

SEPTEMBER 11

Perspectives from the Field of Philanthropy

VOLUME TWO



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THE FOUNDATION CENTER

The Foundation Center

Mission

The Foundation Center's mission is to support and improve philanthropy by promoting public understanding of the field and helping grantseekers succeed.

To achieve our mission, we:

- Collect, organize, and communicate information on U.S. philanthropy
- Conduct and facilitate research on trends in the field
- Provide education and training on the grantseeking process
- Ensure public access to information and services through our World Wide Web site, print and electronic publications, five libraries and learning centers, and a national network of Cooperating Collections.

Founded in 1956, the Center is the nation's leading authority on philanthropy and is dedicated to serving grantseekers, grantmakers, researchers, policymakers, the media, and the general public.

The Foundation Center is documenting private philanthropy's response to the September 11 terrorist attacks. Using our experience in collecting and analyzing giving data, we are constructing a comprehensive picture of giving by foundations and corporations in the aftermath of 9/11, as well as tracking contributions by intermediaries and direct-service providers. We are also presenting news and in-depth interviews concerning the philanthropic response to 9/11 in the Foundation Center's online journal, *Philanthropy News Digest*. Some of these have been reproduced in *September 11: Perspectives from the Field of Philanthropy*. To learn more, please visit our Web site at www.fdncenter.org.

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Foreword

As the second anniversary of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks draws near, the after-shocks of that day continue to ripple outward from Lower Manhattan, the banks of the Potomac, and a field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Appropriately, the story of philanthropy in the wake of these events also continues to unfold.

While most observers agree that charities and philanthropies moved quickly to meet the immediate needs of those affected by the attacks, critics (many with little firsthand knowledge of the field) stressed the lack of coordination among charities. Later, they questioned decisions to use donated funds to meet longer-term needs. This was, as a number of people interviewed for this volume argue, a shortsighted critique that hampered efforts to deal with the very real and persistent economic and mental-health consequences of 9/11.

Many of the interviews underscore the significant role played by philanthropic and charitable organizations in providing assistance to the thousands of people who lost loved ones, were displaced from their homes or jobs, or suffered physically or emotionally from the events of that day. The performance of the sector was all the more remarkable given the unprecedented scale and nature of the disaster — and, by comparison, the relatively ineffectual performance of federal government agencies charged with delivering emergency assistance to the victims.

Trying to understand what caused the mainstream media to spin the story of the philanthropic response to 9/11 as it did is the focus of several of the interviews. The large amount of money involved was a factor, as were the PR blunders of the American Red Cross and the apparent hostility of certain news organizations to fundraising and to organized philanthropy. Additionally, as some of the people we interviewed suggest, charities and philanthropies themselves are partly to blame for falling back on old habits and assuming that good intentions are enough to ensure good publicity. That assumption is being reexamined in the post-9/11 era.

The clash of radical Islam and the West and the war on terrorism figure prominently in the pages that follow. How America is choosing to fight that war and at what cost to civil liberties will be debated for years to come. The various interviews offered herein illuminate the complexity and interrelatedness of the issues involved.

While we can hope for a successful and relatively swift resolution to our confrontation with terrorism, it seems unlikely that resolution will come without further attacks on U.S. soil. How the philanthropic sector responds — and is expected to respond — in the event of such an attack is discussed in the last few interviews in this volume. Americans gave heroically of their time and money in the wake of September 11. Will they do the same following future terrorist attacks or even natural or other disasters that claim many lives? Will the government compensate victims of the next disaster as it did the victims of 9/11? Will philanthropies and charities be expected to provide the lion's share of future emergency assistance? What can the sector do to enlist the media as a partner? The answers are elusive, but the questions must be asked — sooner rather than later.

As the final piece of the collection reminds us, the history of 9/11, like all history, is a quicksilver thing, formed by an ever-changing combination of personal experience, informed opinion, and entrenched interests. We hope this volume contributes in some way to the writing of that history.

Compassion and Competence: A Non-Philanthropist Reflects on the Contributions of Philanthropy

Until becoming CEO of the September 11th Fund, my only contribution to the world of nonprofits was the occasional check. My career had been split between business and government, and my perspective was that of an outsider. I now have a much more textured and admiring view.

Answering the Call

In September 2001, I was looking to return to what is euphemistically referred to as the “private sector.” After serving in government, and having left behind a Wall Street career, I felt the need to return to business — or, as I joked (unfortunately in public), the “land of the overpaid.” So I was not prepared for the telephone call from an old friend, an executive recruiter, saying, “I’m looking for someone to head the September 11th Fund. I know it’s not what you’re looking for, but it’s important and I think it’s something you might be good at.” Like millions of others, I answered the call to help.

JOSHUA GOTBAUM
FORMER PRESIDENT AND CEO
SEPTEMBER 11TH FUND



Initially, no one knew how many would need help or what kind of help they might need.

The September 11th Fund was founded by the New York Community Trust and United Way of New York City (UWNYC) on September 11, 2001. Both organizations were grantmakers, and so it is not surprising that they designed the Fund to be an intermediary, a means of funneling the generosity of millions to organizations that could provide help, quickly and effectively. They recognized from the first that the Fund would need its own management and board and — even as their staffs collaborated to make the first grants — immediately began to recruit and review candidates.

When I met the leadership of UWNYC and the Trust, I told them that, paradoxically, service in the U.S. Office of Management and Budget was excellent preparation for the task they faced: At OMB, we routinely had to decide how best to use always-inadequate funds. The sums we considered were undeniably large, and yet clearly insufficient to meet all the legitimate claims on them. As a result, I thought the real trick would be choosing, from among the many who wanted to help, those organizations that could act most effectively — without demoralizing all those who wanted also to help. As it turned out, I was quite wrong — there were other, much tougher challenges ahead; however, none of us knew it at the time, and so my confidently delivered (if mistaken) assertion got me the job. It was October 2, 2001.

Deciding How to Help

In founding the September 11th Fund, the Trust and UWNYC had been foresighted enough to recognize that, initially, no one knew how many would need help or what kind of help they might need. From the first, they said the Fund would help “victims, their families, and affected communities.” As a result, they avoided the trap fallen into by many other charities: raising funds for so specific a purpose that they were forced to use them even though the need turned out to be small, or had been satisfied by others. For example, several organizations raised funds specifically to help those who were orphaned by the events of September 11. Fortunately, while almost no one was truly orphaned by the attacks, those with funds so earmarked had a problem.

What the founders of the Fund could not avoid was the need to make judgments about whom and how to help. Recognizing that these judgments could be controversial, they chose a board with considerable stature to make them and named Frank Thomas, the former head of the Ford Foundation, to chair it.

At our very first meeting, we showed the board that many people were affected by the September 11 attacks in many different ways. At the time, it was thought that 5,000 had died, leaving behind 10,000 to 20,000 immediate family members, plus others who depended upon them. Several hundred people were thought to have been seriously injured, and tens of thousands would end up losing their jobs or businesses. Hundreds of thousands more across the country would lose their jobs as business travel and tourism slowed and the economy weakened. An unknown number would bear the hidden scars of trauma, whether because of the death of a loved one, the searing memory of having to flee the area, or the daily strain of combing through the ruins looking for traces of those who were lost.

COMPASSION AND COMPETENCE:
A NON-PHILANTHROPIST REFLECTS ON THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF PHILANTHROPY

Even with the millions that had been contributed to the September 11th Fund, there was simply no way to meet all these needs. From the first board meeting and continuing for months, we asked the board to consider three questions:

- **Who to help?** Millions were affected by September 11 in some way. Several thousand people were murdered; tens of thousands had their workplaces destroyed or were displaced from their homes; the freeze on air travel cost hundreds of thousands of airline workers, hotel clerks, and others their jobs; and untold numbers of those who watched, in person or on television, were depressed. Clearly, charities could and did help the families of those who died or were injured. But should we stop there? What about those whose jobs and workplaces were gone or shut, or children who were evacuated and moved to other, already crowded schools? Even though thousands had contributed generously, there were simply not enough resources to help everyone who had been affected, and so we were forced to choose. The board debated, for example, whether those who had worked in mid-Manhattan hotels and then lost their jobs as tourism fell should be helped in some way; eventually, they decided they could not distinguish those workers from the hundreds of thousands similarly affected by the travel slump in other cities.

Ultimately, the board decided to consider help, based on need, for the families of those who had died, for those who were injured, for those who lost their jobs or were displaced from their homes, for businesses and nonprofits that would be essential to rebuilding the community, and for relief workers and witnesses in the immediate area of the attacks.

In the immediate aftermath of September 11, this was a very controversial decision. Many members of the media attacked the Fund, arguing that those who donated had done so only with the surviving families in mind. They screamed about fraud and “donor intent.” The actual donors were more broad-minded. We took two surveys asking their opinion of whom and how we should help. The overwhelming majority favored help to those who lost their jobs or were displaced from their homes. Furthermore, many of the surviving families agreed, so long as they were being cared for, too.

- **What kinds of help should be funded?** Should we provide help with cash, services, or referrals to services funded by others? A substantial portion of the Fund’s grants went to meet financial needs in the months before government aid was available, but it was also clear that cash alone would not be enough. Services mattered. One of the most powerful lessons we learned from Oklahoma City was that mental-health counseling would be needed, but that many who had been traumatized wouldn’t avail themselves of it for months, sometimes years, and not even then if they had to pay for it. So the Fund, working with the American Red Cross, covered all the out-of-pocket cost of mental-health treatments. We recognized that people’s needs varied: Helping people isn’t a one-size-fits-all business.
- **Duplicate services or “fill the gaps”?** One of the hardest challenges was deciding how much the Fund should take into account the help already being provided by others and focus its resources on “filling the gaps.” Many had contributed on the assumption

The overwhelming majority [of donors] favored help to those who lost their jobs or were displaced from their homes.

The greatest challenge in helping the victims of September 11 was not getting resources — it was working together.

they were making possible help to the surviving families, or to the survivors of police or firefighters who had died. A small percentage of the donations, in fact, had been specifically designated for particular purposes. However, few knew in those early days how generous the nation would be, or that many of these surviving families had already received substantial assistance from others and would receive even more. Could donors possibly have intended that some victims continue to receive financial aid without regard to need — in some cases, hundreds of thousands of dollars — if doing so meant there was nothing left for others? We didn't think so. (Nor did many of the surviving families. Some told us they simply didn't need the help.) In the end, we recognized this tension with a compromise: A portion of the Fund was used to make a gift to all surviving families, while the majority of funds were granted based on need and used to fill the gaps left by other charities and government. In this way, many more people in need were helped.

“Many Hands Make Lots of Work”: Learning to Work Together

The greatest challenge in helping the victims of September 11 was not getting resources — it was working together. Hundreds of nonprofits and thousands of individuals reached out after September 11. They wanted to help, in any way they could. The challenge was that charities were not organized and the victims in no shape to organize them. Those affected didn't want to be forced to interview a dozen charities, providing documentation time after time, just to find help. And yet, in the beginning, that's exactly what they had to do.

The reason for this was simple. September 11 affected thousands of people, but service agencies had neither the experience nor the procedures either for working together or allocating responsibility among themselves. There was no lead agency capable of assigning work. Some, such as the American Red Cross and Salvation Army, had procedures for themselves, but these did not include deciding who could best serve a widow, a displaced worker, or a shuttered small business, much less doing so on a coordinated basis for thousands of people within a matter of days.

Government tried to step into the breach. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the nation's premier disaster-response agency, moved in and convened meetings with the various charities. FEMA told them: “Don't worry, we can handle this.” They couldn't. FEMA turned out to be extraordinarily skilled at working with local governments, but real people were another matter. FEMA lacked the resources to meet and comfort the thousands who were affected. The agency had funds to help the unemployed and the displaced but refused to let nonprofit organizations help people fill out its forms. Financial assistance was available only after you called their toll-free number, waited for their form to arrive and sent it back, and passed muster with unseen evaluators working thousands of miles away. If you survived this gauntlet — and most did not — you waited; the check would be “in the mail.” FEMA was a major disappointment. Kafka's bureaucrats could not have done worse.

COMPASSION AND COMPETENCE:
A NON-PHILANTHROPIST REFLECTS ON THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF PHILANTHROPY

New York City government was much more effective. In New York, the mayor's Office of Emergency Management moved quickly to provide "one-stop shopping." In creating the Family Assistance Center (and, later, a comparable center for displaced workers), the agency provided a single location where those who needed help and those who might provide it could meet. Although the building was cavernous, it was warm and support was everywhere. There was day care and food, places from which to call family members overseas, and a memorial wall to leave mementos of loved ones.

This was a dramatic improvement. Nonetheless, the Family Assistance Center was still, in form, a bazaar, with rows of stalls and dozens of organizations setting up shop. Too many of the victims, already traumatized, were frustrated by confusion about where to get help and the multiplicity of forms required to get it. Once it became clear that charitable support was substantial but uncoordinated, families realized they would have to file multiple applications, sometimes without knowing which organizations could provide what benefits. Bereaved families had to go from stall to stall, explaining — and documenting — their situation.

The charities recognized the difficulty, and took steps to improve it. The September 11th Fund underwrote a directory of services and made it available at the Center, through a toll-free hotline, and on the Web. Within the Center, charities agreed informally on an order of service, so that, for example, the Red Cross knew when someone arrived that they'd already been helped by the Salvation Army and Safe Horizon.

Nonetheless, it was clear that more was necessary. Ideally, the many charities (and the fewer government agencies) that provided cash and services should have a single common intake form and a common, coordinated, and understandable set of assistance programs. In the aftermath of the bombing in Oklahoma City, the local charities had formed a committee to do so. It had worked well. New York's attorney general, Eliot Spitzer, whose office oversees charitable activities in the state, pointedly asked why a similar effort shouldn't be set up in response to September 11 and offered to establish it. In fact, the challenge was much greater. Many more people were affected in New York and many more organizations wanted to help. (September 11 had more active charities than there were fatalities in Oklahoma City.) Each organization had its own forms, its own programs, and its own privacy policies safeguarded by its own lawyers. Nonetheless, responding to this pressure, leading charities began to meet. At first, they formed a coordinating committee, but soon they recognized that the situation required a separate, substantial organization to build a common information base and communication effort, and to develop a more coordinated program of assistance. By December, these charities had established the 9/11 United Services Group (USG) and had accepted an outsider — an investment banker, no less — to run it. The September 11th Fund bankrolled the new organization.

With help from IBM and McKinsey, USG began to develop a common database, so that victims would not constantly have to reapply to get help. It also trained hundreds

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of service coordinators from dozens of different charities, so that those affected could get personalized help from trained staff in their own community. USG also became a vehicle for coordinating assistance programs and communicating about them to those who were affected.

