

NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU
Historical Services Branch

Interview NGB-06

INTERVIEW OF

MAJ GEORGE CHIN
Assistant G-3
42nd Infantry Division (Mechanized)

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
2 **MAJ MELNYK:** This is MAJ Les' Melnyk, Army
3 National Guard Historian for the National Guard Bureau.

4 I am interviewing MAJ George Chin. He is the
5 Deputy G-3 for the 42nd Infantry Division, and, in this
6 operation, he was acting as a liaison officer for the
7 National Guard operations relating to the terrorist
8 attack in New York City on 11 September.

9 This interview is taking place on the 19th of
10 September at Battery Park in New York City.

11 MAJ Chin, you have read and signed the access
12 agreement for oral history materials and agreed that
13 everything you say here can be used by the Army however
14 they wish.

15 **MAJ CHIN:** Yes, I do.

16 **MAJ MELNYK:** Could you start by telling us a
17 little bit about your background, your civilian
18 background and your military background, including just
19 to let us know where you're coming from.

20 **MAJ CHIN:** Okay. Basically, I entered the
21 National Guard back in 1982, December of 1982, with the

1 101st Cavalry. I came in as an enlisted personnel. I
2 was, prior to that, enlisted active duty three years
3 with the 44th MED Brigade, and on entering the National
4 Guard, I was a medic for about one year and I entered
5 into the OCS program up at Camp Smith, New York, and
6 was commissioned second lieutenant in 1985.

7 From that point on, I had gone down to the
8 basic course, Armor Branch, down at Fort Knox,
9 Kentucky, and I was with the 101st CAV until 1987.

10 I came out of HHC as the company commander and
11 from that point, I was assigned to the 42nd Infantry
12 Division and the G-3 under COL Nagle (phonetic.)

13 I was a battle captain there for the 1989
14 Warfighter at Fort Leavenworth.

15 After the Warfighter exercise, I had returned
16 back to the 101st CAV as the Battalion S-3. LTC
17 Generieux had -- was change of command with LTC
18 Costagliola.

19 At that point, I had moved into the battalion
20 XO slot, but there was a lateral transfer with MAJ Durr
21 and myself up at division.

1 So basically I am up there as the Deputy G-3,
2 and that's where my current duty position right at this
3 moment.

4 **MAJ MELNYK:** You've had that since --

5 **MAJ CHIN:** Since two ATs ago.

6 **MAJ MELNYK:** Okay. Your civilian capacity?

7 **MAJ CHIN:** Yeah. I work for a company called
8 Packard Bioscience, and basically they manufacture
9 equipment that measures radioactivity.

10 My service down at Fort Mammoth, New Jersey,
11 basically some of those well known pharmaceutical
12 companies, Merck in Rahway, New Jersey, Schering Plough
13 in Kenilworth, New Jersey, Wyeth-Ayerst and Lederle in
14 Grove River, New York, and a few other outliers of
15 these companies.

16 **MAJ MELNYK:** Where do you live?

17 **MAJ CHIN:** I reside in Staten Island, New
18 York. I've been there since 1965, when my parents had
19 moved there. I was basically born in the Bronx, New
20 York, and the only time basically I was out from my
21 residence here in New York was during my time in active

1 duty at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

2 **MAJ MELNYK:** Okay. Sir, if we could take it
3 now to September 11. If you could, describe what you
4 were doing when you learned about the attack and what
5 your first reactions were.

6 **MAJ CHIN:** Basically, it was pretty much a
7 normal day, getting up. I had gone over to Fort
8 Wadsworth, which is no longer Fort Wadsworth. It's
9 owned by the Coast Guard. It used to be the Naval
10 station.

11 **MAJ MELNYK:** It's located on the Staten Island
12 end of the Verrazano Narrows Bridge.

13 **MAJ CHIN:** Right. And I had worked out in the
14 gym prior to going to work, and I heard over -- upon
15 going home, I heard something about a plane that had
16 collided into the World Trade Center, and I didn't get
17 all the bits and pieces.

18 It was a lot of confusion and basically my
19 understanding was that maybe -- well, my feeling was
20 that maybe perhaps an airliner or small Cessna or
21 something of that sort maybe veered into the towers.

1 And at that point, I kind of went up
2 overlooking the harbor to see if I could see it, and I
3 seen some large dark smoke coming out. All of a
4 sudden, I notice, also, a big flash from the other,
5 coming out of the side of the building of the second
6 tower.

7 And there were some workers landscaping and
8 they had the radio on from their trucks and one worker
9 also had a Nextel cell phone he was getting in some
10 information from down here from the Battery Park.

11 At that point, we seen one of the first towers
12 collapse and I can hear large rumbling from Staten
13 Island, from here, when the tower had dropped.

