the south parking lot were, I stopped, because I could hear announcements coming through a loudspeaker, but I couldn't hear them very well. So I went and I stood close to it so I could hear what was being said. It was a recording. It was something to the affect of "The Pentagon is under attack. Proceed to the nearest exit immediately. The building is no longer secure." I watched. It's a very long escalator that goes out to the south parking lot, or it was then. It's not there anymore. I watched the people going out and decided that I would not go up right that second. I would wait. If people started coming back down, then I wouldn't go out, because that would mean there was more danger at the top of that escalator. But, people did not come back down the escalator, so I went ahead and proceeded up the escalator to the south parking lot.

The thing that struck me first was the people with cell phones. Everybody seemed to have a cell phone, and nobody could make a connection with anybody. I noticed some pay phones over by where the bus stops used to be and attempted to get out on my credit card to call and let my wife know I was okay. But you could not make a long distance call. So I then proceeded to walk back to Crystal City, which is only a couple of miles away. I passed a number of people I knew. I had all kinds of experiences on that walk back. I made my way back to the hotel, to the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Crystal City, where I was able to make contact with my office in Little Rock. They were able to make contact with my wife and my office in Atlanta.

I did try to go back to the Pentagon. . . . I felt badly that I had not stopped to try and help anybody. The way they sent us out was in the exact opposite direction from where all the damage and injuries and things were. So I went back to see if I could help. . . .[At] that point anybody who had a badge, probably even a school boy patrol, was out directing traffic. They would not let you back across the street to the Pentagon. So with that I proceeded back in the vicinity of the hotel.

INTERVIEWER: Sir, when you were leaving the building and you were hearing the announcements, what was the situation like in the Pentagon? What were the reactions on the faces of people? Were sprinklers going off, were alarms?

BOCKEL: The thing that struck me the most was the lack of panic. . . . Not that there wasn't emotion and not that I didn't see somebody running every now and then, but for the most part people were calmly leaving the building. No sprinklers were going off, at least in the area that I was in. I did talk to somebody who was a corridor over, Colonel [Robert]Cortez. . . . [He] had been a member of the 90th and was an individual mobilization augmentee. He was from New Mexico and used to command one of our battalions. . . . He was telling me about doors being

blown open and ceiling tiles flying out, just one corridor over. So we were very fortunate. The alarms, yes, and that one alarm I didn't hear until I got into the main area. . . . [It was] a very orderly departure from the building, a lot of security.

INTERVIEWER: At what point were you beginning to think about the Army Reserve and your regional support command? What did you think your future missions would be?

BOCKEL: Well, I didn't give that a whole lot of thought. I already knew in advance that there were going to be requirements for the Army Reserve most likely in a homeland defense kind of situation because if the United States was being attacked, we weren't at war anyplace else. . . . I didn't call it homeland defense. It would be needed just like the National Guard when there is a crisis and there is a need for a response. The Army Reserve had to be part of it, because other than Oklahoma City where we had Army Reservists responding there, this is the first time that there's been a situation of the United States being under attack in this sort of fashion. I was reminded of something that General Max Baratz, the former chief of the Army Reserve, said at one time. We talked about who the first responders were and who provided that kind of civil support. We always focus on the National Guard because it's a state force to the real local force, but as General Baratz said, if somebody put poison gas in the Washington subway system and affected the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia, it suddenly becomes a federal issue. The Army Reserve is very important to that. . . . I knew the Army Reserve was going to have to be involved. As to what about the 90th, I didn't know at that point, but I knew that the Army Reserve was going to be involved.

INTERVIEWER: As Operation NOBLE EAGLE and ENDURING FREEDOM have unfolded, how has your RSC responded?

BOCKEL: The most immediate needs were for military police at the active Army installations in our area: Fort Polk, Fort Hood, Fort Bliss, Fort Sam Houston, Fort Sill. We provided the military police from our garrison support units. We provided military police to provide support to our aviation activities in South Texas. As far as operations outside of CONUS [Continental United States] or not involving homeland support, we've had military intelligence units, quartermaster units, medical units, [and] more military police units that have been called to the colors for additional support.³⁸

³⁸ Major General David R. Bockel, interview by Sergeant William Miller, tape recording with transcript, 22 May 2002.



Major Michael J. Coughlin

Chapter 10

Major Michael J. Coughlin, Deputy Legal Counsel for OCAR

INTERVIEWER : Could you tell me what you were doing on 11 September 2001?

COUGHLIN: September 11th started as a typical day up here at headquarters. I remember it being an exceptionally nice fall day, bright blue sky, almost cloudless, I believe, perfect temperature, just starting out to be a perfect fall day. I anticipated coming into the office and conducting business as usual

INTERVIEWER : What were your plans on this day?

COUGHLIN: On this particular day, . . . I do remember that I was going to go downstairs to the ninth floor of our office building. . . . I was going down to the OSI [Office of Strategic Initiatives] to discuss the [HQDA/OCAR] realignment plan. . . . This was shortly before 9:00 [a.m.]. I came into the office downstairs and Colonel [Terry] Lerch [the OCAR director of staff] was there sitting at the conference table along with some other officers

They were watching CNN. It was showing the Twin Towers in New York. One of them had smoke pouring out of it. When I came in, I asked what happened. They told me a plane had hit it. I said, "It sounds like terrorists attacked." . . . Nobody knew for sure what happened. . . . We were watching the news reports. I recall a second plane coming in from the right-hand side of the screen. My immediate thought was, "What is another plane doing in that air space?" In a couple of seconds you're thinking that and you're thinking, maybe it's a police or similar law enforcement plane. All of a sudden it turns sharply and crashes into the second tower. Of course, at that point, everyone was sure that it was a terrorist attack, that it was intentional.

At that point, Colonel Lerch had me call Colonel Mitchell Bisanar [the director of OCAR Operations]. . . . We called him to have him come down to the conference room we were in because we anticipated there might be more coordinated strikes given the massive scale of what we were watching unfold. . . . At that point, it wasn't yet quite that urgent. What we had seen, as tragic and horrific as it was, was in New York City. We had nothing here to be immediately concerned about. . . . Colonel Lerch left the conference room and went back up to his office, which is on the twelfth floor. I noticed as we were watching the report . . . two things. One is that a plane had crashed in the field in Pennsylvania. No one at that time knew if there was any connection or if it was a coincidence.

A little bit later, after 9:00 [a.m.], maybe about 9:20 [a.m.], a report came by on the ticker at the bottom of the screen and it said a fire had been reported at the Pentagon. I had worked in the Pentagon. The Pentagon is a very old building with old wiring. They are in the process of

renovating it and fires break out there occasionally because of the work they are doing on the wiring. That was really not an immediate concern because, having worked there, I know that, that stuff happens.

A few minutes later, Colonel Lerch came into the conference room and told us to evacuate the building because the Pentagon had just been hit and it was in flames. So, at that point, we exited the conference room and went out to the street. I came out the front door of our office building onto the street. Immediately to my right, at about one o'clock, and up in the sky, there was this tremendous black cloud of smoke. You could smell the jet fuel in the air. We were probably three blocks from the Pentagon. The wind was blowing in our direction and it was carrying the cloud and the smoke our way. At that time, people had started to evacuate the building, and we started to gather at our assembly points along the street. . . . We didn't know what was going on for sure. We were accounting for people. At that point, we got orders to . . . try and go home. . . .

Probably sometime after we evacuated our office building, [my boss] Lieutenant Colonel [Paul] Conrad and myself . . . walked up to 23rd Street where there are a number of restaurants and places. We wanted to find a place that would have the report on television. In the meantime, my pager kept going off. It was my wife trying to call me. Although she knew that I didn't work in the Pentagon, I told her that I was going to go over [there]. . . . I had planned on going over to the Pentagon to do some things and meet with some people. . . . That didn't happen obviously, but she didn't know that. . . . Fortunately, I was able to get through to my wife . . . and told her that I was okay and not to worry about me and that I would not be coming home anytime soon because I did not know . . . what else was going to happen during the day

I want to say that at about 11:00 or 11:30 [a.m.], I can't remember exactly now, we walked, my boss and I, back toward the Pentagon. I felt all this time while we were up at 23rd Street, that I wanted to go over to see if there was something that I could do in any way, shape, or form So we walked back toward the Pentagon, but as we got closer, I separated from Lieutenant Colonel Conrad, and I . . . met some other folks from the office. . . . We had heard a rumor that they were taking uniformed volunteers to help. At that time, they [military and civilian security forces] had all the intersections blocked off. . . . I asked one of the officers who was at that particular intersection . . . [that] I heard they were collecting . . . uniformed volunteers to help out. . . . He said he did not know anything about that, but that I could go down to the command post and ask about it. . . . As we got there, an Army lieutenant colonel . . . came out of the trailer and said, "Hey, they are having a meeting inside the trailer right now and they want the senior representative on the scene from all the branches and agencies in the trailer, and we need somebody from the Army." I happened to be the senior Army guy . . . and they said, "You, get in the trailer." So I went in the trailer as the Army representative, and it turned out that was the FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation] command trailer or command post

I was on the phone trying to get through to the Army Operations Center. . . . Unfortunately, the phones were not working. . . . We were doing those types of things. . . . The

scene was . . . hectic, but it wasn't disorganized. It seemed like people knew their jobs and knew their area of responsibility and right now was a matter of coordinating . . . the various agencies, civilian and military, that were on the scene and making sure everything was getting covered. . . . We had a report of another plane coming in, which later turned out to be . . . not true. So, they wanted to move the command post away. They only wanted one [senior] representative. . . . So I left the trailer at that point

INTERVIEWER: What was your next step?

COUGHLIN: After I left the command post . . . by then a significant amount of emergency vehicles were on the scene, as were a large number of military personnel. . . . I was approached by an Army captain from the Military District of Washington [MDW]. He was looking for the FBI. Well, the command post had just pulled away. Since I was the senior . . . Army officer there, he came up to me and asked if I knew anybody from the FBI because he needed to talk to them The captain was bringing in some Army ambulances from MDW and they just wanted to know where they wanted them

When the captain started to go back, I asked if I could ride along with him since there were not any other Army people around So I went with him. We went in what I think was a Suburban . . . full of emergency gear and things like that. . . . There was a string of . . . six Army ambulances coming up. We had to locate them, which we did, and coordinate them around [the] south parking[lot]. . . . We got those lined up over there. . . . By then, the fire crews were already on the scene and trying to put out the fire, and the trucks were on the field. At that point I started looking to see where I could do something, where I could help.

While I was there I saw the DCAR, Deputy Chief Army Reserve, Colonel [Malcolm B.] Westcott, and talked to him for a little bit. He was standing there ready to help, too. . . . We talked about what there was to do and everybody was more or less at that point on standby because the building was still on fire. After I talked to Colonel Westcott, . . . I went back over onto the infield a little bit more to get closer because I . . . just had this feeling of "This is a momentous day in history. I need to do something. I need to be part of it."

I wanted to help. . . . I worked in that building. I knew lots of people in that building. As it turns out, I knew a couple of the people who were killed in the attack. I knew a lot of people who worked for the Army, the Office of the Deputy of Chief of Staff of Personnel. . . . The plane actually hit almost where my old office was. . . . By then, the . . . [place] where the plane had hit the Pentagon had collapsed in and left a big gaping hole in the building that we saw subsequently for days on the news. Smoke was still pouring out of the building from the impact site of the roof.

INTERVIEWER: Approximately what time was this?

COUGHLIN: I am going to say this was early afternoon, probably after 12 [p.m.] or 1:00 [p.m.]. . . . I recall the smoke, the very bright, very intense orange flames coming out of the windows and the whole side of the Pentagon charred black from where the fuel had burned on impact. The fire truck on the heliport was destroyed and debris was all over this field. This grass field is huge. . . . It runs from one end of the Pentagon from that side to the other end, and it is deep from the Pentagon out to the street, maybe a couple of hundred yards. When I was out there, scattered all throughout the ground there were pieces of the plane . . . and pieces of the building. . . . At that time, the main effort was . . . fighting the fire and the fire crews were doing that.

They started to organize us into litter teams. . . . I wanted to help, so I knew, I am not going to stay in the back. I am going to go up front and see what I can do. . . . I went in and I saw a Navy captain . . . who was organizing litter teams and . . . coordinating efforts on the field. I went over [to] where he was. The next thing I know, he told me to get a Metro bus into the infield and park it so we could . . . set up a temporary morgue from the north end of the field

. . . We had them to keep running the air conditioning [in the bus]. We used that for the firefighters when they came out of the Pentagon. . . . We were standing by to be litter teams, to help anybody still in the Pentagon. . . . A little bit later in the afternoon . . . they needed five two-man teams . . . and I was one of them . . . to help with the firefighters. . . . This was getting later in the afternoon and what we were told at that time was that it was pretty clear they were not bringing [anyone else] out of the Pentagon . . . [The firefighters] had been in there since early . . . morning. The adrenaline was running out and the heat and the exhaustion would start affecting them. As they came out of the building, we made sure they got into the bus to cool down if they needed that. The person I was with, my partner and I, actually helped two firefighters who were suffering from exhaustion or something. . . .

We were with the members of the Old Guard waiting. The building was still on fire. I talked to a couple of firefighters coming out and asked them what it looked like inside. They all said it looked like a war zone. It was totally burned out and black. . . . They also said that it was so hot that [when] the water . . . being sprayed on the roof of the building . . . came down through the various floors and . . . reached down to the firefighters it was hot water. It was boiling. . . . The FBI did not want anyone going into the building yet because it was considered a crime scene.

About 7:15 [p.m.] when it looked like we wouldn't be doing anything more for the day, I left and some others as well. . . . I came back here and called my wife to come in and get me. . . . We got home and started watching the news. The first report of casualties at the Pentagon they said could be eight hundred people. I said, "I've got to go back. I don't want to be at home with all this going on." My wife understood that. So, I drove back. It was about 11:00 [p.m.] or midnight when I finally got here. There wasn't really much to do at that time. The firefighters were still working on the building. Most of the crews were standing down. People were getting rest. The scene was actually very quiet

I went to the north end where I had been most of the afternoon, but there wasn't anybody down there. I came back toward the center of the impact and walked down closer to it to see if there was anything I could do. When I got closer, maybe yards away, the engineers were there examining the structure. At that point, a lot of the fires were out. They were starting to turn their attention to the safety of the building.

A number of things happened while I was there. For some reason, it seemed like I was the senior Army officer there. There was a sergeant major who was down there and some members of the Old Guard who were helping put in the wooden support blocks on six-by-six like railroad ties. . . . The sergeant major came up to me and said, "Sir, there are two Marines here that came up from Quantico. They need your help." These two Marines, Sergeant Nathaniel Penn and Staff Sergeant Ronald Mix, had come up with an American flag. They said that the commander of Quantico had given them this flag and told them to take it to the Pentagon and try and get that flag up. And so I said, "Absolutely, let's do it. Where should we hang it?" Really there wasn't a place to hang it, because there was nothing in that field. . . . I checked with the civilian authorities on the scene and I said, "I've got two Marines here that brought a flag and we want to hang this flag up." They said, "Yes, whatever you need. We will help you." As we were doing that, we were joined by a Sergeant Major Leon Yarbough from the Army and a Staff Sergeant Reginald Riley, also from the Army. I believe it was Sergeant Major Yarbough who found a large metal pole over by the burned out fire truck. He got the pole out and started bending it straight again. The Marines and the two Army NCOs [noncommissioned officers], and I think we had a couple of civilians, got the pole up on the fire truck. We attached it with some zip strips and duck tape. We put the flag on the pole. It was the first flag to fly on the scene at the Pentagon. . . . That was the neatest thing I did. I helped get that team and organized those guys to get that flag up.

After that I went over to the MDW command trailer on the scene. There was a lieutenant colonel in there. I went in and told the lieutenant colonel, "Sir, we just put up a small American flag over on the fire truck, and I think it would be a great idea if we could get a larger American flag over here and put it up on the building so when the sun comes up tomorrow morning the American people and the world can see we have an American flag here." He said, "That's a great idea. Let's get on it." So, they called back to the MDW to see if they could get a flag over there. About an hour or so later, a couple of MPs [military police] came over with a flag. As far as I know, that flag did not go up that night. A couple of days later when the president visited you

saw one. . . . That is the thing I feel most proud of. . . . I just knew that day that I wanted to be over there to help. I'm a soldier. That's where we should have been³⁹

³⁹ Major Michael J. Coughlin, interview by Sergeant William L. Miller, tape recording with transcript, 5 November 2001.