Creating a new organization and developing coordinated service requires extraordinary effort. The result is far from perfect, but much better than if the charities and government agencies had continued to act separately. Thousands today are better off as a result.

Red Crosses to Bear

The American Red Cross (ARC) was the unsung hero of September 11. It mobilized thousands of volunteers, beginning within minutes of the disaster. It provided financial relief to thousands who needed it and its checks arrived well before government agencies even began to review applications.

Tragically, in large part because it was clumsy in its public and press relations, the ARC ended up not the hero but the goat of September 11. After September 11, millions who wanted to help, but otherwise could not, opened their wallets. Even for an organization that had mobilized more than 40,000 people after September 11, this was overwhelming. Most who contributed to the ARC did not know of the organization's longstanding practice of preserving part of the funds raised in one disaster to meet the challenges of the next. Neither did most of the journalists who began to cover the organization; when they found out, their first reaction was that this was, not prudence, but bad faith. They never had a chance to form a second reaction, because the ARC decided it would rather switch than fight and announced that all funds contributed would be used only to help the direct victims of September 11, particularly the surviving families and injured.

The decision, and the ARC's publicizing of its continuing efforts, may have helped restore some of the confidence it had lost. But it also forced the ARC to move beyond its traditional immediate disaster-assistance mission and provide both very substantial cash gifts and longer-term mental health services. The ARC responded to the latter challenge in an innovative way. It agreed to join forces with the September 11th Fund and co-fund mental-health therapy, whether provided by ARC staff or not. The organization's cash-assistance programs were less successful, I think partly because they were so different from its historical practices.

The professionals of the ARC remain some of the most competent, compassionate people I have met in the September 11 relief effort. Nonetheless, I still wonder whether more people would recognize the Red Cross's contributions if it had "stuck to its guns."

Lessons Learned

As one inexperienced in the world of philanthropy, I was not sure what to expect when I joined the September 11th Fund. I came away with much greater respect and understanding for charities.

1. Experience Counts: Relief Agencies Performed Well

With the double whammy of an unsupportive press and the passage of time, it's easy to forget that charities provided most of the early assistance to individuals and families, that they did so more quickly and reliably than comparable government programs, and that they did so in the face of the largest disaster in U.S. history.

It's clear here that experience helped. The American Red Cross, Salvation Army, and Safe Horizon each had years of practice providing help to victims of crime or disaster. They had volunteers trained and systems in place. It is no criticism to note that these systems were not designed for a disaster of this magnitude — imagine how much worse things would have been were there no systems at all.

Thousands were affected, and their needs varied. Some needed cash to cover living expenses, others lawyers to help get into bank accounts. Some needed doctors, others a sympathetic ear. There was, to be sure, support from government — Disaster Medicaid, cash for families of the uniformed victims and others — but in most cases these programs were slow in providing help and restricted in their eligibility requirements. The charities provided help both more flexibly and more quickly. I still remember, for example, a call from Safe Horizon about whether charitable funds could be used to help an elderly woman whose rent had been paid by her now-dead son, even though she was not legally his dependent or next-of-kin. They could — and did.

In a way that was truly heartening, after September 11 institutions across the country pitched in with their own skills. IBM and others worked to connect charities to donors, to the victims, and to each other. JPMorganChase, Citibank, and others helped make sure that millions in contributions were safely transmitted, accounted for, and managed. Nonprofits and businesses worked cooperatively with government to make sure that tens of thousands of individuals, each with different circumstances and differing needs, nonetheless received help. Nothing can or will undo the damage they experienced on September 11, but working together can and does help people to rebuild their lives.

This does not mean that nonprofits were perfect. Some joined the fray who lacked the necessary skills, and even the best were stretched in the face of a disaster whose magnitude left everyone unprepared. Nonetheless, at least to this outsider, the relief agencies “got a bad rap.”

2. Recognize What Your Competencies Are in Deciding How to Help

Where nonprofits did get into trouble, it seems to me, was when they ignored their own basic competencies in trying to help. A now-classic guidebook advises businesses to “stick to your knitting.” Excellent firms succeed by doing more of what they already do well; diversifying into something that requires different skills is usually a recipe for failure.

Nonprofits are no different. Everyone with an ounce of compassion wanted to help after September 11, and hundreds of organizations came forward thinking they could do so. But not every organization recognized its own limitations. Some disaster agencies insisted on

It's easy to forget that charities provided most of the early assistance to individuals and families. . . .

The fact that charities had performed an extraordinary service was lost in the din — largely unreported even by reputable newspapers and trade publications.

performing counseling and case management, though without the staff and experience to do so. Others, particularly newly created charities, decided to enter the cash-assistance business. Lacking Safe Horizon's experience and infrastructure, they had far more difficulty managing these programs: some gave to those who'd already received much, while others had trouble even finding those in need. The result was more dollars spent, but not better service provided or more people helped.

Nor, in their rush to help, was the funding community immune from this hubris. Many funders made commitments without having the staff and experience for informed judgment. To be sure, there were those who had the necessary breadth, such as the New York Community Trust, UWNYP, and the New York Times Foundation. There were many more who responded by placing their trust in such experienced grantmakers, but there were also many that did not. Whether because of a desire for credit or a lack of experience working with others, many funders chose to work alone, with less effective results. Some made grants to the already well-funded, or for which the need was less than originally thought. Others simply redefined their existing programs as "September 11-related" and continued funding the same grantees to help their existing client population, rather than focusing on those more directly affected by the attacks.

3. Respond to Criticism

Most nonprofits toil for years without ever showing up on the evening news. Many never even make the local papers. September 11 was different. Charities and foundations came under the inquisitive eye of thousands of journalists, most of whom hadn't the faintest idea how charities work.

In the aftermath of this extraordinary event, both sides failed and the public was accordingly sadly misinformed. Under the pressure of deadlines and ratings, many reporters and editors focused on accusations of incompetence and scandal — charities helping people just wasn't "news." Most, though not all, reporters had little interest or patience for explanations that charitable support was based on need and that victims needed counseling and other help, not just cash. Many mistook the grief and rage of the victims as proof of charitable incompetence. The fact that charities had performed an extraordinary service was lost in the din — largely unreported even by reputable newspapers and trade publications.

But it was the charities' story to tell, and charities that paid the price when it wasn't told. The Red Cross was helping thousands, but when it failed to explain its longstanding practice of reserving funds for future disasters, *that* became the story. Eventually, the ARC decided to change its practices rather than justify them, but not before millions became skeptical — in my view, quite unfairly — of the organization's integrity and competence.

At the September 11th Fund, the New York Community Trust and United Way of NYC established the principle of transparency early, recognizing the extraordinary level of donor and public interest. We implemented the approach by explaining our programs

repeatedly and in detail, through a dogged succession of press conferences, interviews, reports, public-service announcements, e-mails, and extensive use of our Web site. This was painful at first, since accusations about the Fund were far more widely reported than our correction of the record and explanation of the facts. Eventually, however, the consistent record of openness and repetition of the facts convinced some skeptics of our honesty and (I hope) also of our judgment. As a result, the Fund was relatively well treated by the press: They rarely reported our activities, but neither did they carry unjust accusations.

After some missteps, the Red Cross created a public education campaign (not funded from the Liberty Fund) in newspapers across the country to explain its actions. I think it realized that the press simply would not report its side of the story. This kind of effort is routine in the business community and might be advisable for nonprofits as well. There's certainly still plenty of misinformation about charitable efforts in the "common knowledge."

4. Do Not Ask for Whom the Bell Tolls

To this outsider, it seemed that the nonprofit "community" was a bit like the "international community," in that it joins together more easily in the face of condemnation than it does to garner support. During the firestorm of criticism of the Red Cross, the response of most other nonprofits was silence. That, in turn, left an open microphone for self-appointed "experts" who pandered to the press and who, despite no apparent experience in disaster relief, gave the air of legitimacy to its accusations. Even more distressing was the enthusiasm with which others in the nonprofit "community," thinking themselves somehow protected, later joined gleefully in a round of uninformed "self"-criticism. Foundations hundreds of miles away that had done nothing except make contributions — and who had no knowledge how those who helped actually performed — nonetheless opined fulsomely to reporters how charities needed to improve. The damage from this misinformation was not limited to the Red Cross: As the Brookings Institution has reported, public support for charities generally was eroded. The damage caused by the nonprofit community's failure to come together could last for years.

* * *

In my time as CEO of the September 11th Fund, I had the good fortune to work with and learn from many as they struggled to provide hope and help in the face of the greatest disaster in our history. My most powerful memory remains a much greater respect for the competence, compassion, and dedication of the thousands in nonprofits who strive, every day, to help people improve their lives. We are all in their debt.

Joshua Gotbaum was CEO of the September 11th Fund from October 2001 to October 2002. He is now in charge of Hawaiian Airlines as its court-appointed bankruptcy trustee. The views expressed here are entirely his own.

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Nonprofits and 9/11: Now the Good News

Looking back on what happened on September 11, 2001, across the country and in New York and Washington, D.C., I am struck by the extraordinary job done by so many people and organizations from the nonprofit sector; I am also struck by how little of that came across to the public.

Stories in the media of agencies dragging their feet, of money in special victims' funds not being distributed, and of grief-stricken families not being served took root early after 9/11, and they have persisted. I believe it is important to set the record straight, based on what I saw and on two recent reports, one commissioned by the Ford Foundation and issued by Thomas Edison State College, the other by the federal government's General Accounting Office.

SUSAN V. BERRESFORD
PRESIDENT
FORD FOUNDATION



The scale of the World Trade Center tragedy and its effects on New York were simply not comparable to past disasters.

Myth #1:

The agencies handling the money that poured in from all over America and the world moved much too slowly.

If 9/11 taught us anything about ourselves, it is that Americans are caring and generous people. Within one month of the attacks, according to one authority, three out of five Americans had given money or help to a 9/11 cause. The GAO report says that 34 of the largest of the 300-plus charities involved received about \$2.4 billion in donations. Nine large foundations granted a total of \$92.5 million in September and another \$68 million by the end of December.

What happened to that money? The GAO says about two-thirds has been distributed in the form of cash grants and services to victims' families and others affected by the attacks. Here is an interesting example of how quickly agencies moved: By the time the Social Security Administration had mailed its first checks to victims' families on October 3, 2001, Safe Horizon — one of the primary organizations helping at Ground Zero — had already put 4,000 checks in the hands of individuals needing urgent help. Although they were aware of the risks in moving so quickly, Safe Horizon staff wrote many of those checks by hand. They knew from experience that practical needs had to be addressed before victims could begin rebuilding their lives. Another example of speed and flexibility was seen in the September 11th Fund created by two very experienced grantmakers, the New York Community Trust and the United Way of New York City.

You may wonder why all of the funds have not been distributed by now. After all, most of the donors expected their contributions to help victims' families directly. Some money was earmarked for long-term use. For example, some \$100 million for college scholarships for the children of victims — which should meet about 70 percent of the financial need — will take up to two decades to disburse fully. Some money was set aside for later victim- and crisis-related uses, since people do not always come forward immediately to seek grief or post-traumatic stress counseling. Some agencies went to extraordinary lengths to ask donors that had not specified long-term use of their money whether they would accept such a practice, and almost always the answer was “yes.”

Myth #2:

New York should have drawn more on the Oklahoma City experience and created a centralized coordinating group that might have improved the response to the disaster.

The scale of the World Trade Center tragedy and its effects on New York were simply not comparable to past disasters.

The attack in Oklahoma City was concentrated in one building with a death toll of 168 among a known roster of federal employees and building occupants. By contrast, nearly 3,000 people were killed at the Trade Center, and many more were injured or traumatized. No reliable lists of the dead were produced quickly, but it was known that many were informal and undocumented workers. An estimated 125,000 jobs were lost in New York. Hundreds of small businesses, from retail stores to pizza parlors, were shut down, throwing

thousands of low- and moderate-wage workers out of work. Total damage to the city's economy has been estimated at close to \$100 billion.

But the tremendous size of New York helped the city to cope with the disaster. For one thing, the city had an enormous number and variety of highly skilled service and philanthropic institutions — more than 10,000. Think about it: In Oklahoma City the principal nonprofit organizations could sit around one table and plan. In New York City, you'd need a football stadium to gather them together.

Many of New York's charities are small and sharply focused on immigrants, for example, or the homeless or very small businesses, groups often overlooked by larger, more generalized agencies. Both the GAO and the Ford reports observe that this diversity proved to be a great strength in the city's response. Each group went to work on its part of the puzzle, applying its particular expertise to often unprecedented problems. The plight of survivors and families of undocumented workers, for example, was addressed with some success through creative solutions worked out between nonprofits and the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Yes, it was messy and often chaotic, but many people were helped quickly, and informal coordination grew into more formal systems fairly soon. Centralization would have slowed the process through which differences of view and practice were resolved. It's also worth noting that in the months after the attack most of the New York City nonprofits concerned with its aftermath have themselves formed a coordinating 9/11 United Services Group, which is continuing to address the long-term needs of victims.

Myth #3:

So much money flowing through the emergency distribution systems inevitably led to widespread fraud and mismanagement.

Evidence from the GAO and state and city criminal investigators indicates that fraud was rare. The Ford and GAO studies found that although agency staffs were under enormous stress and sometimes bent normal procedures, only a relative handful of such cases have been uncovered. To date, the number of people charged with or investigated for fraud remains well under one-half of one percent of the huge number who received cash or services.

A related criticism that deserves a second look involved the Red Cross. Right after the towers fell, Red Cross staff and volunteers were doing heroic work at ground zero. Like Safe Horizon, they helped people get emergency medicine, money, medical care and support. Yet some saw the Red Cross as deceptive because it planned to set aside for future crises some of the vast monies that had poured in. The Red Cross certainly should have been clearer in its appeals and has now taken corrective steps to become more transparent in its solicitations and practices.

But it is unfair to criticize the Red Cross for its prudence in planning to set aside a portion of the donations for future emergencies. We should remember that 9/11 involved coordinated attacks on New York and Washington, and many expected further attacks in

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short order. If the Sears Tower in Chicago or the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco had been hit a day or a week later, we would have applauded the Red Cross' plan.

Myth #4:

The specialized relief funds botched the distribution of funds by using the wrong formulas for disbursements.

The agencies helping victims' families each granted money to them based on different formulas. For example, one fund gave money according to family need; another divided its funds equally among all the families. Still others decided to wait until government funds were available, and to then use their resources to fill the gaps.