14 **MAJ MELNYK:** So you were at Fort Wadsworth
15 watching across the harbor.

16 **MAJ CHIN:** Yes.

17 **MAJ MELNYK:** For quite some time, then.

18 **MAJ CHIN:** Some time, then.

19 **MAJ MELNYK:** Yeah.

20 **MAJ CHIN:** And basically from listening to the
21 radios, they shut down all the bridges just for

1 security purposes and basically traffic, you can hear a
2 lot of sirens going on and basically a lot of chaos
3 going on.

4 At that point, I started -- proceeded to go
5 home. I listened to my voicemail from the job and
6 informed my boss, and my boss says, basically, you
7 know, if you can, don't worry about work today.

8 At that point, my next message was that the
9 Troy Armory had said that I needed to report up to the
10 Troy Armory at the EOC.

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

12 **MAJ CHIN:** I think it was around 1000, 1100
13 hours on that Tuesday morning.

14 And at that point, when I was en route home,
15 traffic was backed up quite a bit on the Staten Island
16 Expressway. They had kind of sealed off the bridges.

17 Pretty much it was chaos going on. A lot of
18 cars were going in reverse, turning around, driving
19 against traffic, people going through red lights.

20 At that point, I collected my gear. I was
21 still not able to get off the island. I did phone the

1 Troy EOC command post there and informed them that I
2 was not able to and that I was going into my former
3 battalion, reporting in there at the 101st CAV on
4 Staten Island.

5 At that point, I reported to colonel
6 Costagliola and basically what we did was tried to get
7 everybody who was coming in on the alert and get an
8 accountability, and not all of the staff was able to
9 come in.

10 So I assisted colonel Costagliola in whatever
11 means that he wanted me to do. Basically, what we did
12 was we started getting EOC numbers, point of contacts
13 up at the 53rd Troop Command, and just established some
14 open communication and reported to them as to what the
15 strength was currently.

16 We did gather a small convoy of medics, small
17 groups of senior NCOs, MSG Ralph Urizzo, colonel Nachio
18 (phonetic,) who was a JAG officer who was assigned
19 there.

20 They basically was an advance party or
21 quartering party to come into Manhattan and evaluate

1 and assist in any way possible.

2 We got reports back that it was pretty bad and
3 basically from our understanding, was that the fire
4 department, their command center was located at the
5 World Trade Center and it knocked out most of their top
6 officials who were in command of that center for --
7 throughout New York City.

8 Back at Staten Island, we did have a Battalion
9 Commander Leonard. He did stop by Staten Island
10 Armory, just to see what kind of equipment that we did
11 have.

12 **MAJ MELNYK:** This is the fire department.

13 **MAJ CHIN:** The fire chief.

14 **MAJ MELNYK:** Fire chief.

15 **MAJ CHIN:** Fire department chief. And
16 basically he wanted to see what kind of equipment that
17 the military had at the armory at Staten Island.

18 And he did inform us that the top command,
19 chain of command was wiped out at the World Trade
20 Center and that they were now trying to get a handle
21 and command and control.

1 **MAJ MELNYK:** Previous folks that I spoke to
2 from the 101st told me that there was a fire department
3 EOC collocated almost with the armory or located
4 nearby.

5 **MAJ CHIN:** Yes. Right across the street from
6 Slossen Avenue. We did provide an APC just to block
7 off the entranceway, just for security purposes,
8 because we did not know if there was going to be any
9 other attacks.

10 Basically, the party that came in to Staten
11 Island, they eventually returned late Tuesday night and
12 they reported back as to what they'd seen. Most of
13 them started to go down on the West Side Highway here
14 next to the -- even off of Broadway.

15 There were just body parts just laying all
16 over the streets and --

17 **MAJ MELNYK:** Again, what party had gone in?

18 **MAJ CHIN:** We had mostly medics that --
19 whatever medical personnel that we had. We even had
20 some Reservists come in, reporting in that they were a
21 field medic.

1 Of course, they showed us appropriate IDs and
2 stuff like that and we just sent whatever ambulances,
3 ambulance Humvees into the area, as well as the senior
4 NCOs and I'm not -- I think it was CPT Reilly who also
5 went in there.

6 **MAJ MELNYK:** Yes.

7 **MAJ CHIN:** With that convoy.

8 **MAJ MELNYK:** They came back that night or some
9 of them?

10 **MAJ CHIN:** They did return probably -- it
11 might have even been past midnight, into like Wednesday
12 morning at that point, and there might have been some
13 that might have stayed back here.

14 I understood that they set up a -- it was a
15 command post, I think, right around Liberty Street near
16 the site where it was up there. And basically they
17 were given like flags and cones and stuff, where they
18 seen body parts and stuff like that, so that they would
19 try to help out the OEM, I guess.

20 **MAJ MELNYK:** When did you get in?