Army Reservists Killed at the Pentagon on 11 September 2001



Colonel David M. Scales



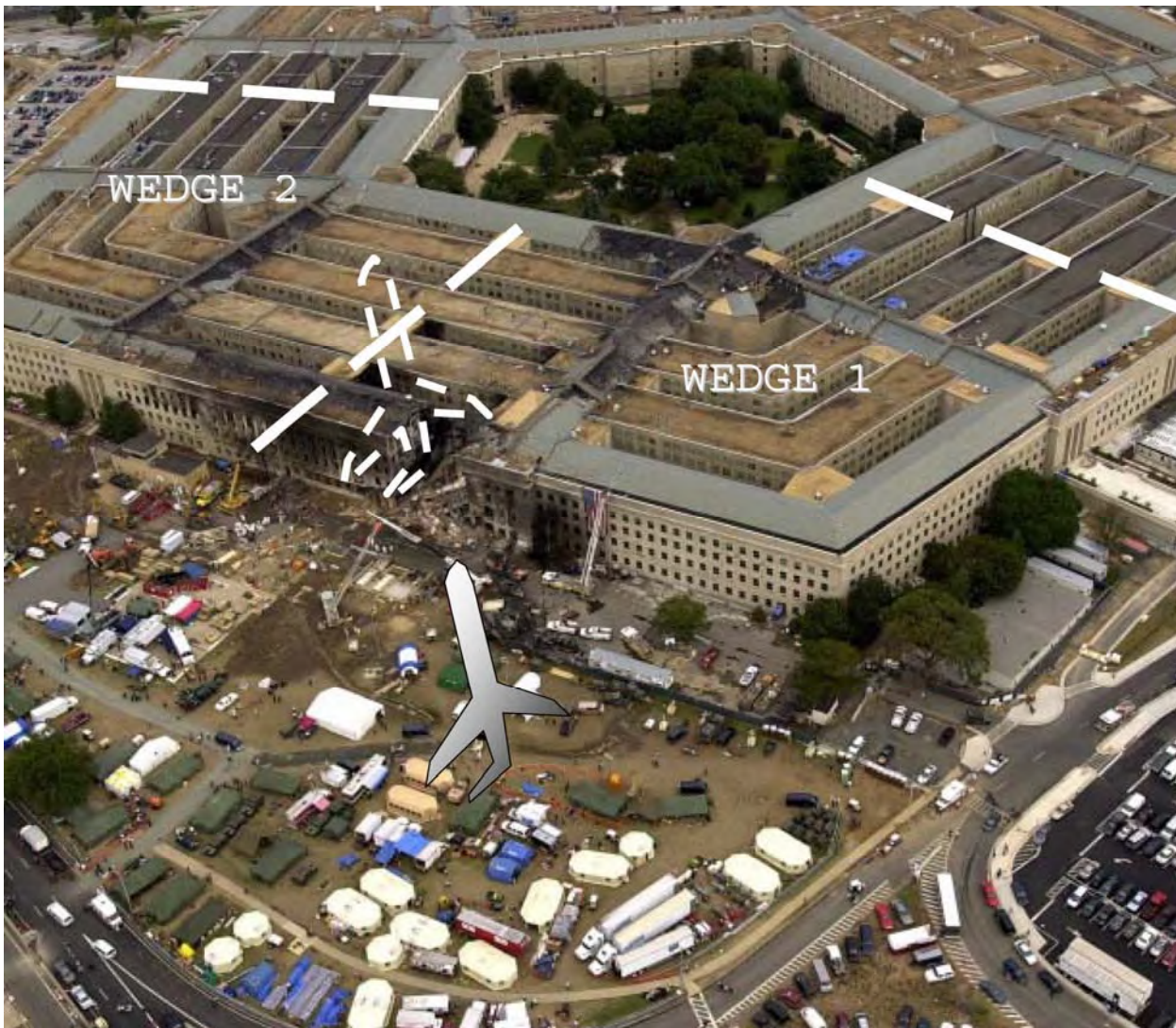
Colonel Ronald F. Golinski (Retired)

A Nation Under Attack



Arlington, VA, 11 September 2001 — Lieutenant Colonel Randy Pullen, a public affairs officer with the Office, Chief Army Reserve (OCAR) rushed to the Pentagon to record the results of the terrorist attack. These workers left the Pentagon after Flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon. Despite the surprise of the attack, some interviewees described the evacuation as calm but with some confusion. *(Photo by Lieutenant Colonel Randy Pullen, OCAR Public Affairs Office)*

The Path of the Attack



Arlington, VA, September, 2001 — This aerial shot of the Pentagon, using a graphic representation of the plane, shows the angle that Flight 77 hit the Pentagon. It crashed into the newly renovated wedge 1, with its reinforced structure, and its path of destruction extended into wedge 2. *(Photograph courtesy of the Pentagon Renovation Project Collection)*

“I saw people running from the area where the plane had hit and saw smoke.”

-Sergeant First Class Monica Morris describing the attack on the Pentagon.



Arlington, VA, 11 September 2001 — Flight 77 hit this portion of the Pentagon’s E ring, which collapsed and burned for many hours. Fortunately, the plane hit the newly renovated wedge 1 that had been remodeled and strengthened as part of a plan to modernize the Pentagon, which included reducing the Pentagon’s vulnerability to a terrorist attack. Though the plane’s impact and ensuing fire caused severe damage it would have been worse if the plane hit a different wedge. Army Reservists in the Pentagon evacuated the building and then many of them tried to provide medical assistance or joined litter teams to carry out any wounded. *(Photograph courtesy of the Pentagon Renovation Project Collection)*

The Army Reserve Responds



Arlington, VA, 11 September 2001 — Command Sergeant Major Alex Lackey, Command Sergeant Major of the Army Reserve, communicates on a cell phone outside the Pentagon on 11 September. Smoke is still coming from the Pentagon. Inside the building when the plane hit, he exited the Pentagon, then formed a litter team and tried to rescue survivors. Prevented from re-entering the building because of the fire and the threat of an additional attack, he supported the soldiers of the 3rd Infantry Regiment (“the Old Guard”) who rushed from Fort Myer to the Pentagon. *(Photo by Master Sergeant Jacqueline Gopie, OCAR)*



Arlington, VA, 17 September 2001 – Soldiers of the Army Reserve's 311th Quartermaster Company (QM Co) (Mortuary Affairs) from Aguadilla, Puerto Rico – along with federal officials like Federal Bureau of Investigation agent Samuel Simon – set up operations in the north parking lot of the Pentagon on the morning of 17 September 2001. The men and women of the 311th had the grim task of searching through tons of debris from the Pentagon attack, searching for remains of victims and personal effects. They deployed and were operational within seventy-two hours of the call for volunteers reaching them. *(Photo by Lieutenant Colonel Randy Pullen, OCAR Public Affairs Office)*

“I remembered how to start an IV, which I hadn’t done in a long time.”

-Colonel Malcolm Westcott used his past experience as a medic to treat the injured at the Pentagon.



Arlington, VA, 11 September 2001 — Firefighters and rescue workers form a line outside the Pentagon, close to the heliport. Rescue workers operated continuously, using lights during the night, to search for any survivors or remains. They continued their efforts until 13 September when the efforts shifted from rescue to recovery. Local communities, such as Arlington County – which contributed as many as 200 firefighters and police – played a major role in the rescue effort. Federal agencies – including the Federal Emergency Management Agency, FBI, and the Defense Protective Service – made significant contributions to the rescue efforts as well. Soldiers from OCAR, Fort Myer, Fort Belvoir, Fort Lee, the Pentagon, and elsewhere provided a strong Army response to the attack. *(Photo by Sergeant Nathaniel Penn, MD, United States Marine Corps)*

“Absolutely, let’s do it”

-Major Micheal Coughlin when approached about raising the US flag at the Pentagon.



Arlington, VA, 11 September 2001 — These soldiers and Marines raised what was probably the first flag to fly at the damaged section of the Pentagon, on the night of 11 September 2001. Major Michael Coughlin, who worked at OCAR, described this event and his role in coordinating it in his interview. These soldiers and Marines stood on a fire-crash rescue vehicle that the Fort Myer Fire Department stationed at the Pentagon’s heliport to safeguard arriving and departing helicopters. The truck caught on fire after Flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon but fortunately the firefighters survived. *(Photograph courtesy of the Pentagon Renovation Project Collection)*

***“Now we are going to have to get involved in this.
What do they want from the Army Reserve?”***

-Lieutenant General Thomas Plewes examining the Army Reserve’s role after the attack.



Arlington, VA, 14 September 2001 — Three days after the attack, fire engines surrounded around the damaged portion of the Pentagon. At that time efforts had shifted from rescue to recovery and the 311th QM Co used its knowledge of mortuary affairs to assist. In the days following the attack, Lieutenant General Plewes stated that the Army Reserve focused on gaining accountability of its personnel in both New York and Washington, raising security conditions at the reserve sites around the nation and overseas, and examining Army Reserve assets to provide assistance at the Pentagon and New York. *(Photograph courtesy of the Pentagon Renovation Project Collection)*

Damage Inside the Pentagon



Arlington, VA, 14 September 2001 — Thousands of gallons of burning jet fuel created a fire that temporarily overwhelmed the Pentagon's fire fighting capabilities, which allowed the fire to spread. It destroyed rooms like this one on wedge 2's E ring, which probably overlooked Arlington National Cemetery. Lieutenant Colonel Victor Correa realized that the thick smoke produced by the fire prevented some personnel from leaving the area, so he shouted for people to follow his voice, which led them to a clear area. *(Photograph courtesy of the Pentagon Renovation Project Collection)*



Arlington, VA, 22 October 2001 — After Flight 77's impact, many Pentagon workers left the building as quickly as possible and left their personal property behind. Though not damaged by the fire this room suffered damage first as rescuers searched for survivors. The paint indicates that the room was searched. Later soldiers from the Military District of Washington, such as the 3rd Infantry Regiment, or the 311th Quartermaster Company removed personal effects. *(Photo by Specialist Kelly Strand, 46th Military History Detachment (MHD), Little Rock, AR)*

“I never felt personal to a building before, but someone hit my building.”

-Lieutenant Colonel Timon Oujiri’s attitude towards the Pentagon after the attack.



Arlington, VA, 22 October 2001 — Undoubtedly Flight 77’s impact caused some of the debris in this room but the tearing down of adjacent sections added debris as well. Debris hung from the ceiling as well as littering the floor.
(Photo by Specialist Kelly Strand, 46th MHD, Little Rock, AR)

Tearing Down the Damaged Portions of the Pentagon in Order to Rebuild Them



Arlington, VA, 22 October 2001 -- Workers tore down portions of the Pentagon's rings that had severe structural damage in order to rebuild those sections. Their work left behind debris including cabling, rods, and piping. *(Photo by Specialist Kelly Strand, 46th MHD, Little Rock, AR).*



Arlington, VA, 22 October 2001 — An excavator uses a claw to tear down damaged sections and remove debris from the Pentagon. Rebuilding the Pentagon required that some damaged portions be torn down. *(Photo by Specialist Kelly Strand, 46th MHD, Little Rock, AR).*

Recording the Tragedy So None Will Forget



Arlington, VA, 22 October 2001 — Specialist Kelly Strand, 46th MHD from Little Rock, AR, and Sergeant First Class Dennis Lopic, 305th MHD, Pittsburgh, PA, used every means available to photograph the damaged portion of the Pentagon from different angles. In this case they were lifted by construction equipment, which allowed them to photograph damage to the higher floors. Specialist Strand was photographed at about the third floor of the Pentagon. *(Photo by Sergeant First Class Dennis Lopic, 305th MHD, Pittsburgh, PA)*

Witness to Tragedy: A General Remembers



Arlington, VA, 12 November 2001 — Major General David Bockel, commander of the 90th Regional Support Command, headquartered in Little Rock, AR, surveys the damaged section of the Pentagon being torn down. Major General Bockel was in the Pentagon the day terrorists attacked it. *(Photo by Lieutenant Colonel Randy Pullen, OCAR Public Affairs Office)*

Saluting a Fellow Reservist



(LEFT)

Arlington, VA, 10 October 2001 — Symbol of a fallen soldier – a pair of empty boots draped with the dog tags of Army Reserve Colonel David Scales. Colonel Scales was killed during the attack on the Pentagon on September 11, 2001. Colonel Scales' widow, son, and parents attended this memorial service along with the staff from the Office, Chief Army Reserve. At the service his family was presented with the Purple Heart and his son was given a beret with a Colonel's insignia pinned on. (Colonel Scales was promoted posthumously from Lieutenant Colonel) *(Photo by Lieutenant Colonel Randy Pullen, OCAR Public Affairs Office)*

(RIGHT)

Arlington, VA, 11 October 2001 — Buried with full military honors, Colonel Scales cremated remains were interred at Arlington National Cemetery. During this ceremony, Lieutenant General Thomas Plewes presented the flag to the widow of Colonel David Scales. An Active Guard Reserve officer assigned to the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel, Scales was at his place of duty when the hijacked airliner slammed into the Pentagon. *(Photo by Lieutenant Colonel Randy Pullen, OCAR Public Affairs Office)*



Answering the call



Aguadillo, PR, 14 September 2001 — SGT Jean Paul Villanueva of the Army Reserve's 311th Quartermaster Company (Mortuary Affairs) gets a farewell hug from his son, Jean Carlo, prior to SGT Villanueva's deployment from Puerto Rico to Washington, DC, on September 14. Army Reservists called up for Operation NOBLE EAGLE or ENDURING FREEDOM held similar farewells across the nation. *(Photo by Mr. Pedro Silva, 65th RSC Public Affairs Specialist.)*

(RIGHT)

Arlington, VA, 6 November 2001 — Specialists Jose Acosta and Maria Izquierdo, both from the 311th QM Co, pose outside Building 228, Fort Myer, by their unit's painted insignia. Building 228 housed the personal effects, from both the living and deceased Pentagon employees, that were removed from the damaged sections of the Pentagon. After the 311th QM Co decontaminated those objects the owners and surviving family members could sign and take the items home. Soldiers from the 311th QM Co also enjoyed the break room and performed some administrative functions in this building. *(Photo by Sergeant William Miller, 90th MHD, San Antonio, TX.)*



(LEFT)

Arlington, VA, 6 November 2001 — The 311th Quartermaster Company processed and cleaned the personal effects of the victims of the Pentagon attack in Building 227 at Fort Myer. The open spaces inside the building, which once served as a stable, allowed planners to partition it into sections suitable for the different stages of cleaning the effects. *(Photo by Sergeant William Miller, 90th MHD, San Antonio, TX.)*

Rebuilding the Pentagon



Arlington, VA, 9 January 2002 — This picture shows the reconstruction efforts at the Pentagon. The E, D, and C rings have been torn down, cleared and construction started on the first floor E ring. By 11 September 2002 Pentagon workers completely rebuilt the outer ring (E ring). *(Photo by Sergeant William Miller, 90th MHD, San Antonio, TX.)*



Arlington, VA, 9 January 2002 — This picture provides a view of Corridor 5, Second Floor leading to the center of the Pentagon. Pentagon workers cleared this hallway of debris before rebuilding in this area. *(Photo by Sergeant William Miller, 90th MHD, San Antonio, TX.)*

One Year Later: Pentagon Observance Ceremony



Arlington, VA, 11 September 2002 — One year after Flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon President George Bush and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld attended an observance of the 11 September 2001 attack. Held at the site of the impact, which showcased the rebuilt section and the efforts of the construction workers, soldiers unfurled the same US flag flown at the impact site a year earlier. Afterwards, at 9:37 A.M., which was the time Flight 77 hit the Pentagon on 11 September 2001, a moment of silence was held for the victims of the attack. *(Photo by Sergeant William Miller, 90th MHD, San Antonio, TX)*



Lieutenant Colonel Timon Oujiri

Chapter 11

Lieutenant Colonel Timon Oujiri, Active Guard Reserve Officer, OCAR

INTERVIEWER: What were you expecting to do on 11 September? What was your planned day and was it close to your average day?

OUIRI: It was close to the average. It was planned out. I was supposed to be over in the building at 10:30 [a.m.] meeting with some people . . .

INTERVIEWER: The building being the Pentagon?

OUIRI: The building being the Pentagon. The Chief of the Army Reserve, Lieutenant General [Thomas J.] Plewes, I was to pick him up at 10:30 [a.m.]. At 11:00 [a.m.], he and I were going out to a lunch. . . . He had meetings, luncheon meetings, and that afternoon I was his escort for that day for briefings, etc. . . .

INTERVIEWER: What actually transpired? When did you first learn about the World Trade Center attack?

OUIRI: We were up here in the office [Jefferson Plaza II].