Try to imagine yourself in a decision-making role in the midst of such a catastrophe. Which [fund distribution] method would you choose? Before you decide, I can tell you that whatever your decision, you will be harshly criticized for it. That is what happened after 9/11. No distribution method was widely accepted as fair. The truth is that no single formula is likely to satisfy everyone. Beyond that, the situation is fraught with deep, powerful emotions and funding agencies become one focus for these feelings of loss.

Myth #5:

Public confidence in the nonprofit sector has been seriously damaged by the 9/11 efforts.

Traditionally, about two-thirds of Americans say they believe our sector is ethical and effective. Right after 9/11 that proportion climbed to about 73 percent and then drifted back to the norm of two-thirds. Some commentators seeing that downward drift made much of the decline — perhaps forgetting that it was merely returning to the original high norm.

With the benefit of hindsight, we may now provide a fair report card on the philanthropic and nonprofit sector response to 9/11.

The American public certainly gets an "A+" for its amazing generosity. The spontaneous outpouring of aid in all forms, from money to blood to equipment and services, was truly inspiring. Foundations and corporations were as forthcoming. Perhaps most important for those of us in the nonprofit sector is the confidence in human services agencies that was demonstrated by such openhearted public support. As the GAO concluded: "Overall, charitable aid made a major contribution in the nation's response to the September 11 attacks despite very difficult circumstances."

That very understated phrase, "despite very difficult circumstances," explains why I believe the response of nonprofit service agencies also deserves high grades. At a time of chaos and fear, they displayed speed, flexibility, and creativity to meet the emergency needs of the most severely afflicted.

That isn't to say we couldn't do better next time — should there be, God forbid, a next time. We can surely improve in such areas as creating a single emergency application form,

and in ensuring that appeals to the public for funds are frank and open about their use, including the necessity for reserve funds. We must also be prepared to celebrate flexibility and creativity in our staffs. Training sessions might include exercises about when and how to stretch and adapt established procedures.

Communications is another area where we have much to do. In general, our sector is unused to public scrutiny of the kind received after 9/11, and many of us can be oversensitive to criticism. Also, in a crisis we are focused on providing services and often forget that we need the public support that can come with effective, open communication. So our 9/11 success story was largely drowned in the flood of media reports about what was thought to be going wrong. This might have been less of a problem if our sector had found a way for respected public figures to give frequent, regular media briefings on nonprofits' work.

Finally, even in the midst of crisis it is important to consider needs that may seem peripheral but are actually essential to recovery. Emergency aid to artistic and cultural groups, for example, helped some of those struggling organizations recover from damage near the site and kept others going despite lost audiences. Within weeks, they were helping people overcome shock and grief and reestablishing a sense of normalcy in community life.

I believe that the nonprofit sector in America can foster the ideas and activities that bring ever-higher levels of decency and justice. The many and varied nonprofit organizations that serve our communities proved their value to the nation during 9/11 and its aftermath. We are lucky to have such a robust sector in both good times and bad. Let's be sure we continue to strengthen it.

The many and varied nonprofit organizations that serve our communities proved their value to the nation during 9/11 and its aftermath.

Philanthropy and Domestic Terrorism

At 9:02 a.m. on April 19, 1995, moments after parents had walked their children to the second-floor day care center, 4,800 pounds of ammonia nitrate and fuel oil destroyed the nine-story Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in downtown Oklahoma City. Vibrations from the explosion could be felt almost thirty miles away. Later, it was learned that the destruction had been caused by a truck bomb. One hundred and sixty-eight people — men, women, and children — were killed and another five hundred were injured, in what federal authorities soon were calling the worst act of domestic terrorism in U.S. history.

In the days immediately following the tragedy, the Oklahoma City Community Foundation joined with several other area organizations to provide leadership and oversee distribution of the charitable contributions that began to pour in to Oklahoma City in response to the bombing. The model of coordination

NANCY ANTHONY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
OKLAHOMA CITY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION



developed by the foundation subsequently was hailed by philanthropic leaders around the country for its effectiveness and fairness.

In late January, *Philanthropy News Digest* spoke with executive director Nancy Anthony about her organization's role in the recovery efforts that followed the bombing; the similarities and differences between the charitable responses to the bombing in Oklahoma City and the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C.; and how communities and charities can better prepare for future disasters of this nature and magnitude. Anthony also responded to questions about how the economic slowdown has affected the community foundation's fundraising efforts and its future initiatives.

Nancy Anthony joined the Oklahoma City Community Foundation as executive director in 1985, at a time when it had assets of \$20 million and one other full-time employee. Today the foundation has nineteen full-time employees, over \$400 million in assets, and makes average annual distributions of \$15 million to the Oklahoma City community. During her seventeen years at the helm of the foundation, OCCF has become a leader among community foundations nationwide in the development of agency endowments and today operates the largest agency endowment program in the United States, as well as the largest independent scholarship program in Oklahoma.

Anthony received a B.A. from Vanderbilt University, M.A. and M.Phil. degrees in mathematical statistics from Yale University, and a Ph.D. in biostatistics from the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center. Over the course of her career, she has taught at Vanderbilt and Oklahoma City University, and has served as a consultant in statistics and demography. As a community volunteer, Anthony has served for twenty-five years as a member of Oklahoma City's Metropolitan Library Commission, including six years as chair, and was honored for her work as a library advocate by the American Library Association in 2000. In addition, she has served on a number of community boards and has also served as a volunteer coach for several girls athletic teams.

A native of Elizabethtown, Kentucky, she and her husband, Robert H. Anthony, reside in Oklahoma City. They have four daughters who are currently attending or recently graduated from college.

Foundation Center: Tell us a little about the Oklahoma City Community Foundation — When was it established? What are its signature programs? And how long have you been with the foundation?

Nancy Anthony: The foundation has been around since 1969, and I've been here since 1985. I'd say it's a typical community foundation. We're the oldest and largest one in Oklahoma, and were here a long time before the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building. Most people seem to think we sprang up as a result of the bombing, but that's not the case.

The thing we're best known for — not only in this community, but throughout the country — is that we have the largest endowment fund management program in the United States.

There are about two hundred and fifty nonprofit organizations in the Oklahoma City area that have endowment funds at OCCF. That's about \$125 million in funds, comprising about a third of our assets. That gives us a permanent relationship with a relatively large number of organizations outside the normal grant process. In other words, we not only help them manage their endowment funds, we also help them develop donors for those funds. And we do other things typical of community foundations, like offering donor-advised funds and managing scholarship funds. In fact, our proven ability to manage scholarship funds is one of the reasons we were so involved in the response to the Murrah Building bombing.

FC: Take us back to that day. Where were you on the morning of Wednesday, April 19, 1995?

NA: The Murrah Building was right across the street from the small downtown post office where we have our post office box, and I drove by the building every morning on the way to pick up the mail. But that morning I was already in our offices, which are about five or six blocks away, when the explosion, which happened at 9:02 a.m., occurred. It was one of those kinds of explosions that if you were within ten blocks, you felt like it was your building that had exploded. It was that loud a noise. It was a chilly spring morning, and I remember thinking that the heating system, which is on the roof of the building, had exploded. All the ceiling tiles in the building sort of lifted off their metal runners and then settled back down. The air pressure created by the blast was so significant that it blew out all the windows in all the buildings in the immediate vicinity of the Murrah Building. It blew all the glass across the room, and then the vacuum created by the blast sucked it all back out again, so you had people being hit by glass flying in both directions.

After a minute or two, when we realized we weren't hurt, we ran outside to see what was going on. I think we expected to see the building on fire. By then, everybody else on our block had already run out of their buildings. And then — wham — the fire trucks and police vehicles started to arrive.

FC: Did OCCF respond in any way in the immediate aftermath of the bombing?

NA: I think it's important for people to understand that we perceived this as an emergency situation, like a tornado or a flood or a hurricane. And we are not emergency responders. We manage endowment funds for the long term. It's the job of the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army and FEMA [Federal Emergency Management Agency] to show up at the tornadoes and floods and fires. You also have to remember that nothing like this had ever happened before, at least not here in the United States. So we didn't respond in the immediate aftermath of the bombing; we reacted. To respond means you know what you're going to do. We know what to do when a tornado comes to town because we've dealt with so many of them in Oklahoma. We know what kinds of services are needed; we know what's going to happen to people, and what the whole rebuilding process for a family or a community is. But in the immediate aftermath of the bombing, nobody knew what to do. Nobody was prepared for the tremendous social and psychological impact it ultimately

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We agreed to help out, with certain conditions. . . . One, that we could commingle the funds . . . and, two, that we had the final say as to how the dollars were used.

had on the families of the victims and on the community. Instead, our initial reaction was, “Hey, this isn’t our deal. We’re not in the emergency business. The best thing we can do is to stay out of the way and let the emergency people run the show.” And that’s what we did, and what they did. The Red Cross treated it like any other kind of emergency, which, basically, was to come in and get people out of the building and take care of the people who had been hurt. That was it.

But by the following Monday, people had begun to recover from the shock and were beginning to feel the need to respond in a significant way. If it’s their next-door neighbor or somebody they know, people bring flowers. They bring food. They do what they can to help. If, on the other hand, they don’t live in the community, their options are limited and so they send money. And that’s what happened. The money began to pour in, and all these little funds to help the victim’s families sprouted up. Every radio station had a fund. The Junior League had a fund. The Rotary Club had a fund. People wanted to help and they wanted to do it through people they had a connection to. So, if you belong to the American Legion in Omaha, Nebraska, you call the American Legion in Oklahoma City. If you belong to the Rotary Club in New York City, you call the Rotary Club in Oklahoma City. You tend to rely on people you trust, on people who share your values.

In any case, it didn’t take long to realize that the money was mounting up. And at that point, we said, “Okay, all these people are talking about making grants to individuals, which are very different than grants to nonprofit organizations. We need to let the community know what grants to individuals are all about.” So we contacted the Council on Foundations on Monday and asked for some materials. And by Wednesday, we had issued a press release and mailed out a letter to all the banks in the area and anybody that had a fund saying, “If you’re going to collect money, if you’re going to make grants to individuals and people are going to get a charitable deduction as a result of their contributions, then you have to follow these rules.”

After that, we had five or six banks and major radio and television stations call us up and say, “We can collect this money, but we don’t have a clue about how to acknowledge or distribute it. Would you do that for us?” And we agreed to help out, with certain conditions. And those conditions were, one, that we could commingle the funds for the purposes of utilizing them and, two, that we had the final say as to how the dollars were used. Sure, tell us if you want it to be used for children, or education, or whatever, but once you do, we’ll make the final determination as to the particulars.

At that point, there were eighty different entities out there that had some kind of fund receiving contributions. It wasn’t that people were actively fundraising; the money was just coming in the mail. So, because he was concerned about scams and accountability issues, the governor, Frank Keating, called a meeting of all these funds — this was about eight or nine days after the bombing — and said, “Okay, let’s see what we can do to coordinate all this.” The governor felt it was important that we find a way to collect and share information so that everyone involved in the recovery effort would know who the victims were and who the family members of those victims were. And as a result of that meeting

and the fact that we shared a couple of trustees, the United Way of Oklahoma City and OCCF volunteered to coordinate the database effort.

Like I said, we didn't think we had a role to play initially. But after about ten days, it became obvious that this wasn't a run-of-the-mill emergency, that the implications in terms of how people had been affected were much larger than we had imagined. The stuff the Red Cross and the Salvation Army normally do for people in times of emergency wasn't required after the first couple of days. People didn't need shelter. They needed help in rebuilding their lives, which is a very different scenario than the ones in which the Salvation Army and Red Cross normally operate.

FC: Was the situation in Oklahoma City similar to the one those organizations later faced in New York after 9/11?

NA: Yes, but in Oklahoma City, the Red Cross and Salvation Army weren't as visible. They didn't have to deal with the same level of media scrutiny here as they got in New York. What they did, however, and how they did it was similar. Don't get me wrong; I'm not complaining about it. I'm just saying that Oklahoma City was a different situation than what those organizations were used to dealing with. No one knew what to expect. I mean, we went about three months without knowing from one day to the next what would happen. But now there are two templates for this kind of disaster response: Oklahoma City and New York. And if something happens someplace else, at least everyone will have a basic idea of what needs to be done.

FC: Well, let's talk about New York. How did you hear about what had happened at the World Trade Center on the morning of September 11, 2001?

NA: We watched it unfold on television like everybody else. I would have to say that we identified with the chaos: the lack of information, the lack of a plan detailing which organizations should respond, or even what needed to be done. I also have to admit that I said to myself, "I'm glad that we don't have to go through that again."

FC: When were you first contacted by folks here on the East Coast and asked to share your experiences with the aftermath of a devastating terrorist attack?

NA: Well, on September 19, the head of the Oklahoma City United Way, Tom Brown, called me and said he had been asked by the United Way in Washington, D.C., to come east and lend them a hand. But he had just retired, so he asked if I would go instead, which I did, on September 20. We also got calls from some of the people in New York asking about the forms that we had used, how we had set up the database, and so on. Obviously, the scale of the disaster in New York was of a different order of magnitude. But the fundamental issue which dominated both Oklahoma City and New York was dealing with a very large group of individuals who have lost a loved one in a very tragic and highly visible event. Dealing with the emotions and the needs of the people is the driver for all of the activity. Even though there was more of it in New York than Oklahoma City, the character was the same.

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The press was a much bigger player in the story than it was in Oklahoma City. . . . A lot of the agencies . . . started doing things based on how they felt the press would react.

FC: Can you describe your role in the weeks following the attacks?

NA: I spent a lot of time on the telephone — about half of it with people trying to figure out how to provide services or create or administer funds. The rest of it was spent talking to people from the press. I did about a hundred interviews with different media people over a period of about six months.

I actually came to New York in early November and started working with a couple of groups in the city. Some of them were involved in sorting out the legal issues related to distributing charitable funds. As you probably know, a waiver was eventually granted by the IRS to September 11-related charities that allowed them to ignore financial need as a criterion for distributing charitable funds. That was a big difference from Oklahoma City, where the relief-based-on-need requirement was never waived. Once that happened for New York, things changed a great deal. Because Oklahoma City didn't have a waiver, we didn't make direct grants to individuals but instead paid bills for them or gave them vouchers if they didn't have any resources to pay for food, housing, or medical care. Services like funerals, mental health, and counseling services were provided without respect to financial needs. Because so much money was involved, there was an extensive letter from the IRS to Oklahoma City charities about this issue. Basically, it said that if an individual had resources, you could not give them money just because they were related to a tragedy.