21 **MAJ CHIN:** I came in Wednesday morning and

1 basically I came in with the scouts and everyone else.

2 I guess, as far as I can recollect, but the eerie
3 feeling was going through the Battery Tunnel.

4 I used to work in Manhattan two years ago,
5 quite a number of years, and to be faced with traffic
6 just from Staten Island going to 57th Street, it used
7 to take me an hour and a half just to go 18 miles.

8 And that particular morning, there was like no
9 traffic out at all. The Battery Tunnel was shut down,
10 just with the Tri-Borough Bridge police, and they
11 checked IDs and allowed military vehicles to go through
12 there.

13 But they did inform me that halfway through
14 the tunnel, that there was no lights. And when we got
15 to that point, all you seen was just black soot and
16 smoke. You couldn't even see -- the only thing that
17 you could see in front of you was just as much as the
18 headlights would show.

19 And it was basically an eerie feeling because
20 you knew that the buildings went down, you just did not
21 know what to expect when you got on the outside of the

1 tunnel.

2 When we did get through, we kind of reported
3 down here at the Battery Park area, where most of all
4 the troops were using as an assembly area, and we
5 pretty much coordinated with the police department and
6 pretty much got our missions from there.

7 During that interim, even from Tuesday on, I
8 was trying to get a hold of MAJ Bob Magnanini, because
9 he and I usually travel up together, because we're
10 primarily basically senior staff guys from the division
11 that lived downstate New York here, and we'd usually
12 car pool it together.

13 And cell phones were very -- they either
14 worked or they didn't work. The public telephones here
15 in the area did not work at all, even on Staten Island,
16 I guess maybe because the World Trade Center had a lot
17 of the antennas or the microwave antennas to provide
18 that transmission, and like I said, it just either
19 worked or it didn't work.

20 Other than that, later that night, on
21 Wednesday, there was quite a bit of number of missions

1 that were going on, cordon -- blocking off the World
2 Trade Center.

3 **MAJ MELNYK:** Since you were something of an
4 orphan officer, how did the 101 use you? What role did
5 you play?

6 **MAJ CHIN:** Basically, it was still liaison,
7 but I think we were waiting for MAJ Durr, who was the
8 battalion XO, to come down.

9 He was trying to rally up Bravo Company and
10 Charlie Company from Bravo B up in Troy, New York, and
11 Charlie Company from Hoosick Falls.

12 And the battalion S-3, who was a Suffolk
13 County cop, wasn't there. So I was probably playing a
14 bit of a dual role there and just taking orders, see
15 whatever I can do to help out the battalion and
16 contact.

17 **MAJ MELNYK:** And since there was only -- the
18 battalion commander was the only other field grade
19 there. You --

20 **MAJ CHIN:** Right.

21 **MAJ MELNYK:** You filled in, since you had

1 actually served in the S-3 capacity at the time before.

2 **MAJ CHIN:** Right. Right. So basically the
3 scouts had a mission to block off key intersections to
4 allow construction workers, firefighters, police to get
5 in there.

6 It might have even been in Thursday. You
7 would start losing track of time and all sense as to
8 what's going around and just kind of focusing in on
9 what's in front of you.

10 But we did get a mission where a lot of the
11 outside New York City Fire Department, they had
12 volunteer fire department from New Jersey, out of state
13 people coming in, off duty cops, people trying to get
14 in heavy duty construction equipment and setting it up.

15 The Liberty Plaza area, basically, they asked
16 for National Guard detail of about maybe of a platoon
17 size, which we had with the scouts, and we kind of
18 walked the line up and kind of cleared the area and
19 basically the police chief there said that he was
20 trying to do that for three hours, and wasn't able to
21 do it.

1 And we kind of cleared it off and coordinated
2 -- cordoned off the area within 15 minutes. And there
3 was a lot of cooperation. There as no animosity
4 between the civilian side and the city workers and us.

5 But what was really eerie is to see the site
6 itself, the buildings just torn apart and the World
7 Trade Center just completely down, and it was just only
8 a matter of maybe, what, four stories high, if that,
9 and just, you know, the smoke, just constantly burning.

10 And with there being already a little more
11 than a week now, you know, there's still smoldering
12 fire that's coming up.

13 The eerie thing is that you don't see any
14 office equipment, you don't see any ceiling tiles, you
15 don't see any furniture. Maybe you only seen one
16 computer monitor come out of the whole thing and
17 apparently one of the fire chiefs there and, I guess,
18 one of the civil engineers said that the intensity of
19 the heat inside when the plane had crashed into the
20 building and that JP8 kind of dropped down into the
21 elevator shafts.

1 **MAJ MELNYK:** JP8 being the jet fuel.

2 **MAJ CHIN:** Yes.

