

NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU
Historical Services Branch

Interview NGB-13

INTERVIEW OF

SSG THEODORE ANDRYSIAK
HHC, 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry

CONDUCTED BY

MAJ LES' MELNYK
National Guard Bureau

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Transcript reviewed and corrections made by MAJ Melnyk.
Editorial comments appear in brackets []

TAPE TRANSCRIPTION

P R O C E E D I N G S

1 **MAJ MELNYK:** This is MAJ Les' Melnyk, Army
2 National Guard Historian for the National Guard Bureau,
3 Historical Services Division, and I am speaking to SSG
4 Theodore L. Andrysiak of Headquarters, at Headquarters
5 Company, 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry, at the
6 Regimental Armory at 68 Lexington Avenue, in New York
7 City, on the 17th of September 2001.

8 SSG Andrysiak, you've read and signed the
9 access agreement for oral history materials and --

10 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes. Yes, sir.

11 **MAJ MELNYK:** Okay. I need that out loud.

12 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes, sir.

13 **MAJ MELNYK:** And you understand that whatever
14 you say may be -- will be accessed into the archives of
15 the Army and may be used for later histories and used
16 in that manner, and you have read all the materials and
17 signed, with no reservations in terms of withholding
18 anything.

19 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes, sir.

20 **MAJ MELNYK:** Okay. SSG Andrysiak, if you

1 would begin by telling me, again, for the record, your
2 name, your rank, the unit you belong to, and your duty
3 position in the unit.

4 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes, sir. My name is Theodore
5 Louis Andrysiak, Staff Sergeant. I'm with Headquarters
6 Company, 1st of the 69th, and I am the Headquarters
7 Company Communications Platoon Sergeant.

8 **MAJ MELNYK:** And on Tuesday, the 11th of
9 September, where were you when you found out about the
10 attack on the World Trade Center?

11 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** I was at work, sir. I work
12 for a -- I'm a technician. I'm a full-time technician
13 with [New York State] Department of Military and Naval
14 Affairs. I was at Staten Island, at our direct support
15 shop at the time that we found out about the attacks.

16 **MAJ MELNYK:** And how did you find out about
17 the attack?

18 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** By television. By television,
19 by news. At first, I heard one of our employees had
20 gone around and was telling everybody that an airplane
21 had crashed into the World -- One World Trade Center,

1 and my first thought was that it was a small, maybe a
2 small Cessna, the pilot might have had a heart attack,
3 made an error.

4 And we didn't think much of it, until we heard
5 a second plane had crashed into Two World Trade Center,
6 and that's when we went to the TV to get the update and
7 find out that it was an actual terrorist attack.

8 And with much disbelief and sorrow in my
9 heart, and I'm sure all my coworkers, the horror that
10 we had just witnessed was just unbelievable. Just
11 unbelievable.

12 **MAJ MELNYK:** The maintenance station at Staten
13 Island, is that your normal duty station?

14 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes, sir.

15 **MAJ MELNYK:** Okay.

16 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** I'm an electronics technician
17 there, working on all communications equipment for the
18 lower downstate Army National Guard.

19 **MAJ MELNYK:** How long have you been part of
20 Headquarters Company and part of the battalion?

21 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Since March of 2001, sir.

1 **MAJ MELNYK:** And previously, your military
2 experience, if you could briefly sum it up?

3 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Sure, sir. Eighteen years,
4 the past 18 years, I've been with Headquarters Company,
5 1st of the 101st CAV.

6 **MAJ MELNYK:** Which is on Staten Island.

7 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Which is on Staten Island, in
8 their communications section.

9 **MAJ MELNYK:** A lot of COMMO experience.

10 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes, sir.

11 **MAJ MELNYK:** Okay. What did you do upon
12 coming to the realization or did you come to the
13 realization at that time that --

14 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Sir, my first thoughts were of
15 the battalion and what our mission was going to be
16 through this, in my eyes, horrible times. That was my
17 first thought is of what our unit, battalion, 1st of
18 the 69th, was going to do, what our mission was going
19 to be. That's where my thoughts first turned.