Then, from the middle of January through June, I was probably there every three weeks or so, working with the September 11th Fund, the Robin Hood Foundation, and several mental health groups, letting them know what we had done, in terms of mental health counseling, in Oklahoma City and also what they could expect as far as the victims and the families of victims were concerned — namely, that their first reaction would be anger, followed by anxiety related to figuring out how they were supposed to get on with their lives. In that regard, the two events played out in similar fashion.

But there were differences, too. In New York, for example, the press was a much bigger player in the story than it was in Oklahoma City, and I think a lot of the agencies involved in the recovery effort started doing things based on how they felt the press would react. Sure, we did that to some extent here. But it was a bigger issue, obviously, for the Red Cross and the September 11th Fund in the wake of 9/11. And I think, eventually, it led many organizations to look for ways to get rid of the money as quickly as possible so as to avoid criticism. Often, they'd just give it to somebody else. But what they did was to give it to other charities, not directly to individuals, which is a much harder thing to do. As long as the money had been distributed, however, they could say that they'd given it away.

FC: We're talking about a lot of money — something like \$2.6 billion when all was said and done. Were you surprised at the outpouring of support for the victims of the 9/11 attacks?

NA: Well, that was interesting. It was much more driven by local corporations and foundations than I think a lot of people realize. Of course, I say local, but many of them are

national foundations and multinational corporations with headquarters in New York. When you have groups like IBM and Texaco and the Ford Foundation putting \$8 million and \$10 million into something, that's huge. But if the attacks had happened in Omaha, I don't think those corporations and foundations would have responded in quite the same way. In that sense, the charitable response to 9/11 was similar to what we experienced in Oklahoma City. It's just that the numbers popped significantly because of the huge amounts contributed by New York-based organizations, while we didn't have those kinds of resources in Oklahoma City. In fact, the single largest gift we received was a million-dollar contribution from Southwestern Bell.

FC: In your opinion, how effective was the philanthropic response to 9/11?

NA: Given the unique circumstances, it's difficult to judge. And it's probably too soon to know. My feeling is that, when it's all said and done, the question of effectiveness is going to revolve around how many of the people affected by the attacks were able to get beyond them and live their lives in a productive fashion. That's the whole goal of the recovery effort. It's not about getting money into people's hands. It's about trying to help people rebuild their lives — and if I've said that once, I've said it a hundred thousand times. Unfortunately, we tend to focus on the money, not on what the money is supposed to help people accomplish.

In Oklahoma City, we felt pretty good that, five years after the bombing, we had only seventy out of about eight hundred families still receiving some type of assistance. We still have money and are able to help people. We keep up with most of the families that had children because we administer the main scholarship programs. If they need help, we're in a position to provide it and to already know about it. Most of them no longer need our help except for the scholarship program and some counseling. We have some kids who have overcome it and are going forward in the best way they can, which is better in my mind than saying, "Yes, we had this many dollars and we distributed it all; it all went to people, and none of it went to administrative purposes." Does that mean we were effective? I don't think so.

FC: What was your response upon learning that the federal government had created a compensation fund for the victims of the 9/11 attacks?

NA: It was a very emotional response. It wasn't necessarily a thoughtful response. I also think the creation of the fund established a precedent that the federal government is going to have a difficult time following in the future. Because if terrorism does become part of our lives for the foreseeable future, as many experts predict it will, it's going to become increasingly difficult to compensate victims of terrorist attacks. It's sort of interesting that, in Oklahoma City, it was a federal building that was bombed. Half the people who were killed in that bombing were federal workers. But there was no compensation for those people, despite the fact that they were employees of the federal government. That's a great irony.

FC: Have you been surprised by the cool reception given the compensation fund by the victims' families?

Unfortunately, we tend to focus on the money, not on what the money is supposed to help people accomplish.

People were going to be unhappy, they were going to be angry, and it didn't make any difference what charities and relief agencies did. . . .

NA: No. This whole thing is driven to a certain extent by the grieving process. How do people grieve in a situation like this? They get angry. I felt sorry for a lot of the charities in New York that were criticized by the press because people were unhappy and angry. I mean, what did they expect? People were going to be unhappy, they were going to be angry, and it didn't make any difference what charities and relief agencies did, because what happened to the victims was awful. Now, that's not to say that everybody did a perfect job and shouldn't have been criticized, or that we couldn't have done a better job. But I think there was an unrealistic expectation on the part of the press that once all this money was disbursed, everybody would be happy and whole again. That's just not going to happen, and the amount of money that was or wasn't distributed has nothing to do with it.

In a way, money becomes a distraction. It's a way to be angry about something else rather than being angry about the loss of a loved one. We saw it in Oklahoma City, but on a smaller scale. And we were concerned, in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, that there would be a lot of people here who became angry about the distribution of funds to victims in New York and Washington, D.C. But the actual number was much smaller than we anticipated. And I think that was because a lot of them had already dealt with their grief and were determined to get on with their lives. In New York, on the other hand, people are still going through the grieving process and the money still means something. They haven't figured out that the rest of their lives is what's really important, or that the money is more symbolic than anything else.

FC: How well has the philanthropic community in this country prepared itself for the next terrorist attack?

NA: I think it's something that's being thought about a great deal. I've spoken with a lot of different people and made presentations in several different communities with people who spend a lot of time thinking about the next time. And, as a result, I think the response by the philanthropic community will be very different the next time. In the first place, I don't think people will see it as a typical Red Cross/Salvation Army/FEMA kind of deal. People now understand that those groups are limited in what they can do, that the problem of responding to a major terrorist attack is much bigger than those organizations alone can handle, and that we will need to coordinate and put some services together that are much, much broader than what are normally provided by those organizations.

Second, I think we all accept the notion that there needs to be collaboration from the very beginning, and that relief agencies and charities will have to forget their differences and create some kind of common intake form and a process by which families that need assistance can get it without being swamped by bureaucracy. As we learned after 9/11, every organization creates its own bureaucracy, and if you multiply that by ten, it just becomes a nightmare for people who are trying to navigate the system and are already stressed out to begin with.

And third, I think it's important for every community to have a neutral non-service-provider fund or collection of funds that people can contribute to in the event of a major terrorist attack that's controlled by stakeholders in the community and not by the Red

Cross in Washington, D.C., or the Salvation Army in Atlanta, or FEMA, wherever they happen to be. When the Red Cross or Salvation Army receives money, how those funds are used is determined by their national disaster offices. They don't give money to any local service providers other than their own programs, and they have national guidelines about what they will and will not pay for. There is little or no input from local organizations in that process. There are lots of different kinds of service providers, and I don't think you should designate one, because in the event of a major terrorist attack, you're going to need a whole variety of services. So, every community should have some kind of clearinghouse, like a September 11th Fund or a community foundation, that can be neutral with respect to the kinds of services that need to be funded and can help facilitate their delivery. That's a message we've tried to deliver whenever we've had the opportunity. Now, whether communities will be able to put something like that in place remains to be seen. But I think it's important to note that contributions from donors are given voluntarily, and donors tend to give to organizations that they have confidence in.

FC: Before we wrap things up, I'd like to ask you one or two questions about OCCF. Has the economic slowdown affected your fundraising plans?

NA: Because we do a lot of endowment development, we've pulled back some in that area to give local nonprofits that are having trouble keeping their doors open a little breathing room. On the other hand, we're staying pretty aggressive with respect to planned giving and major gifts. But it's tough. Middle-class donors that had grown accustomed to contributing appreciated stock — and that's a significant portion of our donor base — just didn't have it to give this year.

FC: Are you planning any new initiatives?

NA: We're going to try to step up our planned-giving efforts, because we feel like planned gifts are independent of the economy to a certain extent. It's also the kind of thing that provides a better base for the community. And we're going to continue to emphasize endowment development as much as we possibly can. We feel like that's the best insurance for an organization, and we want to continue to deliver that message.

FC: Well, Nancy, thanks for taking the time to speak with us this morning.

NA: Thank you. It was my pleasure.

Kevin Kinsella, *Philanthropy News Digest's* managing editor, interviewed Nancy Anthony in January 2003.

It's important for every community to have a neutral non-service-provider fund that people can contribute to . . . that's controlled by stakeholders in the community.

Mobilizing Resources to Meet the Needs of Pentagon Families

In the aftermath of September 11, with images of the smoldering ruins of the Twin Towers still fresh in the national imagination, it was easy to forget that Washington, D.C., the seat of America's political and military might, had been the primary target of the terrorists. In fact, but for the heroics of a group of passengers on United Airlines Flight 93, it's almost certain that the White House or Capitol would have been hit and the course of history changed forever.

All too aware of the symbolic value of the terrorists' targets — as well as how nearly the country had escaped disaster — officials in the White House and Department of Defense decided to send a message of their own by pulling out the stops to have the damaged Pentagon rebuilt in time to mark the first anniversary of the attacks. The audacious efficiency of that effort did little, however, to assuage the grief of the victims' families or support local populations affected by the attacks.

TERRI LEE FREEMAN
PRESIDENT
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR THE
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SEPTEMBER 11: PERSPECTIVES FROM THE FIELD OF PHILANTHROPY

In May, *Philanthropy News Digest* spoke with Terri Lee Freeman, president of the Community Foundation of the National Capital Region (CFNCR), about the foundation's efforts to meet the needs of the families affected by the attack on the Pentagon, the impact of the attack on immigrant communities in the D.C. area, the difficulties inherent in coordinating a philanthropic response to future attacks, and lessons learned by the philanthropic community in the aftermath of 9/11.

As president of CFNCR, Freeman has been responsible for providing thought leadership and furthering the mission of the foundation to facilitate individual, family, and organizational giving at all levels to improve the quality of life in the metropolitan Washington region. Under her leadership, the foundation's assets have grown from \$52 million to more than \$200 million, making it the largest local grantmaker in the D.C. area, with grants of more than \$47 million in fiscal year 2002.

In April 2002, *Washingtonian* magazine identified Freeman as one of the 100 Most Powerful Women in Washington, and in August *Ebony* recognized her as one of the top black leaders in philanthropy. More recently, *Washingtonian* recognized her as one of its Washingtonians of the Year, and she was invited to join the *Washington Business Journal's* Board of Advisors. A graduate of the 1996 class of Leadership Washington, Ms. Freeman has served on a variety of boards and is currently a member of the board of Charity Lobbying in the Public Interest, the board of directors of Venture Philanthropy Partners, and a member of the Strategy Group for New Ventures in Philanthropy.

Freeman obtained her bachelor's degree in journalism/communication arts from the University of Dayton in 1981 and received a master's degree in organizational communication management from Howard University in 1983. She is married to the Reverend Bowyer Freeman and has three daughters.

Foundation Center: Terri, how long have you been with the Community Foundation of the National Capital Region?

Terri Lee Freeman: It will be seven years in July.

FC: What did you do before you joined the foundation?

TLF: Immediately prior, I was executive director of the Freddie Mac Foundation, in MacLean, Virginia. Prior to that, I worked for thirteen years in a variety of communications positions at the Freddie Mac Corporation.

FC: Where were you on the morning of September 11, 2001, when you heard that a plane had crashed into the Pentagon?

TLF: In the office.

FC: Had you already heard that something had happened in New York?

TLF: I had. We were preparing for a grants and program committee meeting that morning, and we heard that something had happened at the World Trade Center. My

assistant was on the telephone with someone at the Pentagon when the plane hit, and that's how we found out that something had happened there.

FC: Was it immediately apparent that the two events were related?

TLF: Yes.

FC: Did you and your colleagues do anything on the eleventh to respond to the attack at the Pentagon?

TLF: The only thing I did that day was to talk with Dot Ridings at the Council on Foundations and Lorie Slutsky at the New York Community Trust. They told me that a press release about the establishment of the September 11th Fund would be going out the next day and asked whether or not we would sign on. I said yes, and that was it for the day. I felt it was imperative that I be with my family.

FC: Can you walk us through what CFNCR did during the remainder of that week?

TLF: Well, one of the first things I did was to review the press release about the September 11th Fund. As I did, it became apparent that that effort was very New York-focused and was not going to meet the needs of the Washington area. We knew the United Way here would help the nonprofit organizations that served the families of people killed or missing at the Pentagon, but we also anticipated that people would want to support those families directly. So I talked to several colleagues in the region about establishing something that would benefit families directly. To make a long story short, after a lot of consultation with people from Oklahoma City and conversations with the *Washington Post*, we finalized the details of the Survivors Fund and announced it that Friday, the fourteenth, in the *Post*. On the sixteenth, that Sunday, the *Post* ran an editorial that basically said, "This is what we're contributing to," and the next day the Fund started to receive contributions.

FC: Why did you name it the Survivors Fund?

TLF: We didn't want to use the term "victim"; we wanted something with a more positive connotation. "September 11th" was already taken, so we decided to go with "Survivors."

FC: What was the announced mission of the Fund?

TLF: From the beginning we said that the Fund would be established to meet the longer-term needs of the families and others impacted by the September 11 tragedy at the Pentagon. Which meant the Fund had geographic restrictions and a time frame. We came right out and said our expectation was that the Fund would be in business for between five and seven years, and that we would focus on education, mental health, job transition, and other longer-term activities.

FC: Was your definition of "survivor" open-ended?

TLF: It was relatively open-ended because we knew it wasn't likely to be limited to the families of those who were injured or had died. We learned that from talking to people from Oklahoma City. For instance, I don't believe the Oklahoma City relief efforts initially included first responders. But after talking to the people there, we understood that first

We knew the United Way here would help the nonprofit organizations that served the families . . . but we anticipated that people would want to support those families directly.

We understood that first responders would need assistance. We also recognized that there would be people with survivor's guilt. . . .

responders would need assistance. We also recognized that there would be people with survivor's guilt, people who normally worked in the area where the plane hit but, for whatever reason, weren't there that morning and survived while many of their friends and colleagues were killed. Same with American Airlines employees. So the Fund's mandate was relatively broad from the beginning. Where we had to do some fine-tuning, which was done in what we call our team governance committee, was around the issue of what constitutes a victim's family. Later on we divided the affected population into primary and secondary audiences. The primary audience was comprised of those who had a family member who was injured or killed. The secondary audience included those whose mental health was significantly impacted by the event.

FC: At what point was the scope of the Fund broadened to include indirect victims — for example, those who lost their jobs or income as a result of the attack?

TLF: It wasn't. Instead, we tried to help indirect victims by leveraging other dollars. For example, we had already been working with immigrant populations in the region, so what we did, particularly with larger corporations, was to walk funders through the decision process. We began to talk to people and told them that we hadn't made provisions for the economic distress we were seeing and would they consider deploying some of their funds specifically for those populations. But the Survivors Fund was always limited to the population I mentioned.