INTERVIEWER: On Jefferson Davis Highway?

OUIRI: On Jefferson Davis Highway.

INTERVIEWER: Al Schilf [Chief, Public Affairs Branch, OCAR Public Affairs and Liaison Directorate] came in . . . and said, “A plane just went into the World Trade Center.” This must have been somewhere before 9:00 [a.m.], knowing all the times now but looking back at the time, it was somewhere before 9:00 [a.m.]. We all thought it was just an accident. I then left the office from here and went down to the gymnasium where I was going to go out for my run. I went down and turned on the news down there in the workout facility where they have the TVs and all the cables. . . . I turned on the news to show people what happened in New York City. . . I then went out for a run. As I am out running, the running path goes by National [Reagan] Airport, and normally during that part of the day, 9:00 or 9:30 [a.m.] . . . , a lot of air traffic is going back and forth. Well, I noticed that day that only one aircraft took off and only one aircraft landed. I thought, well, since the accident up at New York, they might be shutting down traffic on the East Coast. Makes sense to me. As I am coming back in from my run, I am

passing National Airport on the way back to JP II, Jefferson Plaza Two on Jefferson Davis Highway. I notice that all of the aircraft were no longer on the tarmac or the runways. I thought that was kind of odd. They must have had something go wrong up in New York, because everything was back . . . against the terminal. At that time, I heard an aircraft incoming. . . .

At this time, it was an accident, so far as I knew. . . . Anyway, so I am back and I hear this aircraft accelerate, and I thought to myself that is not a normal approach sound for an aircraft. It sounded like it was really accelerating. I heard the impact and I stopped. I turned. I looked over toward where the . . . the Pentagon was, and I saw the plume of smoke. I could not see the building because of the trees, and I was a half-mile away probably. I thought to myself, somebody went into the Pentagon. I had no idea. So I ran back to the office. As I returned to the office, people were evacuating the building, etc. I came in, got on the elevator, came up to my desk, called my wife to say I am okay . . . and then went to my evacuation site.

INTERVIEWER: When you saw the smoke and you heard the plane, were you making a connection that it could be a deliberate act?

OUJIRI: For some reason, I thought it was a deliberate act. I remember saying to myself, "Somebody got the Pentagon. Somebody went into the building." At that time, I thought . . . it was not an accident, but then after thinking about it, I thought, what a coincidence, two accidents, etc. And then when I got back here, I heard the second plane went into the World Trade Center. But my gut reaction was that it was a deliberate attack. I don't know if I used the term attack, but it was deliberate. I remember my gut reaction was that it was deliberate.

INTERVIEWER: When you got back here, what were the reactions of those around you? What did you see on their faces? Were they evacuating the building?

OUJIRI: They were evacuating the building very . . . systematically. No panic, no sense of distraught. . . . It was not panic. It was not chaos at all.

INTERVIEWER: How did the accounting go outside?

OUJIRI: By the time I got down there, our deputy had everyone accounted for. . . . We knew we were missing three people: Colonel Profit, Brigitte Hanes, and Major Jean McGinnis. We knew that they were in the building, again the building being the Pentagon. They were over there for meetings. . . . We knew . . . they were there somewhere, so we did not have 100 percent accountability for them. But . . . we knew the whereabouts of everyone else. . . . They knew I was out at the gym, . . . but they did not know exactly where I was until I came back and showed up

INTERVIEWER: Were the three people you mentioned eventually accounted for?

OUJIRI: They were all accounted for later . . . that day

INTERVIEWER: What did you do after you reached the evacuation point? Did you try to go home?

OUJIRI: No. We were trying to locate Colonel Profit and those [others]. . . . The cell phones would not work, etc. So, I, out of curiosity, was going to go over to the building and see if we could help. When we arrived over on Army-Navy Drive, the emergency people and all of the police were turning everybody back. At that time, there were some rescue vehicles caught in traffic. I jumped out . . . and then as I am coming back to the building, some colonel . . . said that they needed volunteers to evacuate people in the Pentagon. . . .

So I was up on corridor 8 [of the Pentagon] speaking to a sergeant, and this doctor. . . said, "Hey, we need some people." There were four or five of us. He said, "Come on and follow me." So I went with this person and the other four or five that were there went into the medical clinic there on corridor 8. He said, "We need these supplies." We were just grabbing everything that was in the medical clinic in corridor 8 [and] took those supplies out into the courtyard. When we arrived in the courtyard, the firemen were already there. This is now noon, I think. . . . I am still in my PT [physical training] gear. They organized us into teams, into structured teams on how to recover casualties and deceased. We were supposed to move into the building and help the firemen. Well, the firemen said no, it was still too hot. They were still fighting the fires, etc.

So, we . . . organized the teams into assistance parties, I guess you would call them, for the firemen. The firemen were on teams rotating, going in, coming out, going in, coming out. We got water for them. There was that concession area down there. Whatever food that they had available, we made them sandwiches and we were assisting them . . . helping them with their gear. . . . They were pretty well whipped. Later that day . . . they took some of our teams and moved us from the courtyard to the outside. . . . So myself and . . . a couple of other teams moved out to the outside of the building. . . . That was when I first saw the impact area.

INTERVIEWER: What was your reaction when you saw that?

OUJIRI: I never felt personal to a building before, but someone hit my building. Just being assigned to the Pentagon and working in there, it was a personal assault. . . . People have asked me before was it chaotic. . . . It wasn't. People were organized, systematic, calm, frustrated. . . . We were not allowed to go in . . . and help. . . . Just knowing the building . . . that there are 25,000 people who work in that building, ten corridors . . . and you know that they need help and you are not allowed to go in and help. I understand why. The firefighters were there and

they had their mission, but it was frustrating because we could not do anything. . . .We could not do anything to help them. . . . I . . . wish I could have done more.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Lieutenant Colonel Timon Oujiri, interview by Sergeant William Miller, tape recording with transcript, 14 December 2001 and Article, “Answering the Call – Individual Accounts, Lieutenant Colonel Timon Oujiri,” OCAR website, 14 September 2001.



Captain Will Flucker



Major Tyree Webster

Chapter 12

Major Tyree Webster, Active Guard Reserve Officer, and Captain Will Flucker, Active Component Officer, OCAR

WEBSTER: Basically, [11 September] was a typical day. I live in Woodbridge [Virginia] and once I got here, I went through the daily activities, going through email. Once I noticed on CNN the World Trade Centers had been attacked, I am on what is called the Crisis Action Team for the Army. I am one of the first responders for a crisis. . . . What it means is that as soon as there is a national disaster or an attack against, domestic or on foreign soil, the United States....I am the first person that they call in the Army Reserve here in the National Capitol Region. . . .

Once they call me, I will call the folks who work our EOC [Emergency Operations Center] at OCAR. . . . I work myself in the Army Operations Center [AOC]. . . . I maintain the SOPs [standard operating procedures] and operation procedures for those two locations. . . . Then, once I got my call, I got a hold of Captain Flucker and Major [Gregory] Martin, who are part of my emergency relocation group team. . . .

INTERVIEWER: Captain Flucker, how did your day start?

FLUCKER: As Major Webster said, it was a relatively normal day. . . . We started the day off very normally, and then someone came over and said that a plane had crashed into one of the towers of the World Trade Center. They brought me over to where the television was, and I watched the second aircraft hit the second tower. Now in between that time, of course, a telephone call [came] from . . . over at the Pentagon announcing that the Crisis Action Team, the CAT, would be standing up and that we would be going to an orientation briefing. So, of course, at that point, . . . we had a group of folks standing around the television and our day had instantly gone from normal to extraordinary

I remember saying as we were standing there at the bus stop, “We need to be looking for the third target.” . . . I had at that time no idea that the Pentagon would be that target. I think we all shared a suspicion that there was a third target and that while everyone’s attention was focused in New York that something would happen someplace. . . . But it completely changed my world when we heard the report from the crash and saw the smoke billow up from the third target, which was the Pentagon. Even as I ran from the bus stop back into the building to dial 911, I could barely appreciate what had just happened

INTERVIEWER: So you all were standing at the bus stop coming from JP II [Jefferson Plaza 2] on the way over to the Pentagon when the plane crashed into the Pentagon. Could you hear the impact?

WEBSTER: Absolutely.

FLUCKER: We felt the impact. . . . Your uniform kind of puffs out from the shockwave. . . . We heard a distinctive explosion and then from our vantage point . . . we immediately saw the smoke billowing up.

WEBSTER: Fireballs going up

INTERVIEWER: Did you continue to make your way over to the Pentagon?

FLUCKER: Not immediately. . . . I lost track of Major Martin and Major Webster at that point, because I went back . . . inside JP II to go to the nearest phone and I called 911. Then I went back out to the bus stop, and I believe I passed

WEBSTER: You passed me heading back into the building.

FLUCKER: That's right. So, Major Webster was coming back into the building as I ran out. Now here is what's weird. Just as normal as you please, the bus pulled up as I ran out of the building. I got on the bus as I normally would. We took off headed for the Pentagon like we normally would. It occurred to me that I was the only one hyperventilating on the bus. These folks did not know what happened until we turned the corner about a block away. So, yes . . . I came in and then headed back to the bus and towards the Pentagon. I ended up getting up to the site of the explosion.

INTERVIEWER: When you headed back into JP II, what was your plan?

WEBSTER: Well, here is what my plan was. . . . I told Major Martin, "You go upstairs and you alert the folks upstairs to what has happened. I will call them ahead of time while you are on your way up. I will also try to make contact with the Pentagon." My cell worked. . . . I called the Pentagon and could not get through. . . . I tried to contact the front office [the office of Lieutenant General Plewes, the Chief, Army Reserve, located in the Pentagon]. . . . When something like this happens, that is the next thing that will activate,. . . the Emergency Operations Center. . . . We wanted folks to come out [of OCAR staff offices in JP II] so we could make an assessment. . . . We did not know what kind of attack it was, chemical or what.

FLUCKER: At this point, we do not know that it is an aircraft that has hit the Pentagon. . . . We know that there has been an explosion at the Pentagon. . . . I think that what . . . Major Webster was getting at was we all knew what the game plan was . . . but in all of our practices and all of

our exercises, the original base of operations was the Pentagon. But now the Pentagon was hit and that changed the game plan fundamentally. We knew that we could still operate. The question was what contingency plan do we activate now because our original starting point was hit?

Now, I am on my way back to the Pentagon with the intent of finding out if indeed the Pentagon Crisis Action Center is still up and active and if so, then I need to get in there. Meanwhile, as Major Webster says, he is trying to figure out . . . what we need to stand up an Emergency Operations Center to connect to the Army Reserve Center, to OCAR here, and we need to be thinking about relocation. . . . Hindsight being 20/20, we ended up doing some things right.

WEBSTER: Right, we went to Major Martin's apartment and established contact . . . with the Army Operations Center. . . . Once I called those guys . . . they were trying to activate the joint communications center. See our phone was down, so they could not contact me. . . . Once I found that information out, Major Martin did some calls and made some more things happen. Then we came back over to JP II

INTERVIEWER: So you were coming back into JP II. Captain Flucker, you were over there at the Pentagon?

FLUCKER: Right, . . . I made it to the Pentagon proper . . . but you could not see the Pentagon . . . because of the smoke and the flames. . . . I got off of the bus and immediately became aware that I was going against the grain. There were literally thousands of people coming out [of the Pentagon] and I was going against the grain trying to find out if I could get to the Crisis Action Team. I got as close as I could and then could not see through the smoke. So I turned around and started heading this way.

Now everybody was trying to use their cell phones. There was no communication. This was when I first realized that it was a plane because there were folks coming out of the Pentagon who saw what had happened and they explained where the plane came from, how it hit and so forth. So I head back over to JP II here at OCAR, and by this time the building has been evacuated. . . . So I find Colonel [Mitchell] Bisanar, the [OCAR] Operations Division chief, and explained to him what happened so he could make an assessment of whether he should stay or go. . . .

So my focus is get to the Crisis Action Center, wherever that may be, and we are still contemplating maybe that is going to be here at JP II, but wherever it is going to be, my focus is to get there. Meanwhile, he [Major Webster] is working the emergency relocation plan. All of this is happening I would say in less than a half hour after the explosion

I would mention . . . there are some secondary explosions that touch off a frenzy of supposition as to whether or not a fourth target has been hit. . . . We found out later that those

were secondary explosions from the aircraft at the Pentagon. But it added to the confusion. Colonel Bisanar, the Operations Division chief, made the call that everyone [the OCAR staff] go home

INTERVIEWER: Did it concern you that you were not able to get into the Pentagon to the Army Operations Center?

FLUCKER: Absolutely!!

WEBSTER: Oh yes!!

FLUCKER: As with any soldier, whatever the drill is, that is the drill that you want to execute. With the Pentagon hit and even though only one side of the building was affected, it looked like the entire building was engulfed and you could not really tell where the primary point of impact was. Then the folks, both civilian and military security forces, would not allow you to get into the Pentagon. That was very frustrating . . . because I knew in my heart of hearts that the Crisis Action Team, because of where it is located in the building, was still viable

WEBSTER: As Captain Flucker was saying, everybody was upset hearing the building was on fire. My attempt to call the AOC [Army Operations Center] was good because, one, we let them know that we are trying to get there. Once we get through the security issues, we will send somebody to represent the Army Reserve on the Crisis Action Team

FLUCKER: So what happens at this point is . . . [the Army Reserve representative to the Crisis Action Team] . . . calls ahead and now . . . by about 1600 hours [the link up between military and civilian security forces] had happened. . . . The external security forces then know that there were certain people that had to be allowed in. . . . By this time, I had made it home, made some arrangements there, and I am on my way back. So by 1800 hours, I had to leave [the Army Reserve representative]. I had no problem getting in because I had announced ahead of time.

INTERVIEWER: Could you outline for us where Major Martin's apartment is in relation to the Pentagon? Were you in visual or auditory range?

FLUCKER: I would say about five miles south of the Pentagon and about a mile from this location, JP II, which is why it was an ideal location if we had to set up an alternate command and control center.

WEBSTER: You can see the Pentagon from his apartment. You can pretty much see what is going on.

FLUCKER: Now, for those of us who made it to cars and started the journey home [it] . . . was an odyssey all its own because people were stuck in traffic. All four lanes of I-95 are locked up and people are now getting out of their cars in fear and leaving them on the freeway, which is now a hopeless situation. But in all of that, for those of us who were in vehicles, you turn on the radio and there was mass speculation as to what was going on

WEBSTER: Car bomb blew up in front of the State Department.

FLUCKER: That's right! There were a number of things that were not only confusing to the folks in the National Capitol Region trying to get home, but now they are being broadcast over the radio. . . . They are mingling with what I know my primary duty is . . . to get back to the CAT. Are my kids out of school now? Does my wife know? And all of these things and, of course, the cell phones are not working. And everybody's family members are trying to contact us

WEBSTER: There was one major key factor that I forgot to mention here. While Captain Flucker and the rest of OCAR was headed home, there was a small contingency of folks here. What we did was we sat down our operations chiefs at this location. We sat down and got our roster out. We put together our manning. . . . So, the planning was to have two people per shift, because we were not too sure how long this was going to last. When they were gone, some additional planning took place, and then we assessed the situation and figured out what we needed to do to support the Army Operations Center.

INTERVIEWER: In what way were you to support the Army Operations Center?

FLUCKER: The Army Operations Center . . . is the service headquarters that provides trained and ready soldiers to commanders-in-chief [CINCs] . . . to prosecute a war. Normally what we would do is join any Army Operations Center, activate the Crisis Action Center, and then get about the business of selecting trained and ready forces so that we can fight a war.

Unfortunately, . . . this crisis was within the continental United States, and so it made our game plan a little convoluted. Instead of sending forces out, we were . . . focused on . . . finding members of our own organizations. There were folks in the Pentagon now who have been directly affected by this attack and so rather than doing what we normally do initially, which is [to decide] what forces are needed, now we are trying to locate who is, well quite frankly, who is alive and who is dead. We are trying to do that in a way that we don't give the wrong impression to the families and that kind of thing. I will tell you we spent the first twelve hours getting that done. . . . After that priority or concurrent with that priority [was] to establish communication with the folks, the organizations we need to help us do our job, that is the United States Army

Reserve Command, Army Reserve Personnel Command, and Forces Command, and a number of other agencies. . . .