20 **MAJ MELNYK:** You assumed that you would be
21 called up.

1 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes, sir.

2 **MAJ MELNYK:** Okay.

3 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes, sir. At the time, I
4 could not make it into the battalion due to the
5 inaccessible access through the freeways and the
6 bridges, till things had calmed down.

7 So I had reported to the 101st CAV, which is
8 on Staten Island. I called the 69th, called the
9 battalion, notified them where I was, and I would make
10 it in as soon as possible, and which I did that night.

11 **MAJ MELNYK:** About what time?

12 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** I got -- arrived here at the
13 69th about 10:30 that evening.

14 **MAJ MELNYK:** And what did you do at that
15 point? Did you -- you fell in with the rest of
16 Headquarters Company. And what were they doing at the
17 time you arrived?

18 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** At the time I arrived, the
19 company was preparing all the equipment necessary to
20 move out for the mission at hand.

21 I had gathered up all my communications

1 people.

2 **MAJ MELNYK:** How many did you have?

3 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** At that time, sir, I had six,
4 at that time.

5 **MAJ MELNYK:** Normally, you would have?

6 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Normally, I would have 15.

7 **MAJ MELNYK:** Okay.

8 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Normally, at that time. At
9 the time, I could not make it into the unit and I
10 called to the unit and I found out that I had -- in the
11 morning, I had four of my soldiers, COMMO Platoon
12 soldiers here at the unit. I was at rest because I
13 knew my platoon could handle the situation until I got
14 there.

15 So I was very much at ease, as I'm sure the
16 company was, that my platoon could handle and assess
17 the situation, what equipment we needed, until we
18 arrived on scene.

19 And when I did arrive on the scene, they did
20 have all -- they had equipment ready and communications
21 established for the battalion and I was very proud of

1 them, very proud of them.

2 **MAJ MELNYK:** So your men had -- your six men
3 had already distributed radios for battalion vehicles.

4 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes, sir.

5 **MAJ MELNYK:** What other jobs were they
6 required to do?

7 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** At that time, they had already
8 set up an antenna on the roof of the armory, with a -77
9 radio. So we had -- one of my soldiers had manned the
10 antenna and the radio for about, I think, three hours,
11 until relieved by somebody else, to try and keep some
12 established communications between the vehicles that
13 were already down at the site, at the World Trade,
14 ground zero, and in the surrounding area.

15 **MAJ MELNYK:** And at what point did you deploy
16 forward with Headquarters Company?

17 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** That was Wednesday morning, on
18 the 12th. That's when we actually went down to ground
19 zero.

20 **MAJ MELNYK:** And you went as a company or did
21 you go with your platoon?

1 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** No. I went down --

2 (Interruption to proceedings.)

3 **MAJ MELNYK:** This is MAJ Melnyk. We had a
4 brief interruption.

5 We were about to ask you, you deployed
6 downtown with your platoon or as an entire company or
7 how did you --

8 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** As an entire company, sir.

9 **MAJ MELNYK:** And how did you get downtown?

10 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** City -- New York City Transit
11 buses were provided for us.

12 **MAJ MELNYK:** You went down the West Side
13 Highway or you went down the FDR Drive?

14 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** No, sir. FDR Drive, sir.
15 Yes, sir.

16 **MAJ MELNYK:** And where did you stage before?

17 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Our staging area was Battery
18 Park, down by the South Ferry.

19 **MAJ MELNYK:** And, again, the time that you got
20 there?

21 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Approximate time we arrived

1 was 0830 that morning.

2 **MAJ MELNYK:** Wednesday morning.

3 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Wednesday morning, yes.

4 **MAJ MELNYK:** What tasks did you need to
5 accomplish at that time?