FC: How much did the Fund eventually receive?

TLF: Right around \$20 million.

FC: And approximately how many people contributed to the Fund?

TLF: We received about twenty thousand gifts.

FC: Is the Fund still open to contributions?

TLF: It is. We received a few gifts around the time of the first anniversary in September 2002. We also received some gifts around the holidays. So it's open, but we don't anticipate getting many more contributions.

FC: How much of the \$20 million have you distributed?

TLF: We've authorized \$7.3 million for victim assistance and actually distributed \$5.2 million.

FC: The administrative costs of providing assistance became a hot-button issue for many 9/11 relief funds. How were they handled in the case of the Survivors Fund?

TLF: The administrative costs of the Fund were covered by corporations, local foundations, and the *Washington Post*.

FC: Have you set a termination date for the Fund?

TLF: We had planned for the Fund to operate for five to seven years. We haven't set a specific termination date, but one of the things we continue to do is have our case

managers keep an eye out for other sources of revenue that can support people's continuing needs after the Survivors Fund has ceased operations.

FC: The Survivors Fund differs from many of the funds created in the aftermath of 9/11 in its use of case managers. What do your case managers do, and why did you decide to structure assistance from the Fund around them?

TLF: Through consultation with social work professionals, it was clear that the distribution of cash alone would not necessarily help people. This was a severe, traumatic event, and there was going to be a need for counseling. The case-management approach is very personal, one-on-one, and fosters longer-term relationships that can help people navigate the charitable landscape. We instructed our case managers to not just look at what the Survivors Fund could provide, but also to look at how they could help people connect with Red Cross dollars, or United Way dollars, or with whatever assistance might be available.

People needed somebody to help them manage that process. That's why we decided on the case-management approach, and it has proven to be effective. We did a survey of our clients, and 93 percent of them reported that they were highly satisfied with the case management they received, while 91 percent reported they were highly satisfied with the services and financial support they received. Anecdotally, we've had people say, "Thank you for the Fund, but thank you more for the case manager." So that approach very much added value to the dollars themselves.

FC: How did you go about selecting case managers?

TLF: We didn't. We contracted with Northern Virginia Family Services, who do this kind of work on a regular basis, and said, "We want to establish a fund for the survivors of the Pentagon attack, we want to use case managers, but we can't do it ourselves. Tell us how many people you'll need in order to keep the case loads reasonable." Typically, case managers are social workers who have been involved with other disasters or have worked with people who have experienced significant trauma. I can't tell you exactly how many years of experience they have on average, but I can say that Northern Virginia Family Services sets high standards for their case managers, and that these people — we have ten case managers and one supervisor — are solely devoted to the work of the Survivors Fund.

FC: Has the predicted need for mental health counseling post-9/11 materialized in your community?

TLF: Yes. We're still seeing an average of ten to twenty new cases a month, most of them mental health-related. Some of them are relatives of victims, but many are Pentagon employees.

FC: Do you anticipate that the need will persist for the next several years?

TLF: Yes, we do. We're starting to see the need develop among rescue workers and Defense Intelligence Agency employees. After the first anniversary, we started to see a

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spike in the numbers. They've leveled off, but we continue to see a steady inflow of new people seeking help. We expect to reach the one-thousand-client mark eventually.

FC: The immigrant community in the D.C. region was hit particularly hard by 9/11. Why was that, and what is the foundation doing to address the needs of immigrants in the area?

TLF: There were several reasons, one being plain old backlash against a religion and various ethnic groups that, in the minds of many unthinking people, had perpetrated this horrible crime against Americans. Second, we have a lot of immigrants who work in the hospitality industry, which was the industry most affected by the attacks. We had been working with nonprofit organizations that provide services to immigrant communities for about a year and a half prior to 9/11, focusing on naturalization issues, tenant advocacy, and so on, and after 9/11 we stepped up our convening activities around some of those issues. But most our efforts have been an extension of the work we'd been doing with the Washington Area Partnership for Immigrants, which deals with social justice issues, legal services to the immigrant community, and collaboration between various ethnic-oriented nonprofits. That work continues.

FC: Have you seen evidence, anecdotal or otherwise, to suggest that support for 9/11 recovery efforts in the D.C. region came at the expense of existing programs?

TLF: Immediately following the attacks, yes, there was a decrease in dollars flowing to organizations not directly involved in disaster recovery-related efforts. But people weren't saying too much back then. It was just too sensitive a topic. Later on, after several months had passed, we began to hear more about all the money going to people directly impacted by 9/11, and questions began to be raised about whether too much money was going to the victims' families and not enough to other types of victims — immigrant communities, hospitality workers, et cetera. But remember, the economy had turned down before September 11, and the attacks served to compound the situation, creating a kind of perfect-storm scenario. I haven't heard people blaming it directly on September 11, but September 11 certainly was a factor. A bigger factor in my opinion, however, was all the negative press around the Red Cross and transparency and accountability issues — more so than the contributions to September 11 funds themselves.

FC: Speaking of the press, were you and your colleagues treated fairly by the local media in the aftermath of 9/11?

TLF: I think so. Surprisingly, we largely stayed out of the fray. Twenty million dollars is a lot of money — but not when compared to the hundreds of millions raised in New York. While we were the largest of the funds devoted to folks at the Pentagon — the other funds raised in this community were very small — we worked closely with those funds. We also kept our local media abreast of what we were doing, and we were never shy about saying, "We don't know how this is going to play out; we've never done this before." So we really didn't receive any negative press.

FC: Is the media still paying attention to the Fund and the needs of the survivors and victims' families?

TLF: An article appeared in the *Washington Post* on September 11, 2002, that was very positive about the work of the Fund. The *Post* actually talked with some of the survivors and some of the people who were utilizing the case-management services provided by the Fund. But I haven't seen an article about the Fund in the local press since then. We're getting ready to do another report to the community, so maybe something will be picked up after it's released.

FC: Is the funding community in the D.C. area doing anything to prepare for future terror-related contingencies?

TLF: Yes, very much so. In October of 2002, CFNCR committed to doing an evaluation of the nonprofit and philanthropic response to 9/11 in the D.C. area. We assembled a task force of stakeholders, including people from other foundations, the local VOAD [Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters], and the media, and McKinsey & Company donated their services to help us develop a blueprint for future disasters — a blueprint that could also be used by other communities. Then we organized the task force into several work groups — one devoted to resource mediation, another to in-kind goods and services, a third to volunteers in service coordination, and a fourth group that focuses on communications activities — and got to work. I'm happy to say that the first draft of that blueprint has been completed. So the next time the call comes from the Red Cross — as it usually does — we'll be in a much better position to mobilize our resources to meet the needs of the community than we were before 9/11.

Having said that, remember that the whole process I just described was done in response to an event that resulted in about two hundred fatalities and injuries. Obviously, the next time could be much worse, and the issue of scale is one we continue to struggle with.

FC: Was the Department of Homeland Security involved in the process?

TLF: Yes. George Vradenburg, one of our trustees, chairs the task force and has been very involved with the Board of Trade's emergency-preparedness work. He also has been working with the Council of Governments and with Michael Byrne, who is now in charge of the Department of Homeland Security's D.C. regional office.

FC: It sounds like the D.C. funding community is better prepared to respond to a next time, with a caveat: You don't know what the next time will look like.

TLF: That's right. As I say in almost every meeting, "The best-laid plans . . ." You just don't know. You try to cover all the bases, but could something happen that we didn't plan for? Absolutely, and we have to recognize that.

FC: What other lessons should we learn from the Survivors Fund? Are they the same lessons we learned from Oklahoma City and the World Trade Center, or did each of those disasters generate its own unique lessons?

TLF: While I think each event generated its own unique lessons, there are similarities. One of the things we've learned is that the community that's ultimately affected in catastrophic disasters tends to be larger than just those who were directly impacted. So, the next time

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this happens we need to make sure that when we establish a mandate for a fund — and it's very important to define what a fund is and what it will do — we define it in such a way that it can meet the needs of all those who are impacted. That was a lesson learned in Oklahoma City, a little after the fact, and something that the September 11th Fund did quite well.

I think the second thing we are learning — again, borne out by the experience of the folks in Oklahoma City — is that people's needs change over time. They want closure, and as time goes by they're apt to be more irritated than appreciative of the process than they might have been early on. Closure is important, and sometimes putting a human face on closure is overlooked. That's why case management is essential to helping people get on with their lives.

Let me give you a quick example. We had a case where an individual was too traumatized to leave the house. Simply cutting her a check wasn't an option, because that wouldn't have gotten her out of the house. So we sent a case manager over to work with her, and eventually she reached a point where she could leave the house and do things like see a doctor or go to the bank. But without the case manager, the pieces of the puzzle wouldn't have come together. People heal in different ways, and you need people who are skilled in mental-health counseling or social work to be able to identify different types of therapeutic need.

Finally, all of us have learned that when it comes to the public, we must be transparent, we must be clear, and we must communicate frequently so that the public's trust in us is preserved. Frankly, I'm concerned that if something else were to happen, we would not be able to raise significant dollars because of all the negative press that was generated in the wake of 9/11. The corporate community will always be a good partner in times of crisis, but you have to wonder whether the average donor will feel as comfortable writing a check for a hundred dollars the next time we're hit by a catastrophic attack. That's a question we all should be asking.

FC: And one I hope we never learn the answer to.

TLF: That's right.

FC: Well, Terri, thanks very much for your time this morning.

TLF: You're very welcome.

Mitch Nauffts, *Philanthropy News Digest's* editorial director, interviewed Terri Lee Freeman in May 2003.

Helping Undocumented Immigrants in the Wake of 9/11

Census results show that the Mexican population in New York City nearly tripled — to 183,813 — between 1990 and 2000, compared with a modest increase in the number of Dominicans and a decline in the Puerto Rican population, the city's two largest Hispanic groups. And some leaders in the Mexican community believe the figure would be closer to 500,000 if it included undocumented immigrants.

The dramatic increase in the city's Mexican population has caused its share of problems. Undocumented Mexican workers struggle to get paid for work they have done, those who have been injured on the job often don't receive medical treatment, and still others are cheated out of wages intended for their families back in Mexico. The events of September 11, 2001, added a new dimension to these problems. Many families already living in poverty lost their primary breadwinner. Undocumented immigrants who survived scrambled to prove

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they had worked downtown or worried whether they would be able to find work again in an economy that had been staggered. Others who were in the country illegally suffered in silence, too scared to ask for help.

Within days, staff at Asociación Tepeyac de New York, a network of forty groups dedicated to organizing and educating the city's Latino immigrants and protecting their social welfare and human rights, were answering phone calls from frantic relatives in Latin America, offering psychological counseling and providing financial assistance to immigrants who were ineligible to receive assistance from other agencies. The young organization — formed just four years earlier by Brother Joel Magallan, SJ, who was sent by Mexican Jesuits in response to an appeal for help from the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York — quickly proved that it could effectively serve the urgent needs of a community whose members, because of their illegal status, often don't trust authorities and other agencies.

Earlier this year, *Philanthropy News Digest* spoke with Teresa García, the finance director at Tepeyac, about the organization's role in the Hispanic community, its work after September 11, 2001, and its plans for the future.

García came to New York City from Mexico in 1995 to study English and philosophy. She later earned a degree in international marketing from Baruch College in New York and worked in the financial services industry for a few years. She began to work with Tepeyac as a volunteer in late 1999 and joined the staff as finance director in May 2001.

Foundation Center: Teresa, tell us about Tepeyac de New York — how did it get started, what is its mission, and how does it fulfill that mission?

Teresa García: I think the heart of what Tepeyac does is organizing and educating people in the Latino community. We were started by community-based activists who were already doing something and wanted to create a formal organization. Once they had done that, they said, "Okay, one of our priorities now that we have formed this organization will be to focus on educational problems." Not formal education, but something that could help people survive and access various agencies that provide assistance to the community. So Tepeyac started a leadership program to teach people in the neighborhoods how to talk to each other and organize. Some people were already doing that, but they didn't have all the skills they needed. It's still one of the most important programs we have — leadership and community organizing.

FC: Your offices, which are less than two miles from the World Trade Center site, were a refuge for many Hispanics who had been downtown on the morning of September 11, 2001. Can you describe the atmosphere in the office that morning?

TG: A lot of immigrants who were working in the World Trade Center area that morning — in construction, in restaurants, in delis — got separated from their friends and co-workers; they didn't know what to do, so they came to our office. Around 10:30, one

person who had been working with us for five years appeared at our door. We were watching TV, like everyone else, to see what was going on, and all of a sudden there he was. He was covered by dust and so scared when I saw him; he was just desperate. Pretty soon, more people started to arrive on foot — remember, there were no trains, no transportation. So we began to take them in, and we also began to receive phone calls from relatives in other countries. It was a crazy day.

Everybody thought that we would be able to help them. But we didn't know what to do — nobody knew what to do. So we just started helping them. A lot of people have asked, "How did you find the people you helped?" We didn't find them; they found us.

FC: Tepeyac originally was formed to serve Mexican immigrants. Did you also serve immigrants from other Latin American countries in the wake of 9/11?

TG: We have a very close relationship with the Mexican immigrant community; the organization was founded by Mexican leaders. We mainly serve undocumented workers, and we've been fighting for amnesty for them since the organization was founded five years ago. We also have a good reputation with the media — the Hispanic media — and we were receiving lots of media coverage around that time. So everybody in the Latin American community began to come to us, even people that had never come to us before. We welcomed everyone.

In the first few weeks, we were working on one hundred and six cases involving people reported missing, and we ended up working on a total of sixty-seven cases. Sixteen of those are Mexican families, and we're also working with families from Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Ecuador, Peru, Honduras, Colombia, Paraguay, Bolivia, and other countries. In addition, we serve nine hundred dislocated workers — sixty-four percent of them Mexican, about nine percent Ecuadorian, five percent from Colombia, five percent from the Caribbean, and about three percent Peruvian. Most of these workers are undocumented, and about half of them worked downtown. The other half worked for bakeries and delivered dough, cookies, or bread, or delivered produce, or did laundry for restaurants downtown. They all lost their jobs. It was a chain reaction.

FC: What did you do initially to help these people?

TG: We started by putting together a database of people who were reported missing and by searching for people in hospitals. Actually, most of our volunteers were working on an event we were going to have in Battery Park the following week, so we already had a lot of people downtown. We just changed the focus of our activity, and everybody started to do different tasks. Some people took phone calls; others worked on creating the database. A lot of people went downtown to the World Trade Center site to see if they could help. We also began to think that we needed to do something more organized and not just react to what people needed. We knew at that point that most of the people coming to us were coming because they couldn't get assistance anywhere else. They came because their experience accessing public services hadn't been good, or because many services simply aren't available to the undocumented population. So we said, "Okay, let's see what we can do."