3 **MAJ MELNYK:** For someone listening to this who
4 doesn't know that.

5 **MAJ CHIN:** That that whole building just acted
6 like a chimney, like a flue that -- the intensity of
7 the heat that they were kind of expecting was at least
8 2,400 degrees Fahrenheit and that everything was just
9 disintegrated, concrete, and it's unbelievable.

10 I understand that what facade of the building
11 that is embedded into the side there, I understood from
12 LT McCaffrey, from the ESU Squad had mentioned to me
13 that they realized that that piece of the facade that's
14 sticking out over on Church Street --

15 **MAJ MELNYK:** The South Tower.

16 **MAJ CHIN:** Yes. Was the 69th and 71st floor.

17 Apparently, they tried to take one of the cranes and
18 pull it out and then maybe lay it down on the street to
19 torch it down, but they weren't even able to get that
20 out.

21 They kind of suspect that when that fell, it's

1 probably embedded about two stories in the ground.

2 **MAJ MELNYK:** So that's not the base of the
3 building that everybody sees there.

4 **MAJ CHIN:** Right, it's not. It's the 69th and
5 71st floor and how they could tell that it's those
6 particular floors is that when this World Trade Center
7 was built, all of that was kind of marked and then
8 saying that, all right, this is the 69th floor, the
9 71st floor, this is now where they started craning up
10 and when it was built, that's where it was.

11 So that's how they know.

12 **MAJ MELNYK:** The original markings.

13 **MAJ CHIN:** Right. Right.

14 **MAJ MELNYK:** That's something new. I hadn't
15 heard that before.

16 **MAJ CHIN:** One of the --

17 **MAJ MELNYK:** When did you actually lay eyes on
18 it? What brought you down in that vicinity?

19 **MAJ CHIN:** I --

20 **MAJ MELNYK:** You initially established here
21 down at Battery Park, but --

1 **MAJ CHIN:** Right.

2 **MAJ MELNYK:** -- what brought you forward?

3 **MAJ CHIN:** Basically, the battalion was
4 already told that we were going to operate down here in
5 the Battery Park area, and to get everyone over here
6 forward and start to take up missions.

7 Once that pretty much set in, I started to
8 report in. I ran into MAJ Magnanini and we kind of
9 rallied up together. We got our information. We were
10 in contact with the 42nd Division EOC up in Troy, New
11 York, reported to colonel Luthringer, COL Hefner, at
12 that point.

13 The whole division staff actually was out at
14 Fort Leavenworth for the Warfighter ramp-up, combat
15 BCTP [Battle Command Training Program] seminar out
16 there, and at that point, the FAA had restricted all
17 air flights throughout the country. Nothing was flying
18 in and flying out.

19 **MAJ MELNYK:** Did you have contact with the
20 actual command and control element of the 53rd Troop
21 Command or did you just contact --

1 **MAJ CHIN:** I contacted the division. I did
2 speak to Command Sergeant Major -- I can't think of his
3 name right now.

4 **MAJ MELNYK:** At Troop Command?

5 **MAJ CHIN:** No. Up at division.

6 **MAJ MELNYK:** At division.

7 **MAJ CHIN:** And I was basically told that to
8 stay down here, not to report up to Troy, and I kind of
9 reported in to LTC Markey from the 107th. He's out of
10 the 53rd Troop Command, and basically that's where I
11 was working out of.

12 And then I kind of reported back down here as
13 being liaison, just to get a feel and report back to
14 the Troop Command.

15 **MAJ MELNYK:** At what point did you break off
16 from your association with your old unit, the 101, and
17 become the liaison to the civilian authorities that you
18 became?

19 **MAJ CHIN:** I think it was basically around
20 probably Wednesday night, late Wednesday night into
21 Thursday.

1 **MAJ MELNYK:** And so you stayed here while the
2 rest of the battalion went back to Staten Island.

3 **MAJ CHIN:** Yeah. Pretty much when Bravo and
4 Charlie Company had showed up, they appeared here down
5 at the Battery Park and at that point, then I had broke
6 loose.

7 **MAJ MELNYK:** And the S-3, at that point,
8 arrived with the -- the XO arrived.

9 **MAJ CHIN:** The XO arrived, yes.

10 **MAJ MELNYK:** With those companies.

11 **MAJ CHIN:** Yes.

12 **MAJ MELNYK:** And the S-3 was en route still.

13 **MAJ CHIN:** Right. Right.

14 **MAJ MELNYK:** From there, what led you into
15 that role?

16 **MAJ CHIN:** Into what role?

17 **MAJ MELNYK:** Into the role of liaison. Nobody
18 ordered you to become the liaison to the police or the
19 fire or you were hooked up with MAJ Magnanini.