6 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** As soon as we hit the ground,
7 I touched base with the company commander and found our
8 COMMO mission and that was to establish the
9 communications -- the command post communications as
10 soon as possible, which we did.

11 We took an OE254 antenna and actually strapped
12 it to a signal lamp.

13 **MAJ MELNYK:** Street light?

14 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Street light. A street light
15 pole, and got communications up in very short time, I'd
16 say within a half an hour.

17 **MAJ MELNYK:** Was the battalion command element
18 already down there Wednesday morning when you arrived?

19 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes, sir. I believe the
20 battalion commander and the staff were on that
21 location.

1 **MAJ MELNYK:** And how were they communicating?

2 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** They were communicating via FM
3 through their Humvees at that time.

4 **MAJ MELNYK:** And how was COMMO for them? Were
5 they having problems? Did they need the extra boost
6 from the antenna?

7 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Well, with the geographic area
8 that we were in, it was very hard for the buildings
9 that were involved in the line of sight for
10 communications.

11 So they were receiving and transmitting
12 somewhat, to some areas, with antennas off the vehicle
13 radios and antennas, but the antenna that we did put up
14 gave them a broader shot, a wider shot, and we were
15 able to get all the way up to ground zero with -- once
16 we established our communications.

17 **MAJ MELNYK:** (Inaudible.)

18 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes, sir.

19 **MAJ MELNYK:** What happened then? Continue the
20 story. What further missions did you and the COMMO
21 Platoon have to accomplish?

1 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** At that time, again, basically
2 standing by for communications, until our mission had
3 changed and that's when the 1st battalion 69th took
4 over the escorting of civilians to their homes to
5 retrieve their personal items and animals.

6 **MAJ MELNYK:** About what time was this?

7 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** I would say Wednesday was the
8 first day that we took over, I would say it was
9 sometime mid afternoon, approximately mid afternoon.

10 **MAJ MELNYK:** Where did people arrive to be
11 escorted?

12 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** They were established right --
13 there was a train station. I would say maybe two,
14 about 200 feet to the rear of our command post, where
15 we had set up barricades and fencing, so the civilians
16 could gather into one local area.

17 **MAJ MELNYK:** In Battery Park.

18 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** In Battery Park, yes.

19 **MAJ MELNYK:** And how did they get down to
20 Battery Park?

21 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Sir, most of them walked.

1 **MAJ MELNYK:** Really.

2 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Most of them walked for miles.

3 Yes, sir. Most of the people that I had talked to in
4 the crowd, there was some sort of a management
5 corporation that was set up down at Pier 40 on the west
6 side, Houston and West, and that's where most of them
7 had gone for information to get back into the
8 buildings.

9 But they were told to come down to Battery
10 Park to be escorted by the National Guard. And most of
11 them, I would say all of them walked to that location
12 that we were at Battery Park.

13 **MAJ MELNYK:** Coming down the FDR Drive. The
14 Guard had cordoned off the west side surrounding.

15 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes, sir. They had to go
16 around -- they would have had to walk around ground
17 zero.

18 **MAJ MELNYK:** Right.

19 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** The whole west side and some
20 of the east side and then down and around to us, which
21 was some miles and time for them to walk.

1 **MAJ MELNYK:** And about how many people do you
2 think gathered down there Wednesday afternoon?

3 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Sir, Wednesday afternoon, I
4 couldn't give you an approximate number for the one
5 day, but between the three days that we had the
6 mission, which was Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, was
7 it -- yeah, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and
8 yesterday, Sunday.

9 Yeah. I believe it was all of those days. We
10 must have processed, between those days, I would say
11 anywhere upwards between 2,500 to maybe 3,000 citizens,
12 if not more. There was not an exact count that was
13 estimated.

14 That we did -- that did gather at any certain
15 point and were processed through by us into their
16 homes.

17 **MAJ MELNYK:** And what was entailed in the
18 process? Who did the processing? What did they have
19 to do in order to be able to go to their homes?