Now by this time it is, let's say between 1900 and 2000 in the evening, and we have established contact with all the major headquarters. Now I am in communication with the Emergency Operations Center here at OCAR and with the Director of Staff Colonel [Terry] Lerch, who is assisting in the operation from his home on two phones, his regular phone and his cell phone. So we are going back and forth through every division of this organization trying to account for folks. Colonel Lerch stayed with me until about four in the morning, working that from his home. I think he got about an hour [of] sleep and then he was back here

INTERVIEWER: At 1900, you have established communication with the Army Operations Center.

FLUCKER: Right, I am in the Army Operations Center and I have established communication with our critical coordination nodes

INTERVIEWER: And you are handling some family requests. What other requests were being made of you from the Army and what types of contributions were you making at the operations centers?

FLUCKER: I don't want to call this the second priority because all this was happening concurrent. While we were trying to get 100 percent accountability, the other thing that we were working was to immediately secure the Pentagon, get forces from wherever they need to be up to the Pentagon . . . [By this time, military] installations all over the United States now have gone to...Force Protection Condition Delta which is the highest level of force protection.

INTERVIEWER: Which basically means they are in a lockdown situation.

FLUCKER: Then, on top of all that, we were engaged in the planning for future operations, that is defense of the continental United States against a suspected, even probable, follow-on attack. We're still within a twenty-four hour window and we do not know if this is over. . . .

WEBSTER: The next day, . . . we came in and we established . . . our Emergency Operations Center here at OCAR. . . .

FLUCKER: It was messy, but we got it done. . . . We can survive, remain viable, and operate under just about any circumstances. I am confident now that there is very little that an enemy

could do to the command and control structure of the United States military that would make us untenable for anything more than a very short, very short period of time⁴¹

⁴¹ Major Tyree Webster and Captain Will Flucker, interview by Captain Suzanne L. Summers and Sergeant William L. Miller, tape recording with transcript, 14 December 2001.



Major Gregory Martin

Chapter 13

Major Gregory Martin, Active Guard Reserve Officer, OCAR

MARTIN: In addition to [my regular duties working in the area of homeland defense], I have additional duties. . . . I am the alternate battle captain for the Crisis Action Team in the Army Operations Center. . . . What transpired on the morning of 11 September basically flowed like this from my perspective. I was sitting in the office at OCAR coordinating with another action officer for a general officer conference that was to be held here in Washington. . . . I don't remember the exact time. It was probably around 0830 or so, 0840. Another officer came in and told me that a plane has struck the World Trade Center. At that point, I stopped what I was doing and I went to see what was going on. I went to our operations center. I found out shortly thereafter that a second plane had hit the second World Trade Tower and at that point I knew in my mind that we were being attacked by terrorists. It just had to be.

At that point I got with the primary battle captain for the Crisis Action Team [CAT], . . . Major Tyree Webster. . . . I asked him what his plan of action was, whether or not the CAT was going to be activated. He said that he had already talked to the Army Operations Center and that they had notified him that all Crisis Action Team primary seat holders were to be seated by 1000 hours. . . . I conferred with him and recommended that I go with him to the CAT to see what was going on, to assess the situation. That way, if he needed to stay as the primary battle captain, I could come back and get face-to-face with our leadership back here at the Office, Chief Army Reserve and let them know what we were doing with regard to the CAT and be able to proceed with further courses of action at that point. I also suggested that we bring the number three battle captain, . . . [Captain] Will Flucker, who is an active component officer who has been working with us for the last three years, very capable officer

We determined to try to catch a bus from Crystal City to the Pentagon. . . . At 0938 hours, while we were standing at the northern end of Crystal City about a half mile from the Pentagon or less, . . . [and] were waiting for the bus . . . we heard a loud explosion. I immediately turned to my right and could see a large black cloud of smoke and debris. My immediate response was "Oh, my God!! They just hit the Pentagon." I did not know anything more than that, but the explosion was obviously large enough that it was something to be concerned about. I did not know that it was a plane that had slammed into the Pentagon because Highway One was immediately between my position and the Pentagon. In fact, my first thought was that it could have been a car bomb

At that point, the immediate question in my mind was "Okay, what should I do? What do my responsibilities call me to do?". . . We huddled quickly and decided that it would be best, not knowing the situation at the Pentagon, to attempt to contact the Army Operations Center via phone and to get back to our building here in Crystal City. [We wanted] to warn the leadership

that we suspect the Pentagon had been attacked. We may want to consider evacuating our own building which is a twelve-story building and could itself be a target. . . . We did call the Army Operations Center and asked for their instructions.

INTERVIEWER: And you were able to get through to them at this time?

MARTIN: Actually, we got through to them. . . . We did evacuate the building. At that point, I recommended to my boss, the Director of Operations, Colonel [Mitchell] Bisanar, that Major Webster and I relocate to my apartment, which is only a twelve-minute walk [from OCAR offices in Crystal City], . . . and reestablish contact with the Army Operations Center. . . . When we were standing outside all we had were cell phones and we could not talk to them. . . . Those are the things that were foremost in our mind. Are you going to continue operating the CAT out of the Pentagon, or is it safe? Or do we have environmental hazards like fires raging and all that?

Once Colonel Bisanar approved that recommendation, Major Webster and I ran back to my apartment, which took us about six minutes, carrying a bunch of gear, documents. We were able to use my private telephone to reach the Army Operations Center. At that point, we were told that the CAT would continue to operate out of the basement even though the building was on fire. We were asked to send someone to occupy the CAT seat for the Army Reserve. . . .

At that point, I decided to make my way back to the Pentagon to occupy the CAT seat. I got a hold of the Army Operations Center via landline again. I confirmed that no one from the Army Reserve had reported to the Army Operations Center to establish our CAT seat and begin operating from the CAT.

INTERVIEWER: Sir, where was Captain Flucker at this point?

MARTIN: Captain Flucker and I coordinated. We decided that I would occupy the CAT seat first. . . . At approximately 1600 hours on 11 September, I actually reported into the Army Operations Center and established the Army Reserve's CAT seat

INTERVIEWER: When did you get your first view of the Pentagon? Did you see it that day?

MARTIN: Oh, yeah! Well, I reported in at, like I said, at 1600 on that day. Getting to the Pentagon was an interesting story. What I did was . . . [get a] a ride to the Pentagon because you could not get in on the normal entrances. We took back roads near the Potomac River to get into the Pentagon River entrance, which was the only entrance . . . [into] the Pentagon. This was the complete opposite side of where the plane struck. It struck . . . around corridor 4 and we were on the other side. Before we even got close to the Pentagon, we encountered Arlington Police who had established roadblocks and were not letting anyone in through that area at all. I was in

military uniform. . . . I also had my military identification . . . [which] I got out. I spoke to the officer, introduced myself, and told him why I needed to get into the Pentagon. I said that if he wanted to call the desk officer at the Army Operations Center, that that was fine with me. Here is the number and if you want to call yourself go ahead and call. He did that and he verified with them that they were expecting me to come in. At that point, after showing my military ID and everything else I had, he was convinced that I was legitimate, and he let me through. At that point, I went through additional security. There were armed guards posted with automatic weapons, at the entrance, which is very close to the secretary of defense's office, and I had no problem getting in.

I know my way around the Pentagon. . . . I worked in the Pentagon in the Army Operations Center for two years, and I have been in this area for almost four years. . . . It was a good thing that I did because the Pentagon was full of smoke. . . . By the time I got away from the entrance and I was maybe halfway to that stairwell, it was pitch dark with acrid smoke. The lights were all out. It was absolutely dark. I did not have a flashlight with me because I did not expect that, plus I was in a hurry to get there in the first place. . . . I grabbed the handrail and I worked my way down a couple of flights of stairs and through some dark hallways until I got to the Army Operations Center and there the lights were on. I don't know what the situation was, whether they were using back-up power or if it had not just affected their primary power. Once I got all the way down to the bottom of the stairwell . . . I just . . . reported in and let everyone know that the Army Reserve had stood up its desk at the CAT

INTERVIEWER: Was there any danger of the AOC being shut down due to the fire?

MARTIN: Yeah, there was a lot of smoke. You were breathing smoke when you were in the Army Operations Center. We were warriors and we were at war. We did not worry about it. Then I was replaced by Captain Flucker. I only spent a couple of hours there at the Army Operations Center. I got things started

INTERVIEWER: What did you do to get things started, sir?

MARTIN: The first thing I did was get instructions about what was going on and what was expected. What does the Army staff and Army leadership expect from the Army Reserve? At that point and over the next several hours the priority was assessing who the casualties were at the Pentagon. That was the priority in the operations center. We knew we had people killed and a lot of people injured. Personnel accountability, treating the wounded, those were the priorities in the first few hours. There was no thought of mobilizing assets in the first few hours. . . . That had not happened in the first few hours. I can tell you we were more worried about people being hurt and killed and ensuring that we had the capability of keeping the CAT and the Army

Operations Center going because that is where the Army leadership comes in to huddle and to plan operations to take care of situations like the one that we had

INTERVIEWER: Could you describe the atmosphere in the AOC?

MARTIN: I would describe the atmosphere as one of professionalism, one of calm, one of trained people doing their jobs. That is the best description that I can give you. There was no fear. People were not running around with no purpose. It was as you would want and expect any military operation to be.

INTERVIEWER: What event stands out most in your mind that day?

MARTIN: Now you have to remember, I . . . heard the explosion and saw the plume at the Pentagon. Certainly that stands out in my mind. At that point, my question was, “How many planes are there with terrorists onboard? Are we going to have a hundred planes slamming into targets all over the country?” I was concerned about continuity of government: Where is the president? Is he being protected? What about our political leadership at the Capitol? Where are they going to go? I did not have to worry about them, but because I do continuity of operations for the Department of Defense, I am also thinking about the continuity of the government, which is the civilian/federal side. What is going on in our country right now?

I would have to say that the . . . two events that stand out most in my mind on that day was when I found out a second plane had hit the World Trade Center. I knew then that this was not an accident. This was terrorism. [The other event] was when someone told me in the afternoon while I was in a traffic jam trying to get back to OCAR . . . that one of the World Centers had collapsed. That is . . . what stood out in my mind.

It was a couple [of] days before I realized I had lost a very close colleague, a couple of colleagues, and close personal friend on the New York City Fire Department. [They were] two of the senior people, Chief Ray Downey and Chief Jack Fanning, whom I had worked with in the last four years, specifically on homeland security and preparing this country for just this kind of an event. Jack Fanning, in particular, was a really close friend of mine. He was a great man, a thirty-year veteran of the Fire Department of New York and was in charge of the hazardous materials response for the entire city of New York. These were men of honor and stature. They were well known throughout the country, highly respected, and those of us who have worked in this field for the last few years for the military have gotten to know fire chiefs all across the country and they have gotten to know us. We have established not only working relationships, but often times really close personal friendships. That took a couple of days to find that out

The Army has really learned a lesson about the importance of the Army Reserve. Many of the assets that first responded were Army Reserve assets. Our mortuary affairs unit came from Puerto Rico, and they were the ones who tended to the deceased victims in the Pentagon.⁴²

⁴² Major Gregory Martin, interview by Sergeant William Miller, tape recording with transcript, OCAR, 14 February 2001.



Sergeant First Class Karen Henderson

Chapter 14

Sergeant First Class Karen Henderson, Active Guard Reserve Non Commissioned Officer, OCAR

INTERVIEWER: What were you planning on 11 September? How were you picturing that day beginning?

HENDERSON: It was a normal day. . . . I was supposed to go to the Pentagon in that particular section that was hit by the plane earlier that morning. . . . However, Lieutenant Colonel [Geraldine] Manning, the new chaplain that had arrived, told me on Monday that she was going to be a little late. I waited on her so that I could in-process her and then I was going to walk her over to the Metro area so that she could get her ID badge and things like that. Lieutenant Colonel [Beth] Robison came in and said, "Turn the television on CNN. A plane has hit the Trade Center." We were all watching that and while we watched, another plane hit.

Sergeant First Class [Veronica] McCottrey made the comment, "I wouldn't be surprised if something is going on at the Pentagon." As soon as she finished saying that, it popped up on the bottom of the screen. Everyone just got dead quiet. My ex is over there and his brother and a lot of really close friends. . . . I was going for the phone, but I couldn't because Colonel Terry Lerch came running in and was telling us to get out of the building. So, I grabbed as many things as I could that were important to me, and then we all started down the stairs to the fall-out area.

INTERVIEWER: What was the reaction of the people around you and how smooth was the evacuation?

HENDERSON: Everyone seemed to evacuate pretty fast, quickly, and very orderly. What I noticed when I got down there was that a lot of people were really worried about the people they knew at the Pentagon and all the smoke from the Pentagon was in our face. We were right there and the smoke was just coming. . . . It was hard trying to get accountability for everyone because, since we are military, a lot of people wanted to go and help at the Pentagon.

INTERVIEWER: So what happened next?

HENDERSON: I'm sitting around waiting and I'm thinking I don't have a ride home. They had stopped the trains and a lot of the other things. . . . I had some friends that worked over at the Pentagon. I thought I could get a ride from one of them. I was kind of paranoid about leaving

my group at first and then my cell phone started ringing. It was my mom and friends wanting to check that I wasn't in the Pentagon. . . .We never did catch up with that ride because we got separated in the crowd at the Pentagon. There was just a bunch of people running because they had said something about another plane being in the area. I saw a lot of smoke and some people were injured

INTERVIEWER: What was your reaction when you thought you would have been in the Pentagon except for waiting for Lieutenant Colonel Manning?

HENDERSON: That really didn't hit me until later on that night. It bothers me now because I am a single mom. . . . I was concerned about my son when it happened and who would take care of him. My mom, I knew she was panicking. I have some really good neighbors [one of whom] she called the school and let the school know that I was okay, so that they could let my son know that. I had a couple of other friends that came into the neighborhood to pick my son up just in case something had happened to me. I had a lot of close neighbors, co-workers, and people that I was stationed with that looked out for me and my son. So, that was a positive up side in such a trying situation.

I never would have imagined anyone doing something like that here in America, much less to all these innocent people, the Trade Center or the Pentagon. . . . You just can't imagine it. It bothers me. . . . I try and put it in the back of my head and act like it's okay, but it does bother me. I changed how I do a lot of things and make sure that I let people know how I feel. I let them know I care about them and I try and keep in contact with my family a lot closer now

I'm excited about being a part of history, but I'm sad that it had to be on such a somber note. I am always going to be proud to be an American because that is who I am. I am also proud to be in the military and whatever support I can lend the government and the people as a whole, I will be there.⁴³

⁴³ Sergeant First Class Karen Henderson, interview by Sergeant William L. Miller, tape recording with transcript, 28 November 2001.



Sergeant First Class Monica B. Morris

Chapter 15

Sergeant First Class Monica B. Morris, Active Guard Reserve NonCommissioned Officer, OCAR

MORRIS: I thought my day was going to be a typical day at work. I did have a meeting at the Pentagon

INTERVIEWER: And what time was this meeting supposed to be?

MORRIS: The meeting started at 0900 hours on the 11th. I arrived at the Pentagon approximately at 8:45 [a.m.]. I was dropped off by a co-worker. The meeting was in 3 Charlie 640, the Deputy, Chief of Staff Operations conference room.

INTERVIEWER: About how far away would that be from ground zero?

MORRIS: It was approximately 100 meters. The location is between the fifth and the sixth corridors on the third floor. . . The meeting proceeded at approximately 0920 hours. . . . I don't know what time exactly the plane hit the Pentagon, but I believe it was at about 0940 hours. We were just wrapping up the meeting, and I heard a very loud noise that sounded like the engines of a plane when a plane is getting ready to land. Within a millisecond, I heard the impact, felt the impact, and felt the shock waves from the blast behind us

The people in the room with me . . . we all looked at each other in shock. We didn't know what was happening. We did not know about the planes hitting the World Trade Center, so some of us thought it was a helicopter crashing into the side of the Pentagon. Someone else said it was a bomb. Other people thought that it might be an explosion at the construction site. People immediately got up and departed the room. . . . The fire alarms did not go off in the Pentagon, but people were evacuating. One of the other NCOs [noncommissioned officers] in the meeting was new to the Pentagon. His name is Sergeant First Class [John] Johnson. He was the new NCO in charge of the medical clinic at the Pentagon. He and I were walking down the corridor to the main hallway. I was going to turn to go towards the impact. He looked at me and said he had to get back to the clinic. He didn't know how to get back from the location we were at, so I grabbed his arm and said, "Come with me, Sarge." I led him back towards the eighth corridor, which is on the opposite side of the Pentagon. People were going down the steps out towards the courtyard. We looked out the windows and saw smoke. We saw people running through the courtyard. The stairs were more crowded, so I took him another way to the clinic, instead of going through the courtyard.

INTERVIEWER: In the courtyard, had they already started bringing in the wounded?