20 **MAJ CHIN:** That was pretty much the directive
21 from LTC Luthringer, who is the G-3 for the 42nd

1 Division. He said that, you know, since MAJ Magnanini
2 and myself were on site here, that we should probably
3 be the division reps, and at that point, I believe the
4 Aviation Brigade from Patchogue had arrived and it was
5 under the command of COL Meskill and COL Doyle. [COL
6 Doyle was scheduled to assume command of the Aviation
7 Bde on 1 Oct 03]

8 **MAJ MELNYK:** Aviation Brigade got on the
9 ground and assumed control, tactical control on
10 Saturday.

11 **MAJ CHIN:** Right.

12 **MAJ MELNYK:** So prior to Saturday, you did
13 what?

14 **MAJ CHIN:** Basically, what happened was the
15 lower Manhattan area was broken down to seven sectors
16 or seven zones and I was responsible for zone one,
17 which was the World Towers site.

18 **MAJ MELNYK:** Ground zero.

19 **MAJ CHIN:** Ground zero.

20 **MAJ MELNYK:** Or the pile or the pit, as
21 everybody has been calling it.

1 **MAJ CHIN:** Yeah. We had basically four
2 officers that were assigned here. So sector six and
3 seven was really not covered. Seven was pretty much
4 the perimeter of one, one being just the ground zero
5 site.

6 **MAJ MELNYK:** Seven is the outer perimeter.

7 **MAJ CHIN:** Yes.

8 **MAJ MELNYK:** Yeah.

9 **MAJ CHIN:** And --

10 **MAJ MELNYK:** Six is all above Canal Street,
11 where there was no crisis.

12 **MAJ CHIN:** Right. At that point, I was told
13 to report with the Police Chief Fox, and he was working
14 the day shift, and night shift was Deputy Chief
15 Esposito, and I believe there was a Chief H-o-e-h-l, I
16 believe his name is Hoehl. He's the overall three star
17 in the NYPD. They have these three stars and I guess
18 they're called chief or deputy chief.

19 **MAJ MELNYK:** And where was this location?

20 **MAJ CHIN:** This was on Vesey Street and
21 Church, basically right in front of the American

1 Express Building on Vesey Street, and that street was
2 basically used for the New York Fire Department and the
3 New York City Police Department as a staging area,
4 having these guys go out to ground zero and trying to
5 do a rescue and recovery mission there.

6 **MAJ MELNYK:** When, again, did you report
7 there?

8 **MAJ CHIN:** Basically, probably around
9 Thursday, Thursday --

10 **MAJ MELNYK:** Around Thursday.

11 **MAJ CHIN:** I can't give you the time. I'm
12 starting to lose track of time frames here. And at
13 that point, I was to report to the police chief and
14 coordinate with him to see what kind of assistance that
15 the National Guard Troops can do, what our capabilities
16 were.

17 At that point, the 42nd Aviation had their S-
18 1, S-4 and S-3 Expandovans set up. Cell phones were
19 given out to all the liaison officers and we were
20 supposed to just keep giving spot situation reports in.

21 Whatever missions that the city officials

1 requested, try to find out what the battalions had
2 available to do that, and if we could provide that
3 mission.

4 **MAJ MELNYK:** So you took the mission straight
5 from the chief and transmitted that to who?

6 **MAJ CHIN:** Over to the TOC area here.

7 **MAJ MELNYK:** To the Aviation elements that
8 were on the ground.

9 **MAJ CHIN:** Aviation Brigade. Yes.

10 **MAJ MELNYK:** Beginning Thursday.

11 **MAJ CHIN:** Thursday.

12 **MAJ MELNYK:** Yeah.

13 **MAJ CHIN:** Yes.

14 **MAJ MELNYK:** And they would then distribute it
15 down to the battalions.

16 **MAJ CHIN:** Right.

17 **MAJ MELNYK:** Whoever could handle it.

18 **MAJ CHIN:** Right. And basically, the 101 CAV
19 had zone two, which was Battery Park south up to
20 probably Wall Street, along Broadway.

21 Zone five I think was the 258, and that kind

1 of stretched from Water Street or Broad Street down to
2 the South Street, all the way up to around Liberty.

3 Zone four went from Liberty all the way up
4 north to about Canal Street, I would say.

5 But we did have a -- I did spend some time
6 probably around Wednesday down on Peck Slip Street and
7 South Street. The NYPD basically had their command
8 post set up there.

9 **MAJ MELNYK:** Peck Slip and not Pike?

10 **MAJ CHIN:** Yeah.

11 **MAJ MELNYK:** Several people identified as Pike
12 Street and looking on the map, I couldn't find a Pike,
13 but I found Peck Slip.

14 **MAJ CHIN:** The general vicinity was basically
15 right -- directly underneath the Manhattan Bridge.

16 **MAJ MELNYK:** The Manhattan Bridge or Brooklyn?