Nobody knew what to do. . . . So we just started helping. A lot of people have asked, "How did you find the people you helped?" We didn't find them; they found us.

The office was open twenty hours a day, seven days a week, with a staff of three people and twenty-one full-time volunteers. . . .

FC: Did you keep track of people who visited or called Tepeyac looking for assistance?

TG: We compiled a lot of statistics. For a while, workers from the World Trade Center area met here every night and would go through the same routine: “Okay, we were working in this business. In this business we had ten people; eight of them were Mexicans, five of them were undocumented,” and so on. We started writing down the names of the businesses and how many people were in each business, and put it all into a database along with the addresses of the businesses, how many people worked in each one, and what their occupation was. Most of the missing worked in the restaurant business — forty-nine percent. Most of the rest were in the service industry — construction, delis, pizzerias, dry cleaning, parking, et cetera.

During the first month after 9/11, we were working from twelve to twenty hours a day. The office was open twenty hours a day, seven days a week, with a staff of three people and twenty-one full-time volunteers, many of them interns from colleges and universities in Mexico. We were trying like crazy to figure out what to do. We started providing counseling for the families of the missing, and we started trying to contact the authorities and the media so they could see what was happening in our community.

FC: When did you start receiving assistance from other agencies?

TG: During that fall, we were able to function thanks to a \$20,000 check from the AFL-CIO, which we received on September 19, and the donations of individuals. At first, everyone knew about the other heroes but not really about our community. But pretty soon we had media coming in from all over the place, and people from all over the country started sending us \$5, \$10, \$20. We gave that money to the families of the victims and began organizing how we would give money to dislocated workers. We also told their stories to media from other countries. We talked to one magazine from France and then a couple of newspapers from Japan, so it was really nice to know that a lot of people cared about the people we serve.

We started to contact FEMA [the Federal Emergency Management Agency] and other agencies in September to tell them about the needs in our community, and I think they began to work with us in October — FEMA, the Red Cross, and other voluntary organizations that help in disasters. The Red Cross said, “Okay, if the people don’t have Social Security numbers and they don’t have documentation, how should we do this? How do you know they’re victims and not just someone off the street?” So we had to come up with a way for people to prove they were victims. Some of them had proof to work with, like the delivery boys who had to show identification every time they made a delivery in the towers. For others who didn’t have proof, not even a pay stub, we ended up grouping them by type of business, so they could serve as witnesses for each other.

FC: Can you give us an example?

TG: Let’s take restaurants. We created a long list of all the restaurants downtown that employed undocumented immigrants. I think, at the beginning, we had the names of fifty-eight places. So when someone came in who had worked at a restaurant on that list, we

would tell him to bring in the other people he knew who worked there. And when they came in, they'd say, "Okay, this lady was a cashier, and I was the cook." We put that information together with other information — how many people were employed by a particular restaurant, what their jobs were, how much money they made, how many dependents they had — then sent them to a public notary, where they signed an affidavit. We wanted them to prove they were who they said they were, but we also wanted to protect ourselves. In fact, Safe Horizon and a couple of other relief agencies adopted the same system; they learned it from us.

FC: What about people who didn't work downtown?

TG: So many of the dislocated workers in our community did not work downtown. They worked in the construction industry, or at the airports, or in restaurants throughout the city and needed assistance as much as anyone. But they didn't qualify for it, either because much of that assistance was earmarked for people who lived or worked below Canal Street [about a mile north of the World Trade Center] or because people had to be able to prove that they were working. Most of the relief agencies had the same criteria. We had about fifty people who were directly affected by the attacks but couldn't get any kind of assistance. So we had to see what else we could do for them.

FC: Besides helping people financially and providing counseling, what other kinds of services did Tepeyac offer to victims?

TG: We started providing case-management services in October, and then we expanded the computer and English classes we were already offering to the community. We knew that a lot of the people who had lost their jobs wouldn't be able to find new ones right away. And because we knew the experience had been hard on them, and we were worried about depression, we decided that the best thing for them at that moment was to get them doing something. So we expanded those programs and made sure we included dislocated workers. We also held a lot of workshops and tried to bring people together, giving them an opportunity to network and support each other while they were looking for jobs. We didn't want them to feel alone.

FC: When did you realize you might need a longer-term plan to address some of these needs?

TG: We thought we were finished with September 11 assistance in December [of 2001], but then we realized many needs still existed and that we needed to design something for the long term. By that point, I had started writing to foundations and asking them for assistance, but they didn't know us and were reluctant to give us anything. I knocked on a lot of doors and just didn't receive anything.

FC: Did any of the foundations you approached eventually get past their reluctance and provide you with funding?

TG: We worked a long time trying to arrange something with the Robin Hood Foundation. We initially met with them in September, when we were going to meetings

We had to come up with a way for people to prove they were victims. . . . Safe Horizon and other relief agencies adopted the same system; they learned it from us.

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with the Salvation Army, FEMA, and other relief agencies. But before they would fund us, they wanted to make sure we had the infrastructure in place to use the funds appropriately. It took us a long time to meet that requirement because we simply didn't have the equipment. I had a computer, but it was from my other job. In total, the organization had two computers — that was it. We also needed to hire more people; we needed desks, chairs, office equipment; and we needed to convince foundations that we could be efficient in distributing resources to our community. So the negotiations were really hard, and it took several months to secure the funding.

After the AFL-CIO contribution, the first one to give us money was the American Jewish World Service. I asked everyone for money except them, and they were the first to approach us. We received a check for \$40,000 from them on November 13, 2001, to distribute to victims and dislocated workers. Then, in January, we started getting money from some of the big funders, including Robin Hood and the September 11th Fund, and that money allowed us to hire five caseworkers, a psychologist, an ESL [English-as-a-Second Language] coordinator, and a computer-class coordinator.

FC: What other things did you do to provide for longer-term needs?

TG: Well, we continued to provide assistance to almost nine hundred dislocated workers. In addition to financial assistance, we offered job-networking support, medical services referrals, psychological counseling, immigration counseling, and legal advice — fortunately, we received a lot of pro bono help.

For the sixty-seven families of the deceased, especially the families abroad, we raised money for them from foundations, churches, and individual donors; provided medical insurance, scholarships for their children, and housing; and helped them set up small businesses so they could survive on their own. We didn't want to just give them money for food or expenses; we wanted to help them learn to survive without us. So we provided financial planning for their education, health, and housing needs down the road.

FC: Did any of your clients qualify for federal assistance?

TG: When we finally got the chance to talk to FEMA about a month and a half after the tragedy, we told them that we had all these people that couldn't get assistance of any kind. Many had children and were on the verge of not having anything to eat. So FEMA agreed to let the parents of children born in this country apply for emergency assistance and came and gave us training on how to fill out the application. We eventually submitted something like three hundred applications — and only one person received assistance. One reason was because the application package was so complicated that it really required more training to figure out than most of our clients received. But another reason was that in every place where you were asked to sign, there was also a warning that said something like, "If you are not in this country legally, you are liable to prosecution."

So, many people who applied got a notice that said they were ineligible. We contacted the people at FEMA and asked them, "Do you want us to do the paperwork again?" And they said, "Okay, let's do the applications again." We wanted more people to apply, but many of

them wouldn't; they were just too scared. As things stand now, forty-eight families who lost a relative will receive death certificates. Among those, we know that thirty-seven are eligible to receive federal compensation, but eleven are still not sure because they lack the required documentation.

FC: When do you expect to bring your 9/11 programs to a close?

TG: As I said, we thought they would last six months and then people would get jobs, say thank you, and that would be that. But the economy is so bad they keep coming back. Sometimes they've managed to find part-time work, but things are very unstable right now. So we'll probably keep them going for at least another year, even though they require a lot of our resources. The need is there.

And we plan to continue helping families — victims' families — apply for financial assistance. We were with them when they started the process, and we want to be there at the end of the process. We also want to work with those who weren't able to receive the assistance they needed. We've completed projects with some of those families — we helped them buy a house or set up a small business that will enable them to survive even without assistance. But we have many other families to serve. So we're probably looking at two more years for victims' families, and maybe longer.

FC: What are you doing to help those families who were not eligible for assistance?

TG: We didn't have any hope that those families were going to receive anything. But from the very beginning, we have had volunteers — people who have experience in financial planning — help with the planning for these families. It's a very different kind of planning than what you see with people who have 401(k)s. I mean, these people have nothing, and in many cases their dependents don't even live in the U.S. So we offer them customized financial planning, and we help where we can with projects of the kind I mentioned — getting them set up with a house and income so that they can survive and provide for their children and pay for basic medical care. You have to understand, many immigrants who come to the U.S. come because they want a house or to send their children to a good school. That's all. But for some of the families that live outside the U.S., we had to close their cases because we couldn't get the proof we needed in order to include them in the program.

FC: Because Tepeyac was positioned to help a population that few agencies were prepared to reach in the wake of 9/11, it grew considerably in the months that followed the attack. How has that expansion affected the organization?

TG: The 9/11 funding we received allowed us to build our programs and reach out, very successfully, to more members of the community. We would like to continue providing that level of assistance to the Latin American community. We have waiting lists for our computer classes, for our ESL classes, for our GED classes. We want to provide scholarships to those people who have completed the ESL and computer classes. They are eager to continue learning and want to keep busy. We have also heard from a lot of Hispanics who have documentation and want to take advantage of our services — they've

The 9/11 funding we received allowed us to build our programs and reach out, very successfully, to more members of the community.

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heard good things about us. How can we say no to others in the community who want to enroll in our classes? We need people — we need funders — to see and understand what we are doing to serve this population, especially what we did to serve 9/11 victims, because it's going to go down in history. And we don't want our community to remain invisible.

Right now we have a big challenge: Because of September 11, we have more clients and fewer resources. Funders want to give grants for specific programs, but we're struggling with operational expenses. We need to pay rent, and foundations don't like to give money for rent. We need to pay utility bills and administrative costs. I've been knocking on a lot of doors, with mixed results. Because of the market and the poor economy, a lot of funders don't have the money right now. They say our proposals are good, but they can't help us with funding.

It's not all bad for us, because we have been able to prove to funders over the last year and a half that we do good work and that we are capable of doing more good work in the future, if they help us. For us, it's been an investment in relationship building with foundations. It's difficult, but I am convinced it will pay off for us in the long run.

FC: Tepeyac relies heavily on volunteers and interns, both full- and part-time. Can you tell us about those programs?

TG: Most of our interns are students from the top universities in Mexico. We have around ten interns right now, and we're bringing on five more to help us with a big event in the city — Our Lady of Guadalupe, which includes a run called the Torch of Our Lady of Guadalupe, or *Carrera Antorcha Guadalupeana*. The race starts in Mexico City, and thousands of young immigrants will participate by passing a torch off to one another until it reaches Saint Patrick's Cathedral in New York City on December 12. The event encourages immigrants from all nationalities to organize and educate themselves to promote their own rights. It also allows Tepeyac to share its organizational model with other immigrant leaders in towns across the country.

We also have some full-time volunteers, people who aren't working who are able to come in and help out for a month or more at a time. And we have some young people who want to continue studying in the afternoon, so they come in after school and we give them a MetroCard [transit pass] to make it worth their while.

So we have a range of people, from professionals who are teaching ESL and computer classes to people who are unemployed and unable to find work. It's really amazing. Six months ago we had about fifty volunteers, and now we have sixty. I've even been thinking that we need to do something for them to show our appreciation, because right now their work is so crucial to what we do. We really should develop a system that sustains them and also makes them feel good about what they do.

FC: We've talked about your 9/11 and leadership and community organizing programs. Anything else we should know about?

TG: Well, we haven't talked about the immigration counseling. People come here to see what kind of application they need to submit to the INS [now the Bureau of Citizenship

and Immigration Services] or where they are in the process. Also, when these people see lawyers and the lawyers don't have time to respond to their questions, they often come to us. Our person in charge of immigration will tell them what's going on with their cases, and she also does workshops, both here and in different neighborhoods.

We also have a labor-counseling program. Most of our clients don't have a Social Security number, so when they get injured on the job they tend not to go to a hospital. We try to explain to them what their rights are. The person in charge of that program will also phone the employer and politely ask them if they can provide some medical attention to our injured client. Or, if our client is unable to work anymore, we try to negotiate with the employer to see whether they qualify for worker's compensation. If it's not possible for the employer to provide worker's comp, we'll take the case to the Labor Department.

Another important thing we do is to help clients get their wages when an employer decides to withhold some or all of their pay. Most of our clients in the labor-counseling program are there because they haven't been paid wages they are owed.

Then we have the educational programs — the computer training and the ESL classes. Volunteers teach those classes, and we have paid staff members who coordinate them. The coordinators are in charge of developing the curriculum; hiring, supervising, and training volunteers; and also looking at other locations for classes. We prefer to keep our classes small — we have been very successful with groups of ten people. With smaller groups, we can evaluate progress better — students' progress as well as whether we are able to deliver on their expectations.

In the ESL classes, they learn the vocabulary they need in order to survive in the workplace, read a lease or negotiate with the landlord, access emergency-room services or Medicare, and so on. Basically, the classes are designed to give immigrants the language skills they need to survive in New York City. We also offer conversational classes taught by volunteers — many from Wall Street or big midtown companies — that give our people an opportunity to learn to speak English properly and have meaningful one-on-one conversations. That's what I love the most about the ESL classes — they give people a chance to connect with people who may have a different social status.

We also have a television program that teaches people how to make a documentary, use a camera, edit. The participants decide what the documentary is going to be about and are part of the production. We already have one group of people who have gone through the program, and they're teaching a new group of students. We get space on the Manhattan Neighborhood Network channel, the public access cable station in Manhattan, and it's just a very nice program because people who used to think that television was only for celebrities or important people get a chance to share their dreams and experiences and ideas with other people. It's inspiring. Most of the participants are young — sixteen-, seventeen-, and eighteen-year-olds. And that's great, because before they go through the program most of them think that the only job they can get is working in a kitchen or something. It's very rewarding for them.

A lot of funders don't have the money right now. It's not all bad for us . . . it's been an investment in relationship building with foundations.

Other agencies and organizations and unions are now coming to us and asking how they should reach out to our community, or are asking us to send people to them.

FC: Do Latin American immigrants in New York differ from other immigrants in the city?