MORRIS: I did not notice to be honest. I saw people running from the area where the plane had hit and saw smoke.

INTERVIEWER: What was the look on their faces?

MORRIS: Fear, panic, and shock. As I got into the eighth corridor, which goes out towards the north parking lot . . . I was in the main corridor to go out of the building. Sergeant [First Class] Johnson went ahead and left me at that time and went to the clinic. I wanted to go with him, but I kind of got pushed out with the crowd because there were so many people. There were people in the crowd that were very calm. There were some that were very scared, crying, and some were panicked. I think I was in shock because I had no idea what was going on and the fire alarms were not going off. I don't remember hearing them at all. As I got outside the Pentagon, that is when I found out about the World Trade Center being hit. A couple of us were going to go back in, but the guards wouldn't let us go back in. We were going to go back in and try and help.

INTERVIEWER: What was your reaction when you heard about the World Trade Center? Did you associate that with what happened at the Pentagon?

MORRIS: Immediately, immediately, I did. From looking at the smoke rising above the Pentagon, I knew that it wasn't a construction explosion. I knew that it wasn't a helicopter and when I heard about the World Trade Center . . . all my thoughts were, "This is not happening. This isn't real. This is insane."

And the worst part was that I was by myself. Because I don't work over there, I wasn't on anyone's accountability roster. People here in Crystal City knew that they had dropped me off, and I had no way of contacting them to let them know that I was alright. I had nowhere or no one to meet up with, so I was basically standing there by myself. A few lieutenant colonels from the Joint Staff came and stayed with me and talked with me. They could see that I was upset

I tried to call my husband, but could not get through on anyone's cell phone. I did not have a cell phone with me. I tried to walk back towards Crystal City. The Defense Protective Service wasn't letting anyone walk past the mall or the river entrance area, which goes back toward Crystal City, because all the smoke was going that way. And they didn't know about the fourth plane yet. They didn't know where that was. All of a sudden, the fighter jets were scrambled over the Pentagon and because they didn't know where the fourth plane was, they thought it was more attacks. They yelled for everyone to take cover. We immediately took cover and had to move back even farther away from the Pentagon towards Lady Bird Johnson Park

My day did not end there. I met up with Major [Desiree] Wineland [of OCAR]. . . . She had run over from Crystal City because . . . her children were in the daycare center outside of the Pentagon. She found her children and all the children had been evacuated immediately. They were safe. She met up with her children. I met up with her and stayed with her until her husband, who is a captain here at OCAR, came back. He had taken some injured people to a nearby hospital. When he did return, he ended up giving me a ride back to Fort Belvoir where I live with my family. On the way, we stopped at a convenience store and that is when I was able to finally contact my husband. That was approximately around 1300 hours, so there were quite a few agonizing, terrifying hours spent outside.

INTERVIEWER: Did your husband know that you had a Pentagon briefing that morning?

MORRIS: He did not know, but he knows that I am over at the Pentagon whether it's picking up mail or going to meetings. So he wasn't sure if I was there or not. It was pretty agonizing for him and my children, because my oldest daughter did find out at school.

INTERVIEWER: And how has this event changed your life? Or has it?

MORRIS: I'm not sure how it has changed it. It has been pretty difficult. The first month was very hard on me. I had trouble sleeping. I pretty much drowned myself in work to deal with what had happened and the fact that I didn't feel that I had helped enough. . . . I did meet up with Sergeant First Class Johnson about three weeks after 11 September. He thanked me for helping him get back where he had to go. And that made me feel a lot better, like I had done something. Just sadness . . . I was very, very sad for a long time. It makes me appreciate life more. It makes me happy to be alive and to do my best everyday.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Sergeant First Class Monica B. Morris, interview by Sergeant William Miller, tape recording with transcript, 29 November 2001.



Chaplain (Colonel) Larry W. Racster

Chapter 16

Chaplain (Colonel) Larry W. Racster, Reserve Advisor to the Chief of Chaplains, HQDA

INTERVIEWER: Could you tell us a little bit about what you were doing on the morning of 11 September when you got the news about the plane crash at the Pentagon?

RACSTER: Yes, I have an interesting anecdote to that day, as I am sure everybody does. Everybody remembers where they were on 11 September. On 11 September, I was at Manassas city traffic court with my eighteen-year-old son, who had a moving violation

The ironic part or what I call the providential [part] of that is that I was scheduled to be the XO [executive officer] for the chief of chaplains in the Pentagon that day. I also had a suspense that same day with Lieutenant Colonel Bill Stoppel in DCSPER [Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel] and also with Lieutenant Colonel Dave Scales. . . . They work in the DA DCSPER office. I was working with them on an issue with colonel and lieutenant colonel promotions selection objectives because I am the reserve advisor to the chief of chaplains on all chaplain reserve affairs. And, if by providence, if God had not had me be where I was, I would have most certainly been in the building and probably with Dave and with Bill when the plane went in. In fact, Dave sent me an email at 8:30 [a.m.], and the plane went in about 9:00 [a.m.]. Dave was a victim. He never came out. So, it's still very emotional for me, . . . and there are other people with hundreds of other stories like that. But it still really brings you home, particularly as a chaplain and trusting in God as I do. It really makes you stop and think.

INTERVIEWER: How quickly did you arrive at the crash scene?

RACSTER: Yes, as soon as we heard it, we heard someone on a cell phone say, "A plane went into the Trade Center." And at that point, my wife was with my son and me, and we said, "Oh, what a tragedy." And then we heard the other one hit, and I said, "This is no tragedy." And about fifteen minutes later, someone said one had hit the Pentagon. So I got on my cell phone and called my office and they said, "Yes, a plane just went in and we are all going to the Pentagon." Our offices were under renovation. In fact, our offices were where the plane went in, but we were moved out two and a half years ago, which is another providential thing

I immediately got the bailiff and told the judge the situation and that I needed to go to the Pentagon. The judge terminated our case. So I left, went home and put on my BDUs [battle dress uniform], grabbed my combat chaplain's kit, because I didn't know what to expect. I even put my bicycle in the car, because from listening to radio reports I knew that no one could get in. They had the streets closed. I thought I'll get as close as I can and just peddle in on my bike.

As I drove in, I had my beret on. Of course, we are the only branch in the Army that is allowed to wear our branch instead of our rank on our beret. So I had my cross on. As soon as the policemen saw me, they just waved me in. I got all the way into Hendricks Hall [*a Marine Corps installation next to Fort Myer in Arlington, Virginia*], which is on the hill above where the plane went in on the Pentagon. I parked my car there and walked to the crash site.

When I got there, it was about 11:00 or 11:30 [a.m.]. There were thirty chaplains standing underneath a tree. Of course, the crash was two hours before that. There really wasn't much to do at that point except pray, try and talk to rescue workers and the firemen, because the building was ablaze. All the people who were casualties that didn't perish had already been removed, so there wasn't much for us to do at that point

INTERVIEWER: What were the reactions? Had most of the military and civilian employees who had worked in the Pentagon been evacuated by the time you got there?

RACSTER: Yes, all that was done. When I got there, the only thing to do was to try and put the fire out and, of course, to secure the area so that nothing else came in. That whole first day that we were there numerous times we had to run because they would sound the alarm because they thought there was another plane in the area or they thought there might be a bomb somewhere. We would have to go and jump and hide behind the walls in case there was another plane coming in. Security was an issue. But all the people that had been injured that were going to make it out had already been extracted from the rubble.

INTERVIEWER: What were their reactions? If you could just kind of go back mentally and describe the scene and expressions on people's faces.

RACSTER: It was really a surreal experience. Everybody was just kind of walking around, trying to see what they could do. I know the chaplains were, and I saw the firefighters and they were, as well. . . . There was every federal agency in the world. . . . Everybody was really about business. Almost everybody knew what they were supposed to do and they were doing it. Nobody was thinking or even had the time to stop and look at the gravity of what was going on and how many people might be in there, because we had heard that anywhere from 150 to 1,000, because no one knew at that point. So, everybody was doing their job and a lot of the first responders, the medic people, engineers, they were all trained and they knew what they were going to do.

It was at that point that the chaplains . . . the two-stars [chaplains] of all the branches just so happened to be out at time, so about 1:00 [p.m.] they finally said, "We can see now that we will not be able to do much, so we are sending most of you home. We are going to leave a small group here the rest of the day to see what you can do to work with the first responders." Since, I had my BDUs on and my combat kit, I was pretty much prepared. Some of the guys had been

there since it happened and they had on their Class Bs, so they weren't quite dressed for it. So I said, "I'll stay." And then about eight or nine other guys volunteered to stay and at that point then the chaplain that was in charge . . . turned to me and said, "Well, Chaplain Racster, you are the most senior guy, so why don't you take charge."

So, that is what I did at that point. I was given charge that day to do whatever I could do. And, of course, being a former infantry officer, I always knew you took the high ground and as a chaplain you really take the high ground. [laugh] I knew that location was the most crucial thing at that point so that we could minister a religious support as we needed to do. So, what I did was I found out where the main entrance was and where everything was happening. It just so happened to be right where the plane went in anyway. I went over to the Emergency Operations Center [EOC]. I have been working with weapons of mass destruction and with disasters since 1992. We put together a group of chaplains we call contingency force pool chaplains, and they are trained to do exactly what we did. . . . My main purpose was to get a central location that we could work out of. I went to the EOC and talked to the emergency operation guy and said, "Hey, I need a tent, tables, chairs, a place to set up the chapel. I've got the ground, but I need a tent."

My mission that day was to stay there, contain that ground, because everybody, the FBI, DPS [Department of Public Safety], everybody was there trying to grab a space to set up. So I said, "Chaplains, you stay there." Me and a couple of others went [and] . . . tried to get tents. We got them . . . about midnight or so. I went inside the courtyard, because that is where we thought they were going to be removing most of the victims. They had all the body bags laid out waiting for the next morning to start doing a recovery inside the courtyard. Of course, I had been in the courtyard many times working there . . . so it was a real surreal experience. . . . We made sure that there were chaplains in there. . . . There were a lot of rescue workers that were still trying to go in and still trying to bring people out, although we didn't think there was much hope. . . . I went home about midnight and then returned the next morning at 7:00 [a.m.].

[He discussed operations at the Pentagon over the next several days.]

There was an unbelievable outpouring of people, not just military but civilians. When I would get home at night, there would be fifteen, twenty phone calls with people wanting to know if I was all right and how they could help. . . . That was such a humbling experience to feel that love and that concern from the American people.

INTERVIEWER: As the days went on, how did your mission progress and change?

RACSTER: What we did was a ministry of presence. . . . We go out with the troops. We get to the forward edge of the battle as close as we can get and we perform ministry. That is just by talking with people, being there, working with them if we have to. . . . We get to know the people and, of course, when you do that that is when you get the reactions from them, and the opportunities open for spiritual, moral or whatever counseling that you need to do. We fanned

out across that whole inside wire, all eighteen chaplains that we had in the daytime and the ten to twelve that we had at night . . .

I assigned people to the crews that were going in, that being the engineers, the mortuary team [the 54th Quartermaster Company] from Fort Lee and the reserve mortuary unit [311th Quartermaster Company] of Puerto Rico. We would assign chaplains that would actually go in with the mortuary team, and they would actually pray over the remains. . . . We have the statue of the officer with his rifle saying, "Follow me." I didn't have to do that with these guys [the chaplains]. I had to put a lasso around them and hold them back, because they all wanted to do what they had been called to do.

INTERVIEWER: Were you the only Army Reservist out of your team of chaplains?

RACSTER: Yes, I am the only one assigned to the Chief of Chaplains office. I take that back. There is another one assigned now, Eric Wester. . . . So, we were the two Army Reservists. We called up four more out of our office, and then we also called up seventeen National Guard chaplains. And the JFAC [Joint Family Action Center] . . . [Brigadier General James T. Spivey, who headed up the JFAC] is a one-star chaplain that . . . is now in the IRR [Individual Ready Reserve] For him to have been pulled out of the IRR to do that mission by an active duty three-star is pretty impressive. . . .

One of the stories that I heard from one of the chaplains [working with the 311th Quartermaster Company (Mortuary Affairs)] is that he said, "You know, I just talked to a guy and he said, 'It didn't bother me to go into the building and picking up the bags. . . . I walked into this one room and there was a chair in the room. The room had been completely charred and you could tell someone had been sitting in that chair. But right on the wall there was a picture, a wedding picture. There was a circle around that picture. Everything in that room was charred, but that picture.'" He said, "I knew that could be me and I knew that could be my wife and I in that room." The chaplain said he just fell apart. It was those little things that come home to you, that bring those horrific sites. . . . A lot of the times, it's not the site of the disaster, but it's those personal little pricks that remind you that you're a human and you don't have the answers at that point. . . .⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Article, "Answering the Call – Chaplain (Colonel) Larry Racster," 9 October 2001, OCAR website and Colonel Larry W. Racster, interview by Captain Suzanne Summers and Sergeant William Miller, tape recording with transcript, 31 October 2001.



Major General Robert Diamond

Chapter 17

Major General Robert Diamond, the Special Assistant to the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army

DIAMOND: The Office of the Administrative Assistant [*where Major General Diamond is assigned*] had more deaths and casualties than any other office in the Department of Defense in the Pentagon. . . . We had a total of . . . forty people [who] died, thirty-seven instantly and others from severe burns. We still have a number of people, about another twenty that were injured and hospitalized, many of whom were released that day or the next day. We still have a few that are in long-term rehab at the Washington Hospital Center due to burns. So of the Army's casualties, which were about seventy-eight or seventy-nine or eighty, we had about half of them. Just uniquely because one of the things that comes under our office is Pentagon renovation and reassignment of space. We had just assigned people to move into the new wedge because it was the most computer-capable wedge. So our computer people were moving in and, in fact, I think the second highest ranking person killed was one of our people

INTERVIEWER: Can you give me that individual's name, sir?

DIAMOND: Mike Selves. . . . His headquarters had moved in there . . . two weeks before, and then we had a number of accounting and budget people for the Army, which comes under us. . . . There were . . . people that we did not know if they were missing, and then people that we knew were missing but did not know if they were in the building at that time for as long as a few days later.

INTERVIEWER: You told me earlier that you were put on duty orders on the 12th of September. What does that mean for you in terms of your responsibilities?

DIAMOND: I had been trying to reach my people that I work with all day [on the 11th], but, of course, the communications were down. But I reached our XO [executive officer] about 8:00 that night and . . . asked him what we were doing. So, we were reconstituting as I called or re-establishing the headquarters operation at a secure building that we were able to locate. . . . I . . . asked what I could do.

I showed up very early the next morning on the 12th and then was put on orders for an extended period of active duty. I was helping, initially, just finding out where all of our people were . . . helping the leadership, what we call the front office, the leadership team, locate people and reestablish where they would operate out of. . . . I think I probably got out to our remote

location at about 6:00 in the morning on the 12th. We had people that were just coming in [to help].

We used the phone tree to just let everybody know. There was no communication between normal channels. The computers were down and people's cell phones were not working because Verizon was overloaded. So you were trying to talk to people through their home phone numbers all night long. That is what we did from our homes on 11 September in the evening. . . .

During that time, though, after we got the initial operations set up early in the morning on the 12th, we then decided we had to come into the building. [We had] to find out what was left of our communications, since we were on the computers and telephones and other kinds of communications, both secure and encrypted and non-classified, and if anyone was there. . . . So we came and spent most of the 12th in the building. We were pretty much on duty twenty-four hours a day that first week trying to simply get operations going and find people.

It took us . . . until that Thursday [13 September] to find out how many people that we had missing that were killed. . . . It was a very difficult process and that, of course, was very wrenching for everybody that was also trying to do their job. We had roughly three thousand people that worked for us. . . . How many people on their own just showed up for work, routine people, in areas not affected by the Pentagon? [They just] drove in, parked, went in, and they got the computers and telephone switches running. By the end of the day of the attack, most of the communications nodes were down, and by Thursday afternoon . . . the leadership of the Army was fully operational in terms of communication. They moved back in on Friday

When you leave this office, if you turn left, the fire stopped at the end of this corridor. This hallway was all full of smoke and everything else and people were operating. . . . Those people here, people in the Army staff, people in the Military District of Washington, just showed up and did their job and did not worry about the danger. You are living in an environment where I would say for that first five or six days or week, we really did not know if something else was going to happen. . . . We were issuing cell phones, laptops, computers by the thousands. Companies were coming in and saying, "Here, we will donate these." Under the rules they are allowed to loan them for a certain period of time

By the middle of the second week, by about ten days, we had what was called Camp Unity or Camp Freedom. . . . It was actually the parking lot because everything was closed off anyway. We had this space in the south parking lot. There were two segments of it. One was the secured area working in the crash site and the other area was the Salvation Army, or the Red Cross, or restaurants that were feeding the rescue workers or troops. There were not that many people that were working in the building.