17 **MAJ CHIN:** Manhattan. Manhattan Bridge.

18 **MAJ MELNYK:** Manhattan Bridge. And people --

19 **MAJ CHIN:** Yeah. That was the initial site
20 for all the NYPD and they wanted the 101 CAV TOC to be
21 stationed there, and basically I just reported there, I

1 guess, prior to going up to the 53rd Troop Command.

2 But everything was phenomenal. It almost --
3 the people, food, everything, just -- it just came out
4 of nowhere.

5 There was no problem of eating or anything of
6 that sort. There was still problems trying to
7 communicate in the city here with the cell phone, but
8 from that point, a lot of the zone commanders, they
9 established these seven zones and they sent in these
10 mobile -- it almost looks like a Winnebago type deal,
11 and they started establishing, each chief, like lower
12 Manhattan, Brooklyn south, all sorts of areas.

13 Manhattan south, Queens south, Brooklyn south.

14 **MAJ MELNYK:** Queens north.

15 **MAJ CHIN:** Queens north.

16 **MAJ MELNYK:** Right. Each one (inaudible.)

17 **MAJ CHIN:** Manhattan north. Yeah.

18 **MAJ MELNYK:** Right.

19 **MAJ CHIN:** And each one of those zones was
20 dictated to those particular precincts in the area.

21 **MAJ MELNYK:** So there was a liaison officer in

1 each of those areas and you were at the main
2 headquarters for the whole effort.

3 **MAJ CHIN:** Right.

4 **MAJ MELNYK:** Peck Slip and South.

5 **MAJ CHIN:** Right. But then after Peck Slip
6 and South, once these seven zones were set up, that was
7 pretty much disbanded at that point. There was no
8 longer a need for a centralized area there.

9 They did keep some kind of one van there, but
10 pretty much the -- everybody seemed to go directed
11 towards their individual zones and basically there was
12 a meeting every day at One Police Plaza, with all the
13 deputy chiefs for --

14 **MAJ MELNYK:** Where is One Police Plaza? For
15 those who don't know New York.

16 **MAJ CHIN:** One Police Plaza is on Pearl
17 Street, right along the Brooklyn Bridge, right in front
18 of Chambers Street, just down the street from city
19 hall.

20 And we were reporting in basically at 1200
21 hours there, although the liaisons would show up and

1 COL Doyle would be there meeting with the chiefs and we
2 would get a rundown from each one of the chiefs as to
3 the --

4 MAJ MELNYK: COL Doyle was the --

5 MAJ CHIN: The basic overall OIC going in to
6 talk with them and then we were there just to get our
7 chiefs in each particular zone to find out what changes
8 were made and then confirm that with COL Doyle.

9 MAJ MELNYK: COL Doyle was operating that from
10 Aviation Brigade as the --

11 MAJ CHIN: Right. But he --

12 MAJ MELNYK: -- executive officer.

13 MAJ CHIN: That's correct. He would then
14 report in to the 1200 meeting, as well.

15 MAJ MELNYK: And he would take charge --

16 MAJ CHIN: At One Police Plaza.

17 MAJ MELNYK: -- of the liaisons. And what
18 kind of changes would you discuss?

19 MAJ CHIN: Well, for instance, I believe on
20 Sunday night, we met there around 2300, because now
21 Monday they were going to begin allowing the civilians

1 or the New Yorkers to begin returning to lower
2 Manhattan in certain areas, and --

3 **MAJ MELNYK:** To go to work.

4 **MAJ CHIN:** To go to work and basically the
5 discussion was to -- how do we go about getting the
6 buses in, what was open, what was operational.

7 The New York City Transit express buses from
8 Staten Island were allowed to go through the Battery
9 Tunnel, coming out of the Battery Tunnel on the west
10 side, on West Street.

11 They would go through -- there's a tunnel
12 underneath the Battery Park and would exit out of Water
13 Street and the express buses that were taking
14 passengers to midtown would proceed directly on the FDR
15 Drive and probably exit off of 42nd Street, 61st
16 Street.

17 Those buses that were dropping off passengers
18 down to the lower Manhattan area, like Wall Street,
19 Maiden Lane, they would take underneath the FDR Drive,
20 which is South Street, and then they would stop making
21 bus stops at Maiden Lane, Wall Street, and allowing

1 passengers to return to their buildings to work.

2 And they would basically go up to, I believe,
3 Houston Street and make a U-turn there, come back.

4 Cabs, taxis were not allowed yet in the areas.

5 Limos were not allowed in the areas. They were
6 beginning to allow delivery trucks to return into the
7 area. They would have basically a check point along
8 Church Street, Broadway, around Canal Street. They
9 would have show proof of lading, shipping materials.

10 They would check randomly some boxes. They
11 did have some bomb dogs to go through there, because
12 they weren't going to open up everything in a box
13 there.