TG: I think all undocumented immigrants, regardless of where they're from, have the same needs. The thing is that when it comes to solving immigration issues, people from other places have more help available; there are more initiatives set up to help them. People who come from Eastern Europe can solve their problems relatively quickly, and then they stop having the problems that come with being an undocumented immigrant. People from Asian countries get help through their agencies and organizations and are able to build a business and establish a stable life sooner.

Don't get me wrong: All immigrants have the same problems and the same needs at the beginning. But somehow immigrants from other regions of the world are solving their problems faster. The federal government isn't helping matters by denying legal residency to Latin American people. As a result, we have immigrants who have been in this country for fifteen years and are still finding it difficult to advance.

FC: Are you excited about the future of your organization?

TG: I'm very excited about the future of Tepeyac, but it's also going to be a challenge. Because we don't have a contract with the city or the state or the federal government, we aren't tied to a set plan. That gives us a lot of flexibility to do things for the population we serve. And I think very few organizations have such close contact with or intimate knowledge of the needs of the communities they serve. Most of our organizers either live with immigrants or are immigrants themselves. So it's very exciting to be able to help the people we are supposed to help. It's very exciting that all these people are approaching us because they trust us. For me, it's a privilege to work here. In the three years I've been here, I can think of so many things we have done and so many people we have helped. It's incredible, really.

At the same time, we still have a lot of work to do. And because we are the ones that are actually doing the work, we are becoming the experts in serving this population. Other agencies and organizations and unions are now coming to us and asking how they should reach out to our community, or are asking us to send people to them — everyone is asking us what our people need. It means a lot for us to be that kind of connection between the people who want to help and the people who need help. And it's just really nice that in New York, people appreciate that these immigrants are contributing to the city's economy and want to help them.

FC: Well, Teresa, thanks so much for your time.

TG: Thank you.

Jennifer Furl, an associate editor at *Philanthropy News Digest*, interviewed Teresa Garcia in April 2003.

The Impact of 9/11 on Low-Income Workers

Cracks in the robust New York City economy of the late '90s began to appear months before two hijacked jetliners slammed into the towers of the World Trade Center on the morning of September 11, 2001. The Nasdaq Composite Index reached an all-time high of 5,132 on March 10, 2000 — and promptly fell 60 percent, to 2,052, over the next twelve months. As investor and business confidence fell along with market indices, wage and job growth in the city began to stagnate and the city's tourism industry experienced the first signs of a slowdown. Then 9/11 happened and, as David R. Jones, president and CEO of the Community Service Society of New York puts it, “the whole thing came unglued.”

In the months after the attacks, the city lost 83,000 actual jobs and an additional 63,000 jobs that would have been created had the attacks not occurred, with those job losses spread evenly over a range of industries, including financial services, aviation, apparel manufacturing, retailing, and tourism. Estimates of the

DAVID R. JONES
PRESIDENT AND CEO
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negative impact on the city's economic output ranged from \$20 billion to \$39 billion. And the toll in human terms — beyond the staggering loss of 2,819 lives — was incalculable.

In a wide-ranging interview conducted in December 2002, *Philanthropy News Digest* spoke with David Jones about the economic impact of 9/11 on the poor and working poor in New York City, his organization's activities in the aftermath of the attacks, the city's current fiscal crisis, welfare reform legislation, and the prospects for economic recovery going forward.

David R. Jones, Esq., has been president and CEO of the Community Service Society of New York, one of the nation's oldest and largest nonprofit social welfare organizations, since 1986.

The son of a former assemblyman and judge, Jones was born in Brooklyn's Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood in 1948 and received his B.A. from Wesleyan University in 1970 and a Juris Doctor degree from Yale Law School in 1974. In 1975, he joined the law firm of Cravath, Swaine and Moore, where he specialized in corporate antitrust cases and contract litigation, and was appointed Special Advisor to the Mayor of the City of New York, with responsibilities in race relations, urban development, immigration reform, and education, in 1979. Prior to joining CSS, Jones served for three years as executive director of the New York City Youth Bureau, where he initiated programs to help homeless young adults and pregnant teens and expanded after-school activities for "latchkey children" of working parents.

From 1993 to 1998, he served on the board of directors of the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation, which operates twenty-one municipal facilities largely serving poor and immigrant populations of color, and in 1998 he was appointed to the advisory board of the Independent Budget Office, a group that monitors city spending.

Mr. Jones currently serves on the boards of the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund, Homes for the Homeless, the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy, and the Wildlife Conservation Society, and sits on the advisory boards of the John F. Kennedy School of Government, the Barnard-Columbia Center for Leadership on Urban Public Policy, and the School of Public Affairs of Baruch College. He is, in addition, a trustee of the New-York Historical Society, a director of the Prospect Park Alliance, and a member of the executive committee of the New York Foundation.

Jones was the recipient of a Thomas J. Watson Fellowship in 1970 and holds an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from the City University of New York and an honorary Master of Arts degree from Wesleyan University. A member of the New York State and federal bars, he is married to Dr. Valerie King, a clinical psychologist. They have two children.

Foundation Center: David, tell us about CSS — when was it founded, what is its mission, and how has that mission changed over the years?

David Jones: Sure. The Community Service Society of New York is about a hundred and fifty-five years old. It was created in the last century by the merger of two prominent not-for-profits, the New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, which was

founded in 1845, and the Charity Organization Society, which was founded in 1882. The founder of the Charity Organization Society was a woman by the name of Josephine Shaw Lowell. She came from a prominent Boston abolitionist family and was the brother of Colonel Robert Shaw, the white commander of black troops in the Civil War whose story was told in the movie *Glory*. After the war — during which she lost virtually all her male relatives — Shaw Lowell moved to New York and became the leader of what became known as the scientific social work movement. Before Josephine Shaw Lowell, the usual way the poor were dealt with, to the extent that anyone bothered, was through something called street relief. Politicians used it a lot — they'd set up a table in a poor neighborhood and provide coal, turkeys, blankets, and what have you in return for votes. That was the major vehicle for the distribution of charitable relief.

Then, after the Civil War, Shaw Lowell's group came in and, along with other activists linked with prominent figures like Jacob Riis and Thomas Nash, the political cartoonist, began to investigate conditions in the city's tenements and poor neighborhoods using something called "friendly visitors" — nice, middle-class ladies who would go into the tenements and visit with poor families and, based on those visits, determine whether a family was deserving of relief.

More significantly, perhaps, these groups also began to uncover some of the corrupt practices that were helping to keep people in conditions of squalor and poverty. It turned out, for example, that the New York City machine politicians of the time actually owned many of the tenements in which the poor lived, and those kinds of arrangements became one of the first targets of this new breed of social reformer. Another was the widespread practice of mixing ground-up chalk with water and passing it off to poor immigrant families as milk, a practice that resulted in the deaths of tens of thousands of children a year. Stopping that practice was one of the fights our predecessor agencies took up and eventually succeeded in winning.

We were also instrumental in creating the first new-law tenement. At the time, around the turn of the century, most of the city's poor were crammed into row tenements with no air or light or central sanitation. So we came up with the idea of putting rooms around an air shaft, which at least gave the tenants in those buildings access to ventilation and a little bit of natural light. We also created the first public baths in New York and the first penny lunch. Essentially, what the organization was about back then — and still is about today — was tackling social problems through research and advocacy: You identify a problem, you investigate the root causes of the problem, and then you either provide relief to those who are suffering or you address the causes of the problem. And if you can't get the public or private sector to fix the problem, you go ahead and create a prototype of something that will. That's how the penny lunch came about. We were the ones who established, through research, the link between malnourished kids and poor performance in school. But we didn't sit around and wait for city government to come to the same conclusion — if we had, we might still be waiting. Instead, we did the research that established the link, created a program to address the problem, and then expanded the program citywide.

You identify a problem, you investigate the root causes . . . and then you either provide relief to those who are suffering or you address the causes of the problem.

When you take government money, there are strings attached. . . . If you decide to accept government funding, you run the risk of compromising your effectiveness as an advocate.

FC: What percentage of your organization’s income and support comes from the public sector and what percentage comes from private sources?

DJ: In terms of private sources, our endowment and contribution-related monies probably run as high as seventy percent of our total income and support, with the other thirty percent coming from public sources. Actually, your question relates to one of my pet peeves. In addition to doing research and providing direct service, CSS is an advocacy organization. We’re unusual in that we do all three. And there’s a reason for that. More and more, not-for-profits are dependent on government money. But when you take government money, there are strings attached, whether you see them or not. With government funding, you always face the risk of having your money cut off if you offend the wrong person. In other words, if you decide to accept government funding, you run the risk of compromising your effectiveness as an advocate. In my opinion, it’s one of the real challenges facing not-for-profits that want to advocate on behalf of the poor, the disabled, or any other group that’s disenfranchised.

FC: How did you become involved in anti-poverty work?

DJ: Actually, I’m the third generation of my family that’s been involved in this kind of work. My grandfather was a lieutenant for Marcus Garvey — the Garveyite movement, which was all about self-help and self-improvement for blacks, was huge in the black community in the early part of the twentieth century. That’s where the issues of self-interest and social mobility for blacks got their first airing. Then, during the 1960s, my father, along with Bobby Kennedy and others, founded something called Bed-Stuy Restoration, one of the first black political groups in Brooklyn. In fact, my father was the first black assemblyman from central Brooklyn.

So even though I’m trained as a lawyer, I recognized early on that I would probably end up being involved in public service and politics on some level. In fact, in college I was a member of the last group of interns that worked for Robert Kennedy before he was assassinated. Then, after I graduated, I went to Yale Law School, where I met a lot of activists who later became prominent national figures, people like the Clintons, [Supreme Court Justice] Clarence Thomas, [former Labor Secretary] Bob Reich, and so on. After graduating from Yale, I clerked for Constance Baker Motley, who had worked on *Brown v. Board of Education*, then joined a large law firm, Cravath, Swaine & Moore. But I didn’t love corporate law, and in 1976 I took a leave of absence to become Jimmy Carter’s deputy campaign director in New York State, which led to me being recruited by Ed Koch’s people to become a special adviser to the mayor in the first Koch administration.

After four years in that role, I took a job as head of youth services for the city of New York, and that’s where a lot of the issues I was — and still am — interested in started to line up. For example, we were able to increase the agency’s budget from something like \$15 million a year to approximately \$50 million a year — or about two times more, in inflation-adjusted dollars, than the current administration is spending on youth services. Which is a bad joke, in my opinion.

Be that as it may, my work in youth services for the city brought me to the attention of CSS, which was looking to augment its traditional work, doing research and providing direct service to the poor and indigent, with opportunities to pursue advocacy more aggressively. And eventually they hired me.

That was seventeen years ago, and although it's not exactly the traditional route into anti-poverty work, it was a journey marked by a fair amount of activism. We see that all the time at CSS. We don't think it's enough to just focus on alleviating poverty; we believe that people need to understand the political context that shapes the experiences of the poor in this country. Because you know what? Poor people themselves don't have the education, they don't have the resources, they don't have the skills to mobilize and get people to pay attention to their issues and needs. They're politically impotent. So the question of how you create leverage for the poor — and there are more than two million of them in New York City alone — is one of the critical issues we struggle with here on a daily basis. Obviously, we have to do it in a nonpartisan way — in fact, we've been a major driver of nonpartisan voter registration in the city for at least a decade, registering more than a quarter of a million new voters over that period. But it's surprising what you can do, even within a nonpartisan framework.

FC: I'd like to come back to some of these issues in a minute. But before we do, can you tell us what CSS did in response to the September 11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center?

DJ: September 11 was a major transition point for CSS in a number of ways. Basically, we wanted to take what we were already doing and, in the context of 9/11, make it relevant to our core constituencies. For example, we expanded many of our technical assistance programs, which we had been providing to smaller not-for-profits and church groups, to nonprofits that were directly affected by the collapse of the towers. We also had direct access, through our Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, to roughly ninety-five hundred volunteers. And, of course, we were in a position to provide direct social services to indirect victims of the attacks, particularly in the area of housing.

The other thing we had was an ongoing relationship with the New York Times Neediest Cases Fund. In fact, CSS and its predecessor agencies were among the earliest beneficiaries of the *Times'* philanthropy, going all the way back to 1911, when we received our first donation from the company. But in the immediate aftermath of the attacks, the people at the *Times* decided to create a special fund within the Neediest Cases Fund that was geared to the working poor, and with our help and the help of other not-for-profits in the social-service sector they began to focus on the needs of this group — food-service handlers, baggage handlers at the airports, hotel chambermaids, people downtown who, one by one, lost their jobs in the days and weeks after the towers fell.

In our view, it turned out to be one of the unsung efforts in the immediate post-9/11 period. Obviously, there was an enormous and totally appropriate outpouring of support for the families of first responders and white-collar employees of major companies who lost their

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There were other communities — Chinatown, for instance — that had been devastated economically by 9/11 and were not getting the help and resources they needed.

lives when the towers came down. It was much more difficult, however, to get assistance if you were the wife of an undocumented food-service handler working at Windows on the World. Those folks had real problems getting adequate support for their families.

Even worse, in terms of job loss and displacement, was what happened to people's benefits. If you were a chambermaid or baggage handler and lost your job in the weeks after 9/11, you had real trouble. Getting money from the government, for example, proved to be uniquely difficult. So, almost from day one, CSS and other organizations began to distribute money to help people with their rent and mortgages, so they wouldn't lose their homes. We secured food vouchers for people, we secured tuition vouchers if their kids were attending parochial school, we did any number of things for poor working families affected by 9/11 that were essential to their well-being and stability.

On the research and advocacy front, we began to lay out for policy makers the broader implications of 9/11 for the working poor in New York City — people who didn't have savings accounts or 401(k)s, who didn't have health or life insurance, who didn't qualify for the various relief funds that had been established in the aftermath of the attacks. And I think our activities in this regard served to reinforce the idea that there were other communities — Chinatown, for instance — that had been devastated economically by 9/11 and were not getting the kind of help and resources they needed to recover from this horrible event.

In addition, we began to work with something called the Windows of Hope Fund, which was set up by the owners of Windows on the World to help the families of those who died in the restaurants in and around the World Trade Center, and eventually became the primary social workers for those families, which are scattered all over the metropolitan region and are likely to need our help for at least the next two to three years.

In a similar vein, we began to talk about what government would have to do in terms of coming up with long-term support for workers who could directly attribute their unemployment to 9/11. That ended up going a couple of different ways. It was the work we did around Disaster Medicaid, where we were one of the primary organizations trying to come up with a streamlined effort to allow people to draw down their Medicaid benefits without getting involved in the cumbersome application process that Medicaid generally requires, that ultimately helped more than 300,000 people qualify for Disaster Medicaid benefits. We also began to talk about increasing and extending people's unemployment benefits, an idea that Congress eventually picked up.