20 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Well, how we had it
21 established was most of them had arrived with addresses

1 the first day, with their addresses written on cards
2 already. So when they had arrived into the area that
3 we had set up, I basically had them or asked them to --
4 you know, for internal cooperation, to help keep the
5 crowd motivated, was to work internally and gather by
6 address and by building, which was fantastic, because
7 they were very cooperative.

8 They were very, very cooperative. And as they
9 did that, as they gathered into address and by
10 building, we were able to process them. All we had to
11 do was once we found out the frozen zone and the free
12 zone, accessible zone for them to move into, all we
13 needed to do was look at an address and we were able to
14 ask them is this above the frozen zone or is this below
15 the frozen zone.

16 **MAJ MELNYK:** So the people in the crowd
17 actually helped you determine --

18 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes, sir. The crowd helped us
19 to determine. We had the area mapped out of which was
20 frozen and not frozen.

21 But, again, we were not familiar with a 100

1 percent of all the addresses that were in that area.

2 **MAJ MELNYK:** Right.

3 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** So we asked the cooperation of
4 the crowd, of the citizens and residents to give us
5 their address and asked them to point out on the map,
6 if we were not familiar with it, where exactly were
7 they located.

8 If one or two buildings had the same entrance,
9 so we could bring two -- as long as they were in the
10 same entrance, and there would maybe be two separate
11 addresses, which, in some cases, we had, that we could
12 put them all in that same group and bring them down, as
13 long as they were all going to one entrance.

14 **MAJ MELNYK:** Who was -- who on the military
15 side was in charge of the organization down there and
16 escorts? Who was the overall commander?

17 Was that a Headquarters Company mission? Was
18 that -- was there more than that?

19 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** That was a Headquarters
20 Company mission.

21 **MAJ MELNYK:** Only? The line companies were

1 not involved.

2 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Sir, we did -- no, sir. We
3 just -- yes. It was a Headquarters mission. That was
4 our mission as Headquarters.

5 **MAJ MELNYK:** So your commander, CPT Daniels,
6 was down there on the scene.

7 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes, sir.

8 **MAJ MELNYK:** Or was that delegated to somebody
9 else?

10 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** No, sir. CPT Daniels was --
11 CPT Daniels and the first sergeant were on the scene
12 and they were the overall coordinators of the mission.

13 **MAJ MELNYK:** Okay. About how many soldiers
14 did you have working this mission, providing escort,
15 containing the crowd?

16 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Between the two team leaders,
17 which was myself and SSG Maybar (phonetic,) with --
18 which, without him, working together as a team, we
19 would not have been able to pull this off.

20 Possibly an amount of anywhere, I would say,
21 between 15 to maybe 20 escorts at each different time.

1 And, again, without all of the escorts and SSG Maybar,
2 this mission would not have been able to be
3 accomplished.

4 I can't imagine the miles that each of these
5 escorts had walked back and forth.

6 **MAJ MELNYK:** It was all done walking. There
7 was no vehicles taking --

8 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** All foot, sir. All by foot.

9 **MAJ MELNYK:** Now, an escort would take a group
10 of, what, 15, 20 people back to their apartments?

11 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Sir, we had groups in excess
12 of 26 to 30 in a group. With that size of a group, two
13 escorts would go with that group to that location, into
14 that one building.

15 They knew the residents, how much time limit
16 they had, they were asked to please gather only what
17 was necessary to take out, the important items, which I
18 had said to the crowd, I had told the crowd, I says,
19 "Please, look to your left and to your right, and front
20 and back of you." I said, "Everybody here is in the
21 same boat. So, please, gather up whatever you need,

1 because we do need the escorts back at the location to
2 help us and your neighbors and get everybody through in
3 a fair and equitable time."

4 And, again, the crowd was very cooperative
5 with that.

6 **MAJ MELNYK:** So people didn't overstay. The
7 soldiers didn't have to go in and hunt them out of
8 their apartments.