INTERVIEWER: Did your office play any role in the recovery efforts?

DIAMOND: We did. Under our office comes security, so we had issues dealing with security, as well as property and the administrative control of the physical plant

INTERVIEWER: When you say your office has responsibility for security, what did that entail?

DIAMOND: We have security and operations for the Army. This comes under us with a full colonel as the head of security, as well as safety: the operation of the Headquarters, Department of the Army for evacuation, safety instructions, as well as security, but not dealing with the building, but security dealing with people [such as the] issuing of passes and things like that, security clearances. . . . There are corresponding people for each of the services. The Defense Protective Service is over our chain as it deals with entry and access. . . . One of the things I was tasked with after the event . . . was to form a task force and look at the evacuation process . . . and determine the building's assets because it hit the renovated area and make an evaluation

We were going to forty, more than forty funerals because people had memorials in different cities . . . and I went to all the ones for our people if they were in this area. . . . We did a lot of traveling, a lot of family time, and working with the [Joint] Family Assistance Center. . . . The people going through the worst trauma, to some degree, were the people in the hospitals. Actually, without anyone dictating it, there was just an informal system to make sure they were taken care of. . . . So that first six weeks or so, we did ad hoc visits. . . . Within the Pentagon, there were a number of services held. There were many more religious services. I am Jewish, one of the very few general officers I know of who is Jewish. An outside synagogue brought a rabbi in . . . and he conducted weekly services. . . . Was this enough? Was it quick? It is hard to say . . . I was okay until somebody actually asked me it

For about the first three weeks or so, the intensity level . . . you just could not do anything other than twenty-four hours a day take care of what you had to do. I would show up at my house at 1:00 in the morning. It was dark. I would shower, change, take a two-hour nap, and leave at 4:00 or 5:00 in the morning. It was dark and we were wearing BDUs [battle dress uniform] at that time

Again, the thing running through this operation where I work was it probably would have been a lot easier if it had been abstracted. It became personal because of not only knowing people died or knowing them but then having to and wanting to attend three or four memorials or ceremonies for individuals and seeing their family. . . . As much as you want to do it, it was one of the most difficult things I have done in my life. The hardest thing was presenting the flag to the people -- very, very hard

INTERVIEWER: Are there any parting thoughts you would like to leave us with, sir?

DIAMOND: I was very proud as a reservist. I called. I got a hold of them that night to do whatever I could. I showed up knowing someday I would [get a] call. I think it was the next day

or a day or two later when I was able to call and say, “What am I supposed to do officially to get on orders?”

What I found from a Reserve standpoint . . . is the large number of Reserve and Guard soldiers of all levels who have been totally involved from the very beginning. . . . As you probably know, this is the first time general officers in large numbers have been mobilized. I think it just goes to show the military, not just the Army, but the services, have come a long way [toward integrating the Army Reserve into the active component structure]. . . . In my job . . . I would go to the Army Operations Center’s briefings in the morning. . . . I sit. I did this weekend, sat in. There was no second thought about should General Diamond [sit in] and he is Reserve, and I sat at the table. To my left is the under secretary of the Army, to my right is the director of the Army staff. Now these are people I know anyway because I work here. But a number of people have remarked to me that, not because of me but because of years ago they would have said, “Why is a Reserve general sitting in?” As I look down on the CAT floor, Crisis Action Team, two of the four generals, one is a National Guard general and one is [Army Reservist Major] General [Robert] Chestnut. . . . He was mobilized, and he was one of the four generals running the Army Operations Center. So it is not only that they are there and need us and want us, but we are so well thought of and integrated that there is not even a second thought . . . that is just the way it is

I was just pleased to be able to make a contribution. Somebody said to me that it must have been really hard. But it would have been much more difficult sitting at home watching it with nothing to do. . . . I was just honored, terribly honored, especially the funerals, some of the people, some of the families that thanked me. I said, “Don’t thank me. I thank you for the privilege to be here today.” For me, I am coming toward the end of my career, not immediately, but it is an interesting closure because you do not normally have that situation. Desert Storm was not one where the Reserves were accorded the same usage or recognition of what they were doing. . . . To watch this change in ten years . . . and to see change in the attitude to the Reserve and Guard, and I even think . . . so in the public mind, and certainly in the political will of mind and political leadership that they need to let it be known that the Reserve and Guard are there.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Major General Robert Diamond, interview by Captain Suzanne Summers, tape recording with transcript, 2 January 2001.



Lieutenant Colonel Bienvenido Rivera

Chapter 18

Lieutenant Colonel Bienvenido Rivera, Active Guard Reserve Officer, HQDA

INTERVIEWER: Could you tell me how 11 September began? What you were expecting and what actually occurred?

RIVERA: Actually, that day began very, very early for me since I needed to be in a little bit earlier than usual at the Pentagon. I got up that day and for some reason it was a strange day. I was really a little bit nervous about my first facilitation duties with the [Army Reserve Forces Policy Board]. . . . I looked at [my] cell phone and saw the message “Jesus is Lord.” That gave me comfort that day. . . . It was a pretty normal day up until about 9:35 [a.m.] when we heard a loud explosion, and we felt the shock wave inside of our conference room.

INTERVIEWER: Prior to that, had you heard anything about the World Trade Center?

RIVERA: No, we had no clue that anything like that was happening. It was not until we felt the shockwave and we heard the explosion. . . . I did not realize it was an attack. . . . At that time, when we heard the explosion and we felt the explosion, one of the officers in the room . . . made a statement that there was a development in New York City of a terrorist nature, and he did not know for sure but that explosion we heard at the Pentagon might have been a terrorist attack. Not a second after he said those words and everyone looked at each other in a sort of disbelief, somebody came through the door and . . . said, “Everybody needs to get out of the building, now!” That was the order for us to vacate the Pentagon.

INTERVIEWER: So there were not any alarms going off after the plane hit?

RIVERA: No, we did not hear any alarms. I think after I secured the conference room . . . that I walked out and attempted to head back to my office to see if I needed to be accounted for or if we needed to do something else. . . . There was a lot of confusion in the hallways. . . . I was diverted by security force personnel who said, “No, you need to be out of the building now!”

INTERVIEWER: Approximately how far away were you from the point of impact?

RIVERA: I was completely opposite [the point of impact]

INTERVIEWER: What about the reactions of the people around you? What were they like?

RIVERA: Well, initially when the message came down to vacate the building, all of the general officers left. I was concerned because as they were visitors to the Pentagon and the Pentagon is sort of a confusing place if you don't know where you are going. . . . If you went to the courtyard, you would see the column of smoke, but inside the Pentagon, I did not see any smoke. Some people might have been disconcerted, as I remember, but most of the people were heading towards the hallways and the exits as they were told. . . .

At that time, I exited the building. . . . Then I realized the next step was to find my people or my office somewhere in this huge parking lot. I figure that this is going to take a while, but I started walking and saw one member of my section and he said, "Well, come with me." We started walking toward the overpass by Eads Street. . . . We went over by that overpass because it was the high ground to see if we could locate some of the members of our section, which we did. We did find our section and then we were all going through the accounting process, making sure that everybody knew where everybody else was at the time of the attack. That is when we started seeing the column of smoke, a huge column of smoke coming out of the side of the Pentagon, but at that time, we were thinking it was a small airplane. . . . We had no idea that this was as huge, in terms of an attack, as it actually was. . . .

At the time, I was just trying my cell phone continuously, trying to tell my family I was okay. I figured that sooner or later they were going to see this thing on the news and it would have been good for them to know that I was okay and not hurt in the attack. . . . There was no going back to the Pentagon to do anything else that day. Our orders were to go back home, stay by the phone. We may be called back in that night or early the next day to do whatever task needed to be done, so that is what I did. . . . [*All forms of transportation were full or unavailable.*] I decided to go walking from the Pentagon to Marymount College [*to locate his daughter who was a student there*], which I did. . . .

INTERVIEWER: What happened the next day, September 12th?

RIVERA: Well, the next day, I made a couple of calls that morning to other co-workers trying to figure out if they heard any instructions as to what we were supposed to do. I was home watching the news when around 1000 or 1030 that morning I received a call from the Army Operations Center. . . . It was one of the officers who worked in the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics. He asked me if I had mortuary affairs experience, which I said, "Yes." Then he said, "We would like you to come to the Pentagon to work." I said, "I am on my way." I immediately put on my battle dress uniform and proceeded to ask my wife to take me to the Metro station. I figured that I could get close to the Pentagon by Metro and then walk my way to the Pentagon. I went and reported in to the Army Operations Center. . . . Lieutenant General [Charles S. Mahan, Jr.] was having a staff meeting with his people. They were talking about mortuary affairs.

INTERVIEWER: It is my understanding that in the Army Operations Center for the first few weeks that of the top five priorities, one of the first priorities was saving lives and another was identifying individuals, getting accountability, and mortuary affairs. Is that correct?

RIVERA: That is correct. . . . General Mahan is holding this conference, and they are talking about mortuary affairs, and that they have had a couple of ideas. . . . There is an extreme sense of urgency, extreme sense of accountability and carefulness as to how the mission was going to be executed. . . . In my mind, as I was riding the Metro, I was getting myself prepared for one of two roles. . . . I discovered in the Army Operations Center that my job would be the second job I was preparing myself to do, which was to be the action officer inside the Army Operations Center advising the Army's leadership in terms of mortuary affairs, in terms of how the operation should be handled, and what things needed to be taken care of, and obviously the reporting and all of that

The first priority was just try to recover or try to evacuate casualties. If there was somebody still alive inside the rubble of the Pentagon, that was priority and job number one. Saving lives was the main thing. Even on the morning of 12 September, the civilian authorities that were working inside of the Pentagon incident area, the civilian rescue teams were still looking for people that might have just gotten hurt and were just covered by rubble or something. They were working toward that end. We knew that we would find some dead people and that would be the recovery mission, rather than the rescue mission. They would have to be done simultaneously. . . .

When we went to visit the incident area, we were met by Mr. Dave Roath [*the European Command mortuary affairs officer*] who happens to be a Reserve officer, individual mobilization augmentee type of individual. But in his role at the Pentagon, he was being employed as a civilian, a GS-12 mortuary affairs officer coming from the European Command. . . . Then Mr. Dave Roath, since he was there from 11 September, was the individual in charge of the . . . Joint Mortuary Affairs Operation Center at the incident area. He was actually controlling and directing the flow of Army resources, personnel, and equipment going into the incident area on behalf of the commander of the Military District, Washington [MDW], Major General [James] Jackson

INTERVIEWER: At that time, were there any Army personnel recovering remains?

RIVERA: Yes, the Army personnel were there. The Army personnel were more in an assist mode rather than a lead mode. The lead was clearly within the FBI and the civilian rescue teams that were there, not only because at this time they had the responsibility for the site, which was actually with the Arlington County Fire Department, but it was from the perspective that the civilian authorities were very well prepared to handle this type of recovery effort inside of a building, inside of a city. The mortuary affairs soldiers coming from the 54th Quartermaster

Company [*an active duty unit stationed at Fort Lee, Virginia*] that had arrived that morning at 0530 with their equipment were more prepared for the normal warfight type of recovery than for a civilian type of recovery

INTERVIEWER: When you saw the Pentagon for the first time, what was your reaction?

RIVERA: Well, it was very sad in my heart to see a side of the Pentagon destroyed, the collapsed area. The smell . . . I knew there was a smell in the air. The smell was not only the fire but was probably also the smell of death, that was pretty much there.

The crews that were working and trying to rescue people were working with an extreme sense of urgency. I saw people going up and down, moving, and running. The sense was there to try to do what was right, but again watching that side of the Pentagon collapsed and looking at the sheer understanding that just hours before there were people inside that building that were simply doing their business. Then, in my mind, [I was] trying to match that with the shockwave that I felt the day before, and then now coming to the realization that I may have hundreds of fatalities inside of this building. I did not know at that time how many we were looking for, but I figured it would be in the hundreds. I was praying that it would not be that many. It was almost a surreal kind of perspective. . . . We knew that we needed to maintain a sense of pride and a sense of cohesion and a sense of mission and the job would get done. I knew that those walls would be rebuilt. . . .

So I went back into the Pentagon and [briefed the Secretary of the Army Thomas White and Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, General [John M.] Keane, on his plan to handle mortuary issues]. . . . I learned from the casualty affairs officer . . . that the 311th Quartermaster Company was going to be called to assist. They would assist in two areas: not only the area of recovery of remains, but also the area of handling the personal effects and the remains

INTERVIEWER: Who made the decision to call up the 311th and why?

RIVERA: I think the decision to call up the 311th was already done by the time I got to the Army Operations Center. This was a decision made early on. . . . To me, it makes sense at the time, even on the early hours, because we knew this was a very big mission in terms of the workload . . . The support [for the mortuary mission] was extremely good. We would get any asset out there to do the mission. . . . The sense of respect and the sense of national commitment and the commitment of the Americans that were there to do this mission was very, very high. . . . The morale was very high, especially the soldiers of the 311th. When they came in, they brought with them a very high sense of commitment.

INTERVIEWER: From 11 September to 1 October, what incident or event stands out most in your mind during that time frame?

RIVERA: I think walking inside the perimeter of the incident area.

INTERVIEWER: The first day you were there?

RIVERA: The first day and realizing what we were going to be doing. It was probably the incident that captured my soul the most. . . . [What] was most rewarding overall from a human perspective was the dedication of everybody that was involved. . . . At the end of the day, you have to bring closure to mom and dad and brothers and sisters. The Army is about people, and the people that watch you grow and look over you deserve the most. That was the most rewarding aspect of the whole thing, just being able to see that success. I did not do that. The guys who did that were the guys who actually recovered [the remains of the crash victims]. I probably had the easiest job, which was to manage it from a perspective of having resources available to me. . . .

INTERVIEWER: Has this mission changed your life at all?

RIVERA: In a way, yes, because it has renewed my sense of purpose. I could be working at the Pentagon, National Command Center. I could be attacked and see what many people went through that day and just see the smoke coming out of the Pentagon and knowing that 189 people, I should say 184 innocent people because there were five hijackers, terrorists inside of American Airlines Flight 77. If I could say that those 184 people died there because of this act, it just renews my purpose of wearing the uniform and being in the armed forces. I can say that. The commitment is renewed and strengthened by something like this.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Lieutenant Colonel Bienvenido Rivera, interview by Sergeant William Miller, tape recording with transcript, 13 February 2002.



First Lieutenant Hector Martinez

Chapter 19

First Lieutenant Hector S. Martinez, Commander, 311th Quartermaster Company (Mortuary Affairs)

INTERVIEWER: Sir, could you tell me what you were doing and where you were on the day of the terrorist attack?

MARTINEZ: I work the second shift at Hewlett-Packard. I remember that I came home very late. It was almost 4:00 in the morning when I finally made it home and I went to sleep. I don't know why, I woke up real early that morning. Normally I have my TV on VH1, so I turned on the TV. I thought someone changed my channel and this was not the news. I was watching it and just stood there. I stood there for half an hour until I finally went to call the battalion commander. I asked him, "Are you watching this?"

INTERVIEWER: What was the immediate affect of the attacks on your life and how did you feel?

MARTINEZ: First, it was disbelief. I couldn't believe what was going on. When it hit the first building, I didn't know what was going on. When they said it could have been a terrorist attack, I knew that there was a good chance that they were going to call us and send us out here to do our job. That is why I called my battalion commander. He did not have any information at the time, so I called the first sergeant, my operations sergeant. I said, "Start getting ready and be on alert because this might be it." So, we gathered at the unit, and we started preparing, squaring away files and documents that we thought we would need in the event of mobilization.

INTERVIEWER: You had not received a phone call yet?

MARTINEZ: No, at that time we had not. We did not receive anything until the fourteenth [of September]. We received the orders for mobilization on Friday at noon. We were already on the ground or flying down here Saturday at noon. So, it was a twenty-four hour mobilization.

INTERVIEWER: You said you received the orders on Friday. Was the following weekend your drill weekend?

MARTINEZ: That weekend was our drill weekend. Fortunately, everyone was moving toward the unit on Friday afternoon when we finally got the orders and were told, "You are going to move tomorrow at noon." So, that is when we started. We were going to take only eighty-five

soldiers, but they changed it to eighty-five volunteers. So, basically most of the unit remained when I said I only needed volunteers. "If you are not going to volunteer, move to the side." Nobody moved. Everyone wanted to volunteer, but I could only bring out eighty-five soldiers.