14 They were informed as to what zones they were
15 able to enter in. So and so forth. I mean, that was
16 basically it. So it was basically just the
17 coordination, everything to synchronize between all
18 agencies and to see what was going on and also to find
19 out where we stood with ConEd, what buildings had
20 power, what buildings did not have power, how could we
21 utilize the Guard members there.

1 At one point, in the beginning, they were
2 using Guard members along with police officers to go
3 floor by floor to check some of these buildings, but
4 53rd Troop Command wanted that stopped.

5 I don't know what reason. It might have been
6 maybe some legal issues or something like that.

7 **MAJ MELNYK:** When you say in the beginning,
8 when, to the best of your recollection?

9 **MAJ CHIN:** Probably around Saturday that was
10 going on. What they would do is then let the NYPD go
11 ahead floor by floor. They would actually also go up
12 on the roof, and I think what they were looking for is
13 any body remains that might be up there on the roof.

14 Also, to check buildings that nobody -- you
15 know, an elderly couple that might have been through
16 this whole ordeal, to check to see that no one, you
17 know, was occupying it.

18 At that point, once a building was cleared,
19 they would station maybe a couple of Guard members in
20 front of the building, not allowing anyone to go in.

21 One thing that was kind of eerie, you could

1 see that people would leave their office open and you
2 can see the desks with their laptops still open, a set,
3 a pair of glasses was sitting there, a suit jacket, a
4 sports jacket draped over a desk chair, and no bodies.

5 And it was almost an eerie feeling, like, you know,
6 where did everybody go. It's almost like they were
7 vaporized or something.

8 But other than that, most of the buildings did
9 not have power yet. GE had provided these generators
10 that were on a tractor-trailer and they were working
11 with ConEd and desperately trying to set up power for
12 these buildings in order to get this ready for Monday,
13 and I think it was probably stressed an importance
14 maybe from Mayor Giuliani to show that, you know, yeah,
15 we can set up business as usual with even this kind of
16 disaster.

17 **MAJ MELNYK:** What was the priority for getting
18 power back? Was it businesses?

19 **MAJ CHIN:** What we heard was the importance
20 was to get Wall Street back to open.

21 **MAJ MELNYK:** The stock exchange and the --

1 **MAJ CHIN:** The stock exchange.

2 **MAJ MELNYK:** -- associated businesses.

3 **MAJ CHIN:** Yeah. And that was the number one
4 priority.

5 **MAJ MELNYK:** What role did the Guard play in
6 helping that happen? What kind of missions did you
7 help arrange?

8 **MAJ CHIN:** I did not have too much hands on.
9 Probably MAJ Magnanini, who was pretty much down in
10 this area here, or the 642 and the 258 were basically -
11 - pretty much the 69th was down here, down in this
12 lower area.

13 **MAJ MELNYK:** So amongst the agencies, you had
14 mentioned ConEd was there, obviously the PD, they ran
15 the show, fire department, I assume, would attend or
16 were they strictly involved with --

17 **MAJ CHIN:** No. They were pretty much with the
18 rescue and recovery operations there.

19 **MAJ MELNYK:** Any other element that --

20 **MAJ CHIN:** We had a lot of Verizon people
21 here. The one that I've seen is that the abundance of

1 agencies that were down here, Federal Marshals, outside
2 county people, other county police departments from
3 outside of New York were here, cadaver dogs were all
4 over the place from various parts of the country that
5 were in here, numerous volunteers that were just
6 phenomenal at what type of support that was giving to
7 New Yorkers and to the fire department, police
8 department.

9 I've got to commend most of these construction
10 workers. You know, you hear so much in the news about
11 the fire department, not to take credit away from them,
12 or the police department, but these ironworkers who are
13 able to get these large cranes and torch everything
14 apart and get that away, you know.

15 Talking to the 204th Engineers, most of the
16 equipment that they have is not even capable of doing
17 that. So, I mean, my -- me personally is my hat's off
18 to them.

19 **MAJ MELNYK:** What -- most of the people that I
20 have interviewed so far have commented on the positive
21 relationships that overwhelmingly they had conducting

1 liaison with the -- primarily the police department and
2 fire department.

3 First off, did you generally share -- agree
4 with that?

5 **MAJ CHIN:** Absolutely, yeah.

6 **MAJ MELNYK:** Having said that, what kind of
7 problems did you face and where did you have to smooth
8 things over, if at all, between the Guard and the
9 civilian authorities?

10 **MAJ CHIN:** Basically, we had to get a clear
11 understanding as to what our mission as the Guard to be
12 here. A lot of the OEMs from the Mayor's office and
13 stuff, there wasn't much of a good in synchronization
14 between agencies.