9 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** No, sir. The citizens were
10 cooperative, very cooperative. The escorts did have to
11 wait sometimes upwards of two hours at one location,
12 depending on the crowd that they had and the situation
13 in the building.

14 Some buildings they had to escort in one
15 apartment at a time, depending on the situation with
16 that particular building and address, you know, on the
17 damage -- you know, how much damage was done to the
18 building, if any, depending on if there were cleanup
19 crews down there in OEM, Office of Emergency
20 Management.

21 **MAJ MELNYK:** Thank you.

1 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** And some -- because one
2 building we had that we took down a large group of
3 about 26 residents and Office of Emergency Management
4 was with the cleanup crew at that time.

5 My soldier, one of my soldiers, PVT Gonzalez,
6 had called me and had explained the situation to me,
7 they have cleanup crews there and they weren't letting
8 anybody into the building at that time, until they had
9 more of their crew come down to escort.

10 I told PVT Gonzalez, I said "You can handle
11 the situation. I have no doubt in my mind that you are
12 handling what's going on down there at this time." I
13 said, "Use your judgment," and, sir, he used his
14 judgment 100 percent as all the escorts did that took
15 residents down.

16 But those were the type missions and type
17 escorts. It did take quite some time, because then we
18 had to eventually just escort one apartment at a time,
19 one apartment at a time.

20 **MAJ MELNYK:** So not in every case, but in some
21 cases.

1 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Not in every case, yes, sir,
2 but in some cases.

3 **MAJ MELNYK:** Did you have problems with people
4 trying to pass themselves off as residents to go into
5 other folks' apartments? Were there any kind of
6 looters or other criminal activity?

7 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** No, sir. We had explained to
8 the crowd before we would start and kept a constant
9 brief that identifications would be checked. We were
10 doing a 100 percent ID check. If they did not have
11 their ID, because some residents did have to run and
12 they did not have any identification with them, we
13 asked them if they agreed to show the escort or an
14 officer, if there was one around, police officer, their
15 proof of address coming out of that apartment, that we
16 would let them go.

17 So they would go down with no identification
18 and then as they were leaving, they had to show proof
19 of identification, identification for that apartment,
20 and which they all did, which worked out fantastic.

21 We were not going to leave anybody behind with

1 no identification, because we understood in that
2 situation that some did have to evacuate quickly,
3 without any of their personal items.

4 **MAJ MELNYK:** During the escorting process,
5 were buildings having to be evacuated at that time?

6 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes, sir. At some times our
7 escorts were in the area, the sound, the horn would
8 sound, which would -- which was saying that maybe there
9 was a chance of a building collapse, and then we would
10 have to evacuate the area and all civilians out of the
11 area until there was an all clear for us to start
12 escorting back in.

13 And I have to say, sir, that without police
14 presence, which we did not have, we did have some, but
15 we ran the operation.

16 **MAJ MELNYK:** Down at Battery Park.

17 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Down at Battery Park, yes,
18 sir. It was requested by myself and by CPT Daniels to
19 not have any police presence or involved in our
20 operation, because this was not a riot crowd. These
21 were residents trying to get into their homes to

1 retrieve their personal belongings and animals, and we
2 did not see it necessary to have a police presence as
3 security for the operation, because the crowd -- we had
4 the crowd well under control.

5 They were standing for hours, sir, at a time
6 in the hot sun. We passed out water and at some times,
7 when we could, sandwiches.

8 We found where the nearest bathroom was for
9 them to use, and basically kept them happy as much as
10 possible.

11 And it was just an unbelievable feeling, sir,
12 to have the crowd work together and be so patient at
13 that time, with everything that was going on, and for
14 them not to be trying to push forward, not trying to
15 come through the barricades, not trying to sneak in, it
16 was just amazing.

17 I mean, I can't tell you.

18 **MAJ MELNYK:** You certainly look like you
19 weren't expecting it.

20 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** No, sir.