INTERVIEWER: It sounds like you were preparing for this situation. Before you even received the call, you were getting paperwork in order. Is this a common task for your unit?

MARTINEZ: I guess it would have been in Bosnia and Kosovo. I think it was always my big hope that in my entire military career that I would have the chance to go and do a real mission, a real war mission. And normally when it happened, the last two times in Bosnia and Kosovo, I said to myself I better start preparing just in case so we are one step ahead. It finally happened. We got the chance to come here and do a real mission with the whole company.

INTERVIEWER: What were some of the difficulties that you encountered in your transition from civilian life to Army life? How were they overcome?

MARTINEZ: Basically, the transition for activation has not been too hard. Basically, the hardest thing is leaving your family behind and being out here knowing that you have over 100 soldiers that are depending on the decisions that you make. You actually have to care and find the necessities and take care of the worries of each and every one of them in order to keep them in the right path ready to accomplish any mission that comes. That is probably the biggest challenge from civilian to military

INTERVIEWER: What has the Army done to help facilitate communication between family members while you serve here?

MARTINEZ: First, when we arrived, we had cell phones provided. We provided cell phones to each squad leader and platoon sergeants so that they could share them while we were out at the Pentagon. After that, a number of entities, and I cannot count them now, but they keep sending calling cards to us. The Salvation Army, the Red Cross, and all other kinds of societies keep sending calling cards. Plus the Air Force made coordination to bring us the video telephone conference and set it up in the soldiers' stations and back at home station. So, on a weekly basis, we have platoons rotating to the VTC [video telephone conference] room. They have the families come during the day or sometimes at night to see them through TV.

INTERVIEWER: What has the support been from your families, the local community, and from the Washington, D.C. community?

MARTINEZ: Support from the local community and Washington has been overwhelming. Ever since we got here, we received all kinds of attention: food, water, clothing, everything that we may need. Since we come from the island [Puerto Rico] and tropics, we are not used to this cold weather. So the biggest help that we have received was people asking if we needed cold weather gear and cold weather clothing for your soldiers. So, everything has been overwhelming, the type of help that we have received ever since we arrived and that we continue to receive from the post [Fort Myer, Virginia]. At home, the family support group at the island keeps in contact with us daily. We find out how families are doing. We also counsel the soldiers and ask if they have any kind of problems, and if they do, we call immediately back to the island and try to get it taken care of. The chaplain has been a great asset to us since when we were at the Pentagon mission and now here at Fort Myer

INTERVIEWER: You said the first group of eighty-five received the order on September 14th. When did the first group of eighty-five leave Puerto Rico?

MARTINEZ: We received the order on the 14th at noon. We flew out from Puerto Rico Saturday at noon. We were here at 1500 or 1530. We were already on the ground the next day.

INTERVIEWER: There was a second deployment. When did that occur? How many troops were involved in that?

MARTINEZ: That occurred on 22 September. It was 103 soldiers that flew down here to help with missions at the Pentagon and the north parking area, and afterwards here at the personal effects [depot at Fort Myer]

INTERVIEWER: Can you describe the role of your company and why you were sent to the Pentagon area?

MARTINEZ: The mission of our unit is to provide mortuary affairs, direct support, and general support to units located at corps and division areas of the theatre. More specifically, we do search and recovery, identification of personal effects and remains.

INTERVIEWER: Why were you chosen for the Pentagon mission? What did you do when you got here?

MARTINEZ: They brought the 54th [Quartermaster Company], the active component unit, which is our sister unit. Apparently, they felt that they would need more mortuary affairs support based on the number of casualties from the terrorist attack. I guess they said, "Let's use

the assets that we have in the Reserves.” Our unit was the first to be alerted and mobilized from the island

INTERVIEWER: Your eighty-five personnel arrived here. What was their first mission at the Pentagon?

MARTINEZ: When we first arrived here, our first mission was the north parking lot area. Basically, they were taking rubble from the crash site and bringing it down in truckloads to the north parking area. Our job was to go through that debris and look out for personal effects, remains, or any other type of document or piece of material that can actually give the FBI some clues of the incident. We were attached the whole time to the FBI. It was great working with the FBI. After a couple of days, we were rolling down there. They predicted the work schedule to be about a month. We went in and started working twenty-four hour operations, and we cut it from a month to two weeks

INTERVIEWER: It was backbreaking work sifting through the rubble. How was it emotionally?

MARTINEZ: I was there the first night with them and that moment when they first found one of the remains. They just stood there. I guess everyone wanted to have a look so that they would know what to expect. So, they stood there quietly for about two or three minutes just staring, and then I said, “Take it down to the FBI and let’s keep going.” So, that soldier took it down and the rest of the soldiers continued. I guess that first experience that they had prepared them for the rest, because after that when they found personal effects and remains they just kept working. Normally, after we finished a shift we would go into a tent and discuss what they had found and how they felt. That kind of gave us some kind of closure of what was going on after the shift. So far, we have no problems.

INTERVIEWER: Can you describe Camp Unity, the makeshift support base that sprang up near the Pentagon?

MARTINEZ: When we first got there, Camp Unity was amazing. We have never seen so many people working together. When we arrived there, Camp Unity’s whole operation was at the Pentagon area. We were making coordination at the Pentagon area, but we were working at the north parking area. The north parking area was more controlled by the FBI. It had only the Salvation Army, the Red Cross, and medics. There were only two or three tents there, while at Camp Unity there was like a 100 tents of everything. You could just walk down and everyone wanted to offer you water, food, snacks, and all kinds of stuff, underwear, shorts. They would offer you everything. The chaplains were around. If they saw you looking down, they would go

and talk to you and ask if you needed to talk to them and if you were feeling okay. AAFES [Army and Air Force Exchange Service] had its part there, McDonald's, Burger King, Outback Steakhouse. It was overwhelming.

When they finished recovering remains at the Pentagon, these places moved down to the north parking areas. So everybody was at the north parking area. When we came back to do the personal effects recovery mission at the Pentagon, everyone was gone. It was just us! So, we came in when everything was 100 percent. Then we went back when everything was calm. Actually, we ran operations by ourselves with the medics that were assigned from the Navy. That is when we made a final mission to the Pentagon, which was a personal effects recovery mission

INTERVIEWER: What were some of the lessons learned for your unit?

MARTINEZ: I was amazed and impressed by the soldiers to do whatever was needed. They did not care. They just wanted to go out and do something. They did not care if they had to work twelve or twenty-four hours. They did not care. Even when I had the first eighty-five down here, I had soldiers calling me down here asking me if I needed any more soldiers. The most impressive is how the soldiers responded and how eager they are to work when you give them the opportunity.

When we went from the north parking area after twelve hours of working, when we drove through, there were civilians and they were cheering and applauding us. Some soldiers didn't know why. I guess they don't realize that they appreciate the work that they were doing. So, I had to explain to them, "Well, they are grateful that you are here and that we are helping out." I guess that kept them motivated the whole time.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ First Lieutenant Hector S. Martinez, interview by Sergeant William L. Miller, tape recording with transcript, 24 October 2001.



Special Agent Samuel Simon

Chapter 20

Special Agent Samuel Simon, Federal Bureau of Investigation

INTERVIEWER: Could you tell me what you were doing on 11 September 2001?

SIMON: On 11 September, I came in to do my normal work. As I was driving in, on the radio, WTOP, I learned about the Trade Center incident. I am a member of the Evidence Response Team for the Washington field office. When I got into the office . . . [I], of course, heard about the Pentagon. I was one of the first agents on the scene out at the Pentagon.

INTERVIEWER: How soon were you at the Pentagon?

SIMON: I would say myself and four other agents were there within ten minutes of the incident.

INTERVIEWER: When did you realize that you would need outside support from the Army or a mortuary affairs unit?

SIMON: From the Army, specifically, I realized as I was coming over the bridge [that I was going to need support]. This was going to be a major undertaking. It was going to take everybody: local authorities, state authorities, federal authorities, and military. . . . The Pentagon was the best location for a tragedy like this to occur because we lacked for no resources

I believe that it was day three, was Friday when I was given twenty-three individuals and I was told by my management that we were beginning to do this operation in the north parking lot. Basically, the operation in the north parking lot was . . . excavating areas of the Pentagon that had been searched already at the scene for remains. Then they were taking that excavation and taking it to the north parking lot for sifting operation. So that very first day, that Friday evening, I went over the hill with twenty-three people.

INTERVIEWER: FBI agents?

SIMON: It was a mish-mash of federal and local authorities. . . . I believe it was Sunday, no, I believe it was Monday . . . when the first contingency of the 311th reported on the scene. . . . They were already there, but they had not gotten their marching orders yet. . . . Saturday was the first full day of work. After the first full day of work, . . . we realized we would need a lot more assistance. . . . I did direct liaison with the CO [commanding officer], Lieutenant Martinez and the other commander from the 311th.

INTERVIEWER: What was your first impression of the 311th?

SIMON: I was four and a half years regular Army and two years National Guard. So I had both sides of the fence. . . . I had no preconceived notions at all like "I am getting a Reserve unit and they are going to be a bunch of reservists, you know, part-timers." I knew that there are a lot of good units out there. I remember speaking to them toward the end of the operation. I told them and I meant it, "I would stack that unit up . . . with any regular Army or National Guard unit that I ever served in." They were a fantastic bunch of people.

I never dealt with a mortuary detail. I was thinking, I was in infantry myself, and I was thinking mortuary detail. What kind of a soldier is going to come out of a mortuary detail? But they were topnotch people. . . . I can't remember how many times when I needed something to get done I would look around and see ten or twenty civilians, federal agents or local officers. . . This is . . . something I want the Army to do. I would go right to the first sergeant of the 311th or the platoon sergeant from the Old Guard and say, "Sergeant, I don't mean to bother you, but could you help me out? Could I get this taken care of?" They would reply, "No problem, agent Simon." And it was done. . . .

We were given two individuals from the FBI hazardous materials unit who oversaw the [decontamination], but we were deconning three hundred people for lunch and for breaks and for shift changes. That is a lot of people to run through a decon line. The 311th gave up fifteen to eighteen soldiers each shift that did nothing but decon. They did an excellent job and are well equipped for it. . . .

INTERVIEWER: Could we discuss some of the work procedures that the 311th followed? What phases did you work with them and how did they change?

SIMON: They were at the scene, like I said, the very second day. Their primary mission there was the mortuary detail, remains recovery. . . . Basically, we teamed up five individuals from the 311th with the dog units. We would take a pile of rubble from the Pentagon, and we would spread it out along the parking lot. Then the dogs would go through it. If they alerted on an area, then the five-person team from the 311th would concentrate on that area to locate the remains

We had two piles [of rubble] and they were probably three to four stories high. We had pieces of concrete and steel in there that were larger than three or four human beings. . . . We had two sites operating. We had a five-man team on site A and a five-man team on site B. The remaining 311th crew was working in the regular work force finding all this other stuff, the evidence, personal effects, and classified materials, and what not after the regular work force went through it a second time. Then we had the dogs go through a third time, an overabundance of caution. . . . Whenever remains were recovered, the 311th took the remains over, properly

packaged them, and then stayed with the remains till they were transported off to the temporary mortuary. That was their primary function out there, but they did much more than that.

We only had ten-man teams working on the remains recovery. We had a fifteen-soldier team working on the NBC [nuclear, biological, and chemical] lines. That was yeomen's work because . . . you were out in an open area unprotected from the elements. There were a couple of days when it got into the nineties. You were in full NBC gear. That exacerbated the weather element and to sit there and bend over. Oftentimes, these people were on their hands and knees going through this rubble with their hands or hand rakes. To sit there and rake and shovel and sift through this rubble is just backbreaking work . . .

The other things they assisted with were raising tents, moving gear. We had a separate decon site that I affectionately referred to as "tent city." We had our break areas. We had the Salvation Army and the Red Cross down there providing hot meals. We even had a chapel set up for the chaplains.

INTERVIEWER: It sounds like Unity City?

SIMON: Exactly, we had our own little version of Unity City, way scaled down. The Old Guard and the 311th basically built that city from scratch for us . . .

INTERVIEWER: How long did you work with the 311th at the incident site?

SIMON: Sixteenth through I believe the last day was the 28th. They came on the 16th, I believe, the full time we were there till we locked up shop. As a matter of fact, they were the last people to leave with us. They helped pack up . . .

INTERVIEWER: How would you describe the 311th's professionalism and morale?

SIMON: Like I said, their professionalism was exemplary. They were one of the best units I have worked with, and I have worked with a lot of units. . . . There was not a whole lot of joking and smoking going on down there [at the Pentagon], because like you said, it was probably one of the most important missions. I know for a fact that it was the most important mission I have ever been on in my military service or in my government service. Nothing I have ever done had ever compared to the work we did at the Pentagon. Everyone knew that going in. The focus of the entire [operation] here and the country as a whole was going to be on what happened at the Pentagon, at least from the military point of view. It seemed that the entire nation was concerned about the New York incident and rightfully so because those were civilian casualties. But, as far as military personnel goes, that was probably the most important mission we have done in decades. It was exemplary the way they handled their mission . . .

I had a nice, long talk with the first sergeant about [the] 311th's main mission, this mortuary detail. . . . I asked him, "How do you recruit anybody to come to your unit?" It is not a high profile job. He told me stories about how when recruits first come in, he brings them into his office and asks them, "Do you understand what this unit is all about?"⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Samuel Simon, interview by Sergeant William Miller, tape recording with transcript, 12 December 2001.



Chaplain (Lieutenant Colonel) Bert Kozen

Chapter 21

Chaplain (Lieutenant Colonel) Bert S. Kozen, 55th Brigade, 28th Infantry Division, Pennsylvania National Guard

INTERVIEWER: Can you tell us how you came to be activated and mobilized for this assignment?

KOZEN: We were scheduled to begin our . . . annual meeting of all the chaplains in the active, Reserve, and Guard component. Our conference was scheduled to begin Wednesday, 13 September. It was going to be in Leesburg [Virginia] up the road from Washington . . .

Our conference was canceled. Then we were alerted to the possibility of being mobilized in support of whatever operations might be taking place here in Washington or in New York. Later that same day, we were notified that we would be mobilized and [to] proceed on down to Washington. It took about five days for the orders to be completely cut and approved. It was the following Monday [when] we finally got the go-ahead to proceed down to Washington.

INTERVIEWER: What was your function? You've been attached to the 311th Quartermaster Company. Is that correct?

KOZEN: My first assignment was at the incident site itself. There were a number of different work-related ministries or sites at the actual incident, the Pentagon. The one that I was most involved in was the mortuary team, which was a sister unit to the 311th, the 54th [Quartermaster Company] out of Fort Lee, Virginia. They were the actual individuals that went in once a body was identified or human remains identified. Then the mortuary team would go in and recover the body or remains, bring them out, and then proceed to have that transported to the morgue that the FBI had set up at the Pentagon itself. So, I stayed pretty much with that operation until the FBI determined that most, if not all, the bodies and human remains had been recovered from the Pentagon incident site. At that point, that operation stopped. . . . That was the first time that I hooked up with the 311th because they were involved in that operation.

INTERVIEWER: What types of functions have you performed with the 311th?

KOZEN: [My mission] was basically a ministry of presence to them. The FBI wash site was a set up on the north parking lot of the Pentagon where all the rubble that was taken out of the Pentagon was sifted through, searching first and foremost for any human remains, any personal effects, any sensitive classified documents, items, computer parts, things of that nature, and

pieces of the airplane. The 311th's primary role at that time was to take care of any human remains

INTERVIEWER: My understanding is that apparently the first wave of members from the 311th that came there were volunteers and had pretty short notice. What kind of issues did that raise for you in terms of soldier care?

KOZEN: Realizing the fact they were here in very short notice could not afford them an awful lot of time to make preparations for a long deployment, not only distance-wise from home, but also for a period of time in which they weren't completely knowledgeable about. . . . There was a certain amount of stress and anxiety there. . . . Some of those we were able to help them with: getting contact with home, seeing to it that certain things were taken care of, medical problems that had arisen, concerns and job related things of that nature. It would be a stress to any of us in a similar situation.

INTERVIEWER: What are some of the activities that you do to combat this stressful situation, sir?

KOZEN: I think the most important thing that we do is actually being present to and with them. A lot of that may be just hanging around with them in the wash site. We made it a point that in the protective suits that we wore we would place a cross and identify ourselves as chaplains so they knew that we were around, which I think is a great help to credibility if the soldiers see that you are willing to submit yourself to those similar experiences and hardships. The suits were uncomfortable, particularly in the hot sunny days. When the troops saw that you were willing to put forth that kind of effort, then they would open up to you.