15 And a good example is the fire department
16 command post. Basically, I tried to ask the police
17 chief if they had contact with the fire department, and
18 it was basically their own entity.

19 So basically as the liaison officer for so
20 long, I reported in to the fire department's command
21 post, which is also like a Winnebago type deal, and

1 reported in there and seen -- introduced myself and
2 told them as to what capabilities we had or if they had
3 any issues or concerns and what kind of capacities that
4 they could find out from me.

5 Basically, I left my cell number that I was
6 assigned and keep people down here at the TOC, at the
7 Aviation, and also inform them that MAJ Jeff Seals, who
8 is the battalion commander of the 204th, gave his cell
9 number and told them primarily who the key players are
10 down here.

11 I also touched base again, like I said before,
12 with the police command center. ESU was located down
13 at Stuyvesant High School, checked in there.

14 I tried to make my rounds all throughout the
15 zone there.

16 **MAJ MELNYK:** Pretty much every day?

17 **MAJ CHIN:** Pretty much every day. I did find
18 out probably about Saturday or Sunday morning, I
19 understood that there was the 179th Air Guard, I
20 believe, out of Syracuse [correction - 174th Fighter
21 Wing]. They had a communication team up there and they

1 were just pulling out.

2 So coordination between the Air Guard and the
3 Army National Guard, that was a problem there.

4 I also did see that there was also a Marine
5 Corps group here. I'm not -- I just only met MAJ
6 Fisher today and I kind of coordinated with him at the
7 police command center there, just kind of spoke with
8 him briefly, until something critical came up that I
9 had --

10 **MAJ MELNYK:** That's interesting. Were they
11 volunteers?

12 **MAJ CHIN:** That I don't know.

13 **MAJ MELNYK:** I was not aware of troops here in
14 a Federal status.

15 **MAJ CHIN:** I don't know. I don't know if they
16 were reservists or active component. I don't even know
17 what their capabilities were or what they were actually
18 doing, if they had something to do with the excavation.

19 **MAJ MELNYK:** They were in uniform.

20 **MAJ CHIN:** Yes.

21 **MAJ MELNYK:** I guess they were under orders.

1 **MAJ CHIN:** Yeah.

2 **MAJ MELNYK:** That's an interesting thing that
3 probably needs to be investigated further, because
4 everybody here is under the impression that the only
5 troops on ground are state active duty for New York
6 National Guard.

7 **MAJ CHIN:** No. There were Air Force -- or Air
8 Guard members here.

9 **MAJ MELNYK:** But that's still New York
10 National Guard.

11 **MAJ CHIN:** I would believe so. And there
12 could be something that could be out of state, as well,
13 that I'm not aware of. But --

14 **MAJ MELNYK:** Thank you.

15 **MAJ CHIN:** Other than that, I don't know what
16 more to say.

17 **MAJ MELNYK:** Well, sir, your overall
18 impressions, as a final thought, in terms of what
19 significance does this have to you and what
20 significance do you think it's going to have for the
21 New York National Guard, particularly here in New York

1 City?

2 **MAJ CHIN:** The funny thing about it was last
3 September of last year, I was asked if I can attend the
4 force protection anti-terrorist class down at Park
5 Avenue Armory, and I believe that was SGT Rosencrantz
6 (phonetic,) who is from STARC, and we had a couple of
7 -- a major, I don't recall his name, and another senior
8 NCO that provided that class.

9 And the key issue was to start all of the
10 armories to set up a force protection SOP and basically
11 that was just completed probably about a month ago up
12 in the Troy Armory.

13 **MAJ MELNYK:** Many of the men I've spoken to,
14 officers and men I have spoken to complained about lack
15 of force protection and not being allowed to carry
16 their weapons, and they are still under the impression
17 to this moment that there is a threat of terrorist
18 attack.

19 **MAJ CHIN:** My concern right now is that we did
20 get reports about a missing Verizon vehicle yesterday
21 and we did understand that it was just misplaced.

1 The first thing that comes to mind is Beirut,
2 you know. What capabilities do we have right now where
3 we only have our soldiers not even armed no longer. I
4 mean, they weren't carrying ammunition, but how do you
5 go about stopping a vehicle at these checkpoints, with
6 numerous, hundreds and hundreds of people here right
7 now, to stop a vehicle going 50 or 80 miles an hour,
8 with possibly explosives there.

9 That to me is a concern. I think since '93,
10 with the [first] attack on the World Trade Center, you
11 know, we knew that maybe somehow that this was going to
12 happen, but, you know, what we were going to do, and
13 now that this happened, I think it changes the entire
14 perspective that America has at this point in time,
15 that it's probably finally reached here in the United
16 States where we've only seen it in other countries.

17 **MAJ MELNYK:** I would agree. Thank you very
18 much.

19 (The interview was concluded.)

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