21 **MAJ MELNYK:** Your expectations were that they

1 would be more trouble than they were.

2 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes, sir. And what I had done
3 was I had listened too -- I stopped to listen to every
4 question that was asked. All they were being asked --
5 all they were asking us to do was -- is to answer their
6 questions, find out information for them, and, I mean,
7 even -- sir, there were some individuals that were
8 there for four hours, five hours, and they'd find out
9 that they could not have access to their building, you
10 know, through the chain, we were trying to find out.

11 When we came back to them with a solid answer
12 and the reason why and with that, they even stood
13 there, shook our hands, and hugged us and said thank
14 you, you have been the most -- this is -- we have been,
15 as the National Guard, they were saying, the most
16 cooperative, most informative organization that they
17 have had and caring, taking care of their needs, that
18 they have had since the whole ordeal.

19 That, to me, was the best things in the world.

20 **MAJ MELNYK:** There are -- I think a lot of
21 soldiers felt that way.

1 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes, sir.

2 **MAJ MELNYK:** That they got as much back from
3 the public as they gave in their service.

4 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes, sir. I mean, some of the
5 crowd -- between the crying of people in the crowd,
6 believing that they're not going to be able to get into
7 their apartments, to see them crying and unsure and
8 then coming back out of their apartments with their
9 personal belongs and cats and with smiles on their face
10 and hugging our escorts and shaking their hands and
11 their -- just their appreciation, it just us very hard,
12 sir, very hard.

13 **MAJ MELNYK:** So your -- could you expand a
14 little on your personal role? It doesn't sound like
15 you were an escort. You were back.

16 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes, sir.

17 **MAJ MELNYK:** You were a team leader. What
18 were your responsibilities as a team leader?

19 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Basically, sir, I mean, I say
20 team leader because it was a team effort. But my
21 position and sole operation was to gather the crowd or,

1 I mean, organize the crowd.

2

3 **MAJ MELNYK:** By building.

4 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** By buildings, by address, to
5 calm the crowd, to answer all their questions that they
6 had.

7 That was my main mission, my main mission, and
8 as I called an address, they came -- they came out of
9 the holding area and then they were turned over to SSG
10 Maybar.

11 His operation was to line up, again, by
12 building, the groups, give them a brief, a safety
13 briefing, hand out dust masks, okay, and collect all
14 cameras. We could not allow any cameras into the site.

15 We did not want pictures taken along the way
16 and, you know, if it was insurance purposes for their
17 apartments, the escorts themselves collected the
18 cameras, held the cameras on the way down and the
19 cameras on the way back.

20 And at that time, again, in that, SSG Maybar's
21 operation, he briefed them, checked all their IDs, and

1 then explained to them again, as I had did, please be
2 brief, please gather your belongings that are essential
3 to you that you need, and animals, and then what was
4 told to them was please do not leave your escorts.

5 When you get down to the area, please, when
6 you come out of your building, stay with your escort
7 and come back with the escort, and that's how the
8 operation ran.

9 And I would say by the third day, which was
10 Saturday -- I mean, the operation was very smooth along
11 the whole way, but by Thursday, the kinks and whatever
12 kinks -- it's the only word I can think of at this time
13 is kinks -- were worked out and we ran smoothly, I mean
14 very smoothly, and we processed --

15 Every day that we were there, by the end of
16 the night, we had no residents left in the area.
17 Everybody was processed through that needed to be
18 processed through.

19 **MAJ MELNYK:** What time do you usually shut
20 down?

21 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** The first couple of nights, we

1 ran -- we started when we hit the ground, which was
2 approximately 0730, 0800. We established our
3 perimeter, established the area, as a battalion first,
4 and then we started our operations.

5 Everybody went to their own operations and we
6 started ours.

7 **MAJ MELNYK:** Right.

8 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** The first couple of nights we
9 ran til about 7:30.

10 **MAJ MELNYK:** In the evening.