Next important thing that we did was just listening to them when they talk, when they share with us their concerns and their anxieties. They like that you listen to them. There might not have been a lot that you could have done at that particular time, but they knew that you generally were concerned about them and would get back to them, follow up on those concerns and issues, and show to them that they had a sympathetic ear and someone that might be able to help them out in that particular problem

INTERVIEWER: What kind of reactions did you see from the soldiers as they were working at the actual crash site?

KOZEN: A wide spectrum. Certainly, a sense of sadness, pain over what had transpired, the tremendous loss of life, and all the pain that was evident in the building itself, but also in the tasks of recovering the bodies, the victims and the material at the wash site. A certain thinking of family -- these were individuals that had families, loved ones, relationships and now that was

ended very quickly. So [there was] a natural inclination on the soldiers' part to think back to their families. The sense of loneliness, particularly for the 311th, because of once again their distance away from home

A certain amount of anger and frustration over what had occurred. And also I have to say a sense of pride. They realized that what they were doing was an important task . . . but also a sense of dignity to the Army as a whole, the government, military, and the nation. . . . What they do is something that not everybody can do and be comfortable about it. And that is not to say that they are completely at ease. They have their ups and downs, difficulties and challenges in that respect, as well, but they perform a mission that is very difficult. I don't think that a vast majority of people would be able to deal with [it]

It was funny because like on elevators, it could be back at the hotel or going someplace. You get on an elevator and people would come on. Military personnel would enter the elevator and they would see a chaplain was in there. You could visibly see almost a sigh of relief. . . . "Things are okay. There is a chaplain here." . . . When Camp Unity was operational, you would be going over there for a meal. It was not uncommon to find people finding a chaplain to sit down with. There might not be any major concerns, but just being able to sit down and being in that proximity. Many services that we celebrated there . . . the masses were a great source of consolation and a sense of peace to the people involved in the operation, as well

INTERVIEWER: What changes in the soldiers' morale and their attitude and their outlook have occurred?

KOZEN: When we first moved over to this site in Fort Myers, they started dealing with the personal effects of the survivors. I think that . . . was very beneficial. . . . It afforded them a chance to kind of step back and take a breather. They were now dealing with material, personal effects of people that they knew were living, people that they knew were going to return and pick these items up. So you could see that as they were working at the tables and stuff a certain amount of joviality, commenting on personal effects. . . . They did it with a . . . good-natured sense about them. . . . Realizing now that they were dealing with . . . living people was a great benefit to them

INTERVIEWER: There have been a number of family members who have been here picking up remains, picking up personal effects

KOZEN: Of survivors. . . . I think on one occasion we heard the phrase uttered "Christmas in October," because there you see a Pentagon employee or military personnel going through what they presumed was going to be completely lost. Some of these things were quite precious. . . . I could see a great sense of relief on these individuals as they opened up the box, "Oh! Praise God! That item is there and it's relatively intact." That highlighted, I think, a sense of certain pride on

their part that they were able to be a part of recovering, cleaning up. They did an outstanding job, the 311th.

Some of these items I saw as they came out. The before and after photos were just unbelievable. They would clean them up and take care of them and put them back together again so that when the person came to pick them up they were immediately recognizable to the individual. A lot of the stuff I just would have thought would have been tossed out and discarded, but again that is . . . part of their training and they do it admirably. They have a keen sense of professionalism. They were able to recover and make these things presentable to them.

INTERVIEWER: What parts of this operation do you feel deserve to be recognized and what parts do you feel can be improved?

KOZEN: I think all the aspects of the operation deserve to be recognized, to be honest with you. It has been a continual flow, the incident site of course, the heroics demonstrated of the people first on the site itself on the 11th and subsequent to that. There were hardships and difficulties faced by all the personnel that were there. . . . It was a very important part of what was going on and our nation's response to the tragedy of 11 September. . . . What they are doing here is having a profound impact on the lives of those Pentagon employees and will also have a very deep impact on the family members of the deceased and the victims

INTERVIEWER: How is this experience going to affect you in your civilian life?

KOZEN: In civilian life, I'm a priest, pastor of a parish with three churches in it. I think the one obvious point that I am going to come away with and something that I've heard expressed by the vast majority of people is once again a deep appreciation for what we have, for what I have: my family, my loved ones, friends, fellow parishioners, what I have as support back at my home station

So, a deep appreciation of that and also a certain pride as well in the training and preparations that I've received and my fellow chaplains have received, particularly on the Reserve side and in the Guard, because the vast majority of the chaplains at the incident sites were Reserve and Guard chaplains. At least the way that the active component interacted with us led me to believe that they appreciated us being here. And a sense that the mission we performed was equal and adequate to the tasks and challenges placed before us.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Lieutenant Colonel Bert S. Kozen, interview by Captain Suzanne Summers and Sergeant William Miller, tape recording with transcript, 23 October 2001.



Sergeant First Class Jose Cruz

Chapter 22

Sergeant First Class Jose N. Cruz, Platoon Sergeant, 311th Quartermaster Company (Mortuary Affairs)

INTERVIEWER: What were you doing on 11 September when terrorists attacked the Pentagon?

CRUZ: I was working. I am the UA [unit administrator] for the unit. That is my full time job. I am also a reservist. . . .

INTERVIEWER: What was your reaction when you first found out about the attack?

CRUZ: I was surprised. I couldn't believe it. I thought it was a movie or something. I arrived at Fort Buchanan, and when I went in they wouldn't let me out. They closed all the gates. So I knew right there that something was going on.

INTERVIEWER: What was your first response to the attacks? You're the unit administrator. What were you thinking?

CRUZ: I immediately called my unit, because I was away. I called my battalion and asked them what was going on. They told me that it was the same way where they were. The gates had been locked and no one could get out.

INTERVIEWER: How long did those procedures last? Do you know?

CRUZ: That was about 9:30 [a.m.], and I got to leave Fort Buchanan at about 1700 hours that afternoon.

INTERVIEWER: How did the attacks have an immediate affect on your life as far as being mobilized? When did you first hear of being mobilized?

CRUZ: Those attacks were on 11 September. The next day I had people calling the unit asking for names, numbers, how many people were ready to go. They were looking for information about the unit. On the 14th, there was a rumor we were deploying. On the 15th, it was a reality. We were gone.

INTERVIEWER: What did you do to prepare?

CRUZ: I knew that I would probably go somewhere. So I started preparing my uniforms and started getting everything ready, just in case anything happened. On the fifteenth, they told me I was moving, so here I am

INTERVIEWER: How about the Washington, D.C. community?

CRUZ: They are great! I am really surprised at Washington, D.C. When we first arrived, there was complete support for us. We were riding in the back of the deuce-and-a-half and people were clapping their hands and saying thank you. . . . That really makes you feel good. . . . When they said we are mobilizing, I was the first to raise my hand. I said, "Hey I'm going." There was a group of eighty-five that left in the beginning. I was a part of that group. We volunteered to go

That night [15 September] we started the first shift. We started working at night. When we got to the north parking lot, the FBI was there. . . . There were actually all kinds of agencies there. . . . They took us into a small tent and briefed us on what to do. . . . At that briefing, the FBI told us what they were looking for. We understood that night that the FBI was running the show. . . . They were looking for papers, passports, things like that

INTERVIEWER: When you first saw the Pentagon, what was your reaction?

CRUZ: I couldn't believe what I was seeing. I had watched the news and read the newspaper at home, but being there and seeing that big hole, it's a totally different feeling.

INTERVIEWER: During these two phases of the operation, sifting through the rubble of the north parking lot and going through the personal effects, what was the high point and did you have a low point?

CRUZ: When I was in the north parking lot, I saw credit cards with names in the rubble. Coming into the depot I'm still seeing those names, but now I'm seeing pictures. . . . I'm relating faces to those names that I saw at the Pentagon, and that's real hard. I'm one of the oldest guys here. I have the experience because I was in the Persian Gulf and there my primary mission was personal effects, but it was hard.

INTERVIEWER: What was the most memorable moment?

CRUZ: The whole thing gave me pride, being there and working there. It feels good that I came here to the States looking for people. I know the family members appreciate that. The same thing with the personal effects. At the depot, when the family members or friends came to

pick up the personal effects, they said thank you. They get to have back something that that person really loved and they love that. . . .

I remember there was a general that came into the personal effects depot. He was outside worried because he lost his medical records. For us, being in the military, we know how important those are. When he came into the personal effects depot and one of the soldiers gave him a big ziploc bag with his medical records inside, he just jumped hysterically. He was so happy. I felt happy for him because I know what medical records mean

INTERVIEWER: Is there anything that you would like to add?

CRUZ: We are here and there have been rumors that we may be going somewhere else. To be honest, most of the guys want to go to New York. They don't want to go home yet. We have the feeling that we can help out there. . . .⁵¹

⁵¹ Sergeant First Class Jose N. Cruz, interview by Sergeant William G. Miller, tape recording with transcript, 26 October 2001.



First Sergeant Jose Santiago

Chapter 23

First Sergeant Jose Santiago, 311th Quartermaster Company (Mortuary Affairs)

INTERVIEWER: What were you doing on 11 September when you first heard of the attack? What was your reaction?

SANTIAGO: I was in my shop since I am an auto body worker on classic cars. The people at the shop came over and told me, “Hey, a plane just crashed into a Twin Tower in New York.” I said, “Well it was probably an accident.” Then they came back and told me, “No, there is another plane that crashed in the Pentagon, and it’s a terrorist.” So, I said let me lock up and go home. . . . I just went straight home and just kept watching the news for the rest of that week. I had drill on Friday, and about 9:30 [a.m.] they told me, “First Sergeant, we are moving.”

INTERVIEWER: 9:30 [a.m.] on 11 September?

SANTIAGO: No, on 14 September. So, as soon as my platoon sergeants came in, I told them, “Guys, we are moving.” We had a formation. After that we told the guys what was going on, that we were going on ADT [active duty for training] for sixteen days [until the beginning of the 2003 fiscal year]. I told them, “. . . When the new fiscal year kicks in, we will be here for the long run.” So, we requested volunteers since all we needed was eighty-five soldiers. The first eighty-five soldiers were all volunteers

INTERVIEWER: Were there any difficulties in transitioning from the civilian to the Army life for yourself and for your personnel?

SANTIAGO: Not for myself. I consider myself a professional soldier. I’ve been in twenty-six years; seven years of those I was an active Army infantryman. . . . For some of my troops, it was kind of difficult because this is the first time they were called out. They are young kids . . . out of college, some of them recently graduated. Two females just recently got off an aircraft from AIT [advanced individual training] and a week later they are back in an aircraft coming back over here

INTERVIEWER: When you told the troops the orders were for sixteen days, what had you been told about the mission in Washington?

SANTIAGO: Nothing, I just went by the orders. The experience that I have told me that it was not going to [be] sixteen days. . . . [We worked with the 54th Quartermaster Company, whose] main mission was to work with the FBI. At the time, the FBI thought that our mission and training was only on the collection of the [human] remains, . . . but then they find out that was not the case.

My people are trained. You can say they are like archeologists. They know what they are looking for, and they look for that thing that does not look normal. . . . They went through the rubble. It was non-stop twelve hours. They only had a break to eat something, and then they would go back into the rubble. They did what we call a grid search. They go down on a grid. They set some patterns and they recover portions of remains, important documents, to include documents of the terrorists. The FBI told us that the estimated time would be one month. My unit did it in two weeks. I believe it was . . . if I am not mistaken . . . either 50,000 or 75,000 tons of rubble. My unit went in two weeks and accomplished the mission. From there, we were moved to the Pentagon. The estimated time there was two months. The unit did it in one week.

[*He discussed community support.*] Everybody wanted to see who the 311th was. Who were these young boys and girls that gave up their civilian life and volunteered to come over here to do a job that nobody wants to do but someone has to do it? And while doing it, we know that we are at least putting pieces of life together. Whatever . . . pieces the soldiers found in the rubble . . . anything, a pen, a ring, at least would give someone something to remember their loved one by. And I always told them, “Gentlemen, this is very important. Not only myself, your families back home, but also the people in Washington will appreciate this for years to come. This is history.” I always remind them of that. Every morning I tell them, “Gentlemen, you can walk with your head high and feel proud because you are doing a mission that you were trained for. And you have done it not only with the best of your abilities, but you’ve done it above and beyond what was expected of you.”

Every time we would drive by the Pentagon, when we changed teams, the civilians on the hilltop by a gas station, they would applaud. I would say, “Hey, guys, that is for you.” A lot of people still want to see us. They want to see these young kids to thank us. Even when the commander, when he was somewhere in Washington, he walked into a place and some guy asked him, “Are you from here?” He said, “No, I am from Puerto Rico. My unit is the 311th from Puerto Rico.” That guy said, “Hey, guys, this is the commander of the 311th.” Everyone just stood up and started applauding. . . . So, everywhere we go, like the cadence says, “people want to know” who we are. So we tell them, “We are the 311th.”

INTERVIEWER: That type of support is invaluable, but what else is done to keep morale up? This is a stressful job.

SANTIAGO: Well, in our battalion, which we consider our battalion for life, they give us calling cards for the troops. I start with the privates, since they are the ones that make the less

money. They gave every platoon sergeant cell phones. I passed those on to the platoon sergeants and told them these are for us to keep in touch ten percent of the day, and the other ninety percent is for the troops so they can call [their families]

When they found out that we were sent out here with only our military clothing, . . . they called [the Salvation Army] . . . and they gave us thick clothing, sweaters, jeans, long johns so the troops could keep warm. . . . AAFES [Army and Air Force Exchange Service], they were great. What can I say? When they found out, they sent us brown t-shirts, socks, and somehow they all joined forces, the Red Cross, AAFES and the Salvation Army. They did their own battle in supplying us. I would tell them we were the front line soldiers and they were our support. They were giving us water, food at the north parking lot, everything we needed. That helped a lot for the first weeks that we were here, all that support that was coming in.

We are still getting support from the Red Cross and the Salvation Army. Just yesterday, the Red Cross found out last week that even though we had what the Salvation Army had given us...we did not have any jackets for cold weather or gloves. . . . We only had what the military had given us. And since being in the Army you are not allowed to mix civilian and military, the Red Cross said, "Give us a list of what they need, and we will pay for it." They gave each soldier \$150 [to buy cold weather clothing]. . . . I had senior NCOs [noncommissioned officers] that were busted on the second week because they had given money that they brought to their privates. All that joining together kept the unit morale above 100 percent. . . . Even though [the soldiers] were exhausted, they were putting in 100 percent. That is what makes this unit special.

INTERVIEWER: Is there anything that you would like to add?

SANTIAGO: Yes, . . . that being a Reserve unit, most people think that these guys are weekend warriors. My unit showed the regular Army that being just a Reserve unit or weekend warriors that we know our job, and we do it to standard and sometimes above standard. Even though we are weekend warriors, we are professionals . . . what you call a citizen and a soldier.⁵²

⁵² First Sergeant Jose Santiago, interview by Sergeant William G. Miller, tape recording with transcript, Fort Myer, Virginia, 24 October 2001.

About the Authors



From Left to Right: Sergeant William Miller, Captain Suzanne Summers, Specialist Imelda Salazar

Captain Suzanne Summers of Austin, Texas, joined the Army Reserve in 1991 and received her direct commission in 1992. Her branch is Adjutant General, and she holds an Army skill identifier in military history. She took command of the 90th Military History Detachment in 2000. In October 2001, Captain Summers and her unit deployed to the Washington, D.C. area under Operation NOBLE EAGLE to capture the Army Reserve's experience and role following the attack on the Pentagon. She holds a bachelor's degree in history from West Virginia University, a master's degree in public history from the University of Houston, and a Ph.D. in history from the University of Texas at Austin. As a civilian, she teaches U.S. history at Austin Community College.

Sergeant William Miller of San Antonio, Texas, joined the Army Reserve in 1995 while working on his master's degree in military history from Texas Tech University in Lubbock. He joined the unit in July 1999. In October 2001 he and the 90th MHD deployed to the Washington, D.C. area. He holds a bachelor's degree in liberal arts with an emphasis in history from Austin College in Sherman, Texas. As a civilian, he is a computer specialist.

Specialist Imelda Salazar of Blanco, Texas, joined the Army in 1995. She began her Army career as an administrative specialist and served for three years on active duty in Germany. She joined the 90th MHD just before it deployed to the Washington, D.C. area for Operation NOBLE EAGLE in October 2001. As a civilian she works for a electricity co-op in Texas.

