

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

MIKE CATALANO

Event: Meeting with Former Head of Solomon Smith Barney Security Building 7 WTC

Type of event: Briefing

Date: Jan . 16, 2004

Special Access Issues: NA

Prepared by: Emily Walker

Team Number: 8

Location: Commission Office 26 Federal Plaza, NY NY

Participants - Non-Commission: Mike Catalano, Former Building Engineer WTC7

Participants - Commission: Emily Walker, George DelGrosso

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss issues and background of Building 7 of the WTC. Mike was recommended to us by Peter Mulroy served as head of Security for Solomon Smith Barney (SSB) at WTC Building 7. Mike had worked in this building for a number of years and was very familiar with the operations and security issues related to the building and the complex. He is an engineer, not a security person so his main focus was the engineering aspects. A NIST representative followed on our discussion and focused on the engineering pieces.

SSB was one of many tenants in this building (which included OEM, Secret Service, DOD, Home Insurance and others). Mike said that the 47 story building was originally built for Drexel. It was empty for a few years when Boesky and Miliken went to jail. In 1987-88, Solomon Brothers took a lease in the building (owned by Silverstein) and eventually took over ¾ of the building. They turned it into Solly's international headquarters and invested over \$800 mm into the building. They installed an AC plant on top of the building so they could control the heating and cooling. This was the first piece to go when the building collapsed. It was sucked in. They had generators installed so that in 1993 when the bombing went, the Solomon floors of WTC7 were still working. They did not need water, electricity or anything.

Mike said there were 12,000 gallons of fuel underground for SSB. 15,000 for the City and another 10,000 for SEC and FBI as well as another 10,000 for Silverstein. He said that this was within code, although he said that the Port Authority did not have to follow City code. He said

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that Silverstein employed 6/7 guys and SSB had 17 on Sept. 11. He said that they shared information and duties with Silverstein's people. SSB had 1 ½ million square feet of the building.

Mike said that Silverstein was super organized. They had fire drills once a month and enacted various disaster scenarios for practice. He said everyone knew where the stairwells were and thus were able to evacuate calmly, staying on the right side of the stairwells.

He was in the Chill box when the first plane hit and even in a sound proof room heard the boom. He went to the 44th floor which was the building managers' office and then told everyone to go and check the facilities. He couldn't see the airplane in the building, but he did witness the jumpers. After he saw that he felt that people had to get out of WTC7 but no announcement had been made.

He was in the hallway when the second plane was hit. He walked down the stairs and people were already evacuating on their own in an orderly fashion. He went to the lobby and spoke with Marty M. who worked for Silverstein and suggested forcefully that an evacuation was necessary. The Silverstein guy said it was not necessary because the event was across the street. After a heated exchange, the Silverstein guy agreed to call an evacuation (after the second plane hit, before the tower fell).

Mike said that he was assisting in setting up a triage center on the loading dock with stuff from the SSB fitness room but no one came. He was out on Vesey Street helping set this up when he was told to call Ed Campbell, the head of the building. He walked inside to call him and the tower fell. There were 6 people at the phone center and they all lay on the floor while the building shook. It sounded like a missile or an earthquake... twisting metal he thought. The vents on the top of the building and on the 5th floor sucked in the air and jammed the generators and caused them to burn.

He went to the 4th floor cafeteria where he knew there was an emergency door. In fact, there were two emergency exits. The one door had a broken handle so it couldn't be used. The other door, when opened was full of fire and smoke (colored). He also looked out the window to see if

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they could jump onto the ConEd building but there was a huge fire there. So they chose to wrap their heads in wet towels and make the escape through the smoky stairwell. The stairwell was below the generators that were burning. They went through the stairwell and made it to the street. They climbed up to Barclay Street when the second tower fell and chased them through the streets. He said large debris, the size of buses, was following them down the street.

He said the generators automatically went on for 27 minutes when the building shakes. So once the first tower fell and the smoke cleared, the building was lit. He said there were no tunnels out of WTC7 in spite of reports. He said the city people were the first to evacuate. He said that the repeater system worked perfectly and their radios were blaring the entire time. Unfortunately, there is no tape of those calls.

Mike said that WTC7 would have collapsed even if the other towers had not collapsed because of the fires. He said there were 50,000 gallons of diesel fuel and 20,000 gallons of coolant. This was a huge fire.

Mike teaches classes to labor unions on homeland security sponsored by the Labor Dept. and invited us to attend. George DelGrosso said he would go.

[Unclassified]

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