11 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Well, we had -- as I said, as
12 far as kinks, about that time, it started to get dark.

13 **MAJ MELNYK:** Right.

14 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** So the next night, for safety
15 reasons, to have all our soldiers back in before dark
16 and the residents, we were cutting it off at 6:00
17 o'clock in the evening, and that was for safety for the
18 residents, as well as for our own soldiers.

19 And then even cutting it down to 6:00 o'clock,
20 we still processed everybody through. Every group we
21 processed through.

1 **MAJ MELNYK:** What about your COMMO mission?

2 After establishing that, putting up the antenna down,
3 were there any other COMMO things --

4 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes, sir.

5 **MAJ MELNYK:** -- that you all had to take care
6 of?

7 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes, sir. We -- as the
8 mission went along, there was a need to establish
9 another net at the command post, which was accomplished
10 by my soldiers and the COMMO Platoon.

11 And then there was also --

12 **MAJ MELNYK:** How did you do that?

13 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Basically, what we did was, at
14 the time, when we had MANPAC [PRC]-77s, at the time.
15 We could not mount another net into the vehicle at the
16 time. So my COMMO Platoon had a -77 MANPAC and ran it
17 off of one of the roof antennas on the vehicle, which
18 worked out perfectly. Worked out perfectly.

19 Another one of our missions was a Charlie
20 Company commander's Humvee, which was all the way up at
21 the top by Embassy Suites, past ground zero.

1 **MAJ MELNYK:** On the west side, on the east
2 side?

3 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** On the west side, sir.

4 **MAJ MELNYK:** Roughly, around what street?

5 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Right on the river. Again,
6 sir, I'm not a 100 percent familiar --

7 **MAJ MELNYK:** Okay.

8 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** -- with the area, but it was,
9 I would say, maybe -- maybe a quarter of a mile or less
10 past ground zero, on the river.

11 **MAJ MELNYK:** Okay. So on the west side.

12 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** On the west side, yes, sir.
13 It was Embassy Suites.

14 **MAJ MELNYK:** Embassy Suites, you said?

15 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Embassy Suites, sir, yes.

16 **MAJ MELNYK:** So there was a hotel up there.

17 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes, sir.

18 **MAJ MELNYK:** Looking at the map now.

19 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Okay. This is ground zero
20 here, sir.

21 **MAJ MELNYK:** Right. Area one.

1 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes, sir. I would say right
2 along this area, sir.

3 **MAJ MELNYK:** Which is in the World Financial
4 Center.

5 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** In the World Financial Center.

6 **MAJ MELNYK:** Okay.

7 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Right up around in the World
8 Financial Center.

9 **MAJ MELNYK:** Where they have the marina.

10 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yeah. We went through the
11 marina, around, and then I would say right here, sir,
12 just past the World Financial Center.

13 **MAJ MELNYK:** Just past the World Financial
14 Center.

15 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes, sir.

16 **MAJ MELNYK:** North End Avenue.

17 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Around that area, sir, yes.

18 **MAJ MELNYK:** Okay. And what was the problem
19 with the Charlie Company commander's vehicle?

20 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Their vehicle radio was unable
21 to transmit, only receive. So they had a MANPAC -77

1 for transmitting and they were receiving from the 524
2 and MANPAC transmission.

3 Three of us, myself, CPL Rolon (phonetic,) and
4 PVT Gonzalez walked up to the area from Battery Park to
5 assess the situation.

6 When we got to the area, we established that
7 it was the radio, in fact, it was not transmitting and
8 there was not a handset or anything else.

9 **MAJ MELNYK:** So the radio was broken.

10 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** So the radio was down. At
11 that time, PVT Gonzalez pulled the radio out of the
12 vehicle, out of the mount, put it on the hood of the
13 Humvee, took the covers off, opened the radio up, and
14 reset the circuit breaker inside the radio, and put it
15 all back together, put it back in the vehicle, and had
16 a 100 percent communications with the vehicle.

17 So it was a mission well accomplished.

18 **MAJ MELNYK:** Given the atmosphere at that
19 time, a lot of dust and dirt in the air, I imagine you
20 probably had a lot of breakdowns.

21 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** No, sir. Communications went

1 well, sir. That was, to my knowledge, the only
2 communications -- real communications problem that we
3 had.

4 Again, the area itself and the buildings and
5 the geographical location of everything was, I would
6 say, the hardest part to overcome.

7 **MAJ MELNYK:** Because the line of sight wasn't
8 established.

9 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Line of sight, yes, sir. Line
10 of sight was difficult to establish. But between
11 relaying, if we had to, between companies to other
12 companies or vehicle to vehicle from the command post,
13 which we did, if it wasn't a direct contact between the
14 receiving station, communications worked well.

15 **MAJ MELNYK:** Did all of your orders come from
16 CPT Daniels or did you interface directly with police,
17 fire, other civilian elements that were giving you
18 orders?

19 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Sir, during the operation with
20 the residents, I did touch base with the police command
21 post.

1 **MAJ MELNYK:** Located where, do you know?

2 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** In Battery Park.

3 **MAJ MELNYK:** They had a command post in
4 Battery Park.

5 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes. At the museum, I
6 believe, that's there. There's a museum.

7 **MAJ MELNYK:** I think that's the Customs House.

8 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Right across the street they
9 were.

10 **MAJ MELNYK:** It looks like a museum.

11 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** I think it was a museum.

12 Yeah, well, it was right across the street and that's
13 where the police command post was set up. And I had
14 touched base with them. I needed a bull horn, for one,
15 because by about half the day, my voice was gone.

16 So I finally was able to come up with a bull
17 horn until HHC was able to -- the 69th was able to come
18 up with one for me, which they located quite quickly
19 for me, which helped out.

20 **MAJ MELNYK:** So most of your communication
21 with the crowd was being bull horned.

1 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes, sir.

2 **MAJ MELNYK:** For --

3 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Until I lost my voice, yeah.

4 But it had to be one of the most uplifting missions

5 that I have ever entailed in my 18 years of service.

6 It was just unbelievable. I enjoyed interfacing with

7 the community 100 percent, as well as Sergeant Maybar

8 and the escorts that were part of the team.

9 It was just -- as I told the crowd, that was

10 the best -- that was the best part of our mission, of

11 what we do, was helping the community and helping the

12 residents, and I did, I stressed that to the crowd many

13 times through the days that we were there, that this is

14 the best part of our mission is to help these people

15 and get them in and handle their needs, which we did

16 above and beyond, sir, above and beyond.

17 And, again --

18 **MAJ MELNYK:** It sounds like you're --

19 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Yes, sir. I'm very proud.

20 And, again, between the escorts and everybody else,

21 without one of those, the mission would not have

1 worked. It would not have worked.

2 **MAJ MELNYK:** Is there anything else that you
3 want to add that you experienced, that you think is
4 noteworthy or interesting?

5 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** One thing I'd like to say,
6 again, as I had told the formation earlier today, that
7 I am proud to be on the ground. Words can't say how
8 proud I am to be on the ground with the 1st of the
9 69th.

10 And for this mission, for any future mission
11 that comes, that happens, whatever that mission may be,
12 I am proud to be here with the 1st of the 69th, and
13 this is my home and this will be my home, if not for
14 anything beyond my control, this will be my home, and
15 that's a fact, sir.

16 I am proud to be with these soldiers, I can't
17 say it enough, and with the command staff, LTC Slack,
18 CPT Daniels, LT Whaley (phonetic,) all the command
19 staff, sir.

20 I am very proud to be part of this unit.

21 **MAJ MELNYK:** Well, thank you very much.

1 **SSG ANDRYSIAK:** Thank you, sir.

2 **MAJ MELNYK:** Appreciate it.

3 (The interview was concluded.)

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