In other words, we tried to shape our response to 9/11 so that it was consistent with our mission. At the same time, we tried to focus on areas that weren't necessarily fashionable — and I use that word advisedly. What I mean is, there was a tremendous outpouring of support for the families of uniformed personnel and the employees of major corporations — appropriately so. But to have the family of a Windows on the World food-service handler get a pittance while the family of a bond trader gets a huge amount of money suggests that their lives are valued differently and raises questions of equity in society. We've tried to raise those questions in a serious but responsible way.

FC: Does that mean you're disappointed with the actions to date of the federal government's Victim Compensation Fund?

DJ: No, not necessarily. Our concern is with the distribution of charitable benefits.

FC: What did you do to coordinate your emergency assistance and volunteer efforts with other relief agencies and charities?

DJ: We were a member almost from the beginning of something called the 9/11 United Services Group, the coordinating agency for second-tier agencies that were providing relief for displaced workers, undocumented aliens, and so on. As I mentioned, the New York Times Neediest Cases Fund also helped to coordinate the activities of many of the charities that were helping displaced workers and the working poor.

In addition, we did a PBS special specifically targeted to low-wage and undocumented workers urging them to come forward to get support for their families, even if their status was somewhat unclear. In fact, we ended up distributing about \$6 million on our own to about three thousand individuals in that category.

FC: Hindsight is twenty-twenty, but would you say the philanthropic community in New York is better prepared to respond to a terrorist attack today than it was prior to September 11, 2001?

DJ: No question. September 11 was an unprecedented event — no one could have imagined a catastrophe of that magnitude — and I think some of the criticism of charities and the philanthropic community was unfair. I mean, I've lived in New York City my whole life and I've never seen anything like 9/11 and its aftermath. But yes, I think there were vital lessons learned. For example, there was a kind of reluctance in the early stages of the relief effort where people wanted to do something, and boards of directors and staffs wanted to do something, but people held back because they didn't want to step on other people's toes. We got past that rather quickly, however. Obviously, there were problems at the Red Cross. But everyone fumbled a bit trying to get their programs in place. That was to be expected. Remember, there was an enormous amount of learning going on concerning how you deal with a disaster of this magnitude, how you share resources, and how you use the strengths of different entities to create a comprehensive and appropriate package of services for the full range of victims. So, in retrospect, it wasn't that bad. And I don't think it'll ever be that awkward again — although I hope we never have to find out.

FC: You've already mentioned a couple of things CSS is doing to help economic victims of 9/11 get back on their feet. Are there other 9/11-related needs you plan to address? And if so, how long do you think you'll be dealing with those needs?

DJ: It's interesting. As we both know, New York City was already teetering on the brink of recession before 9/11, and the attack on the World Trade Center pushed it over the edge. As a result, it's become almost impossible for me to meet a low-wage worker who's lost his or her job or who hasn't been able to find a new job, or someone on welfare who has run out their time limits or is trying to make the transition to the low-wage economy, and not

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We're talking about tens of thousands of economic victims of 9/11, and no one charity, or even group of charities, can handle needs on that scale.

think that, absent 9/11, his or her situation would be entirely different. In personal-injury law there's something called causation that attempts to link a result, the injury, to a specific cause. And in the case of 9/11, causation becomes more removed from the event itself the further we get away from it, but it's there and we can't ignore it.

So a lot of our work these days has merged with our traditional role as advocates for the working poor and those trying to transition from welfare. And we have some unique products, in this regard. For example, I just co-wrote an article with the head of my direct service staff, David Campbell, that discusses how the sector responded to 9/11. Obviously, Windows of Hope is going to remain a critical priority. We're also trying, as we continue our social work intake, to give priority to workers who lost their jobs as a result of 9/11. But at some point we have to start asking where the money for this is going to come from. I mean, we burned through \$5 million in a matter of weeks, and while that may sound like a lot of money, it really isn't when you're dealing with a disaster that indirectly affected tens thousands of people in a region with some of the highest housing, health care, and basic service costs in the country. It's important that the public understands that not-for-profits are not a substitute for government. That's been one of my mantras here. We have to disabuse people of the notion that New York is no different from a small village in Vermont where the local church or community goodwill can do everything. We're talking about a city of eight million. We're talking about an unemployment rate that's hovering around 8 percent for the general population, and is more than 10 percent for blacks, over 9 percent for Latinos, and is almost 16 percent for young people. We're talking about tens of thousands of economic victims of 9/11, and no one charity, or even group of charities, can handle needs on that scale. If we're serious about addressing these problems, government has to step in. The problems we face today, many of them exacerbated if not directly caused by 9/11, are too woven into the local economy and the structure of government benefits to pretend otherwise.

FC: Well, since you brought it up, New York City is looking at a billion-dollar budget shortfall in its current fiscal year and at least a \$3 billion gap in the coming fiscal year. What are the implications, in human terms, of those numbers for unskilled and low-income residents of the metropolitan region?

DJ: A couple of things. Again, the budget shortfall is an outcome, in part, of 9/11. But it's also the result of mistakes made by the Giuliani administration, which handed out tax breaks left and right, to the point that we were in structural deficit by the end of his second term, and everyone knew it. I guess Giuliani and his advisors assumed that the new revenues needed to sustain the city's spending at existing levels were going to come from somewhere. But instead, we got two planes crashing into the World Trade Center and everything that followed from that, including the incredibly large deficits that Mayor Bloomberg now faces. The whole situation is made worse by the fact that, even though the city's budget is nearly \$40 billion and the deficit is \$6 billion, the city carries a heavy burden of what are called as-of-right expenditures, which it has no control over. So when a budget deficit of this size hits, it tends to have a catastrophic effect.

Let me talk about the impact on the not-for-profit sector first. Clearly, the vast majority of not-for-profits, particularly those that deliver human services, are reeling from the budget cuts that have been announced and are facing the dire prospect of additional cuts. We've already seen reductions in city contracts of fifteen to eighteen percent, and we expect 2003 to be even worse. In particular, the budget crisis has resulted in serious cuts to services for the poor, youth services, services to the elderly, and education. These are critical areas, especially for the poor, and no one should be surprised that we've seen significant jumps in the homeless population in New York. For the first time in recent memory, the city is housing nearly forty thousand individuals a night in homeless shelters run by or under contract with the city. That's almost eighty-five hundred families — the highest number in the history of New York City. Many of those are low-wage workers who lost their jobs before 9/11 and had been hanging on by their fingertips. Then 9/11 happened and the whole thing came unglued. From our vantage point, those numbers are likely to increase, not decrease, in the months to come.

To its credit, the Bloomberg administration, after eight years of the previous administration not looking at the issue of low- and moderate-income housing creation, has come up with a long-term strategy for trying to get more low- and moderate-income housing units on the market. Still, because the Giuliani administration failed to do anything in this area, it's going to be some time before Mayor Bloomberg's strategy has an impact.

I don't want to sound overly pessimistic, but I think we're headed for some pretty bleak times in New York City over the next few years. And against that backdrop, I think advocates and providers of direct service have a two-fold responsibility. First, not only to be critics of government, but to work collaboratively with government to come up with solutions to these problems. I mean, this is the kind of schizophrenia that drives any not-for-profit advocate crazy. Nevertheless, the times demand it. It's wonderful to beat up on government — I've done my share of it over the years. But it's not enough for advocates to say, "I don't like how people are being treated in the city's homeless shelters," or "The administration's housing policy is a complete disaster." Instead, we have to talk to and engage with government. We simply cannot afford to walk away from the table or lose sight of the ultimate objective, which is to use our shrinking resources as efficiently and effectively as possible to improve the lives of poor and low-income people.

FC: Many of the policy recommendations your organization has put forward entail an expansion of government paid for by higher taxes. Given the fact that New York already has one of the highest tax burdens in the country, do you think New Yorkers are ready to shoulder a heavier tax burden? And how would you respond to critics of higher taxes who argue that they inevitably lead to job losses and lower tax revenues and thus are counterproductive?

DJ: I would answer those critics in a couple of ways. One of the things we did recently was to commission a survey of six hundred low-income and two hundred moderate-income New Yorkers on a whole range of issues, including taxes. And while people weren't

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jumping for joy over the prospect of higher taxes, we did find that the majority of respondents were willing to pay higher taxes to maintain vital services. That came through loud and clear — not only among low-income respondents, but also among those who were moderate and middle income.

I'll tell you something else. I think it's somewhat disingenuous when critics of higher taxes say, "Well, we know higher taxes will result in X, Y, and Z," without providing data to support their argument. It's the very thing they always accuse us of doing. But unless I've missed it, the anti-tax crowd has not provided data that proves that higher taxes lead to lower revenues. In that regard, my colleagues and I think that New Yorkers know from experience — just think back to the '70s — that they can't expect critical services to be delivered without somebody paying for them.

That said, we're not just talking about higher taxes; we're talking about taxes that are progressive and don't put an enormous burden on the backs of the very people, the poor and working poor, they're intended to help. In our survey, for example, there was real resistance to proposed increases in the subway fare and much greater interest in things like higher income tax rates. Clearly, the mayor's proposal to reinstate the commuter tax is going to be debated. And we seem to have a mixed verdict on his call for higher property taxes. Because of the way his proposal is written, it could end up being a pretty regressive tax that hits low- and moderate-income people more quickly, in the form of immediate rent increases, than it does property owners and the more affluent, and that could exacerbate the homelessness problem in the city and have a further deleterious effect on poor neighborhoods.

I also think it's important to point out that higher property taxes might actually cost the city money. We did a sort of back-of-the-envelope calculation here to figure out how much it's costing the city to house forty thousand people in shelters every night, and we came up with a figure of roughly \$300 million a year. But if we're not careful and pass a property tax that places an unfair burden on poor people, we'll end up spending even more on services for the homeless.

I'll even take it a step further: I think the notion that taxes can't be increased is a pipe dream. Businesses in New York City have seen windfalls, in the form of tax breaks, over the last decade that have been almost obscene. Just recently, a bank that shall remain nameless received \$34 million in tax breaks to stay in the city. Needless to say, it employs virtually no low-wage workers. And yet we can't seem to find money in the city budget to help low-income renters. Don't get me wrong — I think we have to make sure that New York City continues to be a good place to do business and that the private sector continues to drive the New York City economy. But we also need to recognize that if the city's streets are crammed with homeless people, if crime starts to increase — and I'm sorry, but social conservatives who think we have found the secret to controlling crime are kidding themselves — businesses will flee. And the resulting loss of revenue will be a whole lot more serious than anything we're likely to see by raising personal and corporate income taxes by a percentage point or two.

FC: Your organization has described the Welfare Reform Act of 1996 as a watershed event in U.S. social policy. Six years after the passage of that legislation, how would you characterize its impact on poor families in New York City?

DJ: Well, let me give you the negatives first. Clearly, we have in New York City a large number of people on welfare who are reaching their time limits and have not made a successful transition to work, in part because the low-wage economy in New York, for reasons I've discussed, has been shrinking. As a result, we have not seen a marked decrease in poverty or its consequences in New York. It's been particularly brutal on children. We have a group of young people entering adolescence and young adulthood in New York today who are as disadvantaged, if not more so, as any group of kids in recent memory. Their education has been abysmal, they have limited access to adequate health care, and their job prospects are bleaker than at any time in the last fifty years. Yes, it's true that in the mid- to late-'90s we were able to feed them into a low-wage economy that, fortuitously, was growing, and that allowed many of them, at least temporarily, to get off welfare.

Okay, fast forward to today. Those jobs are disappearing like crazy. The combination of the recession and 9/11 has devastated a service sector that a few years ago was absorbing low-wage workers by the tens of thousands. And as that sector has imploded, the people who had transitioned off welfare and into jobs are suddenly finding themselves unemployed and without a safety net to support themselves or their families. Again, going back to our poll, when we talked to those six hundred low-income people and asked them how they were doing, we found that nearly fifty percent had run into a serious problem of one sort or another. Most involved housing issues — they had been threatened with eviction or actually had been evicted, their utilities had been shut off, and so on. Others had to defer needed health care or suddenly were unable to afford the prescription drugs they needed. Now if those six hundred people — and remember, they were randomly selected — are showing that kind of distress, it surely means there's a lot of suffering out there, even if the press and media haven't reported on it. I mean, people are hurting.

So, as an effort to mitigate and improve the conditions of poor Americans, I have to say that welfare reform has been a failure. It has not raised the living standard of the poor and working poor.

Has it led to anything positive? Yes. For one, it has reshaped the context of the welfare debate — and, I must say, it took a while for advocates like myself to realize that. What I mean by that is that welfare reform changed the public perception of poor people as lazy deadbeats out to game the system — you know, the welfare-queen stereotype that was so successfully planted in people's minds by social conservatives in the 1980s and early '90s — to one of people trapped in low-wage work and struggling desperately to make it for themselves and their families. That image clearly has more resonance with the broad public when we're talking about the problems of the working poor, or the deficiencies in our public education system, or the forty million people in this country without health insurance, or the need to build a broad-based political movement to address those problems. I mean, when

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we travel upstate and talk to Republicans there, many of them are very concerned about the lack of access to adequate health care that their constituents, especially the working poor and elderly, face. It's a bridge issue. Similarly, I think we can get traction on issues of housing and housing support. As I mentioned earlier, Mayor Bloomberg recently announced the first comprehensive housing policy for low- and moderate-income people in nearly a decade. And I think that was due, in part, to a calculation that housing-policy reform has a broader base of support than it did even a year or two ago.

So we need to stop whining about welfare reform and deal with the realities of the new environment. And one of those realities is the redefinition of the terms of the debate vis-à-vis poor Americans. We should take every opportunity to make the linkage between the problems of the poor and welfare reform and reframe the issue so that it's about what America will do for its working poor, not what America does for its welfare deadbeats.

FC: Where do private foundations fit into the picture? How significant are they in terms of addressing the problems of low-income families and the working poor in New York City?

DJ: Obviously, the foundation world is a critical supporter of much of our research and direct-service work. But I think the foundation world suffers from what, for lack of a better phrase, I'll call the hopscotch mentality. What I mean by that is that foundations have a tendency to jump around a lot at the expense of being consistent. Let me give you an example. We think there hasn't been enough support from the foundation community for policy research and advocacy on issues of importance to the working poor and that foundations have shied away from engaging government and taking tough stands on controversial issues. Now I happen to think foundations have a responsibility to do that. Actually, conservative foundations have been very effective in this regard. But let's face it. We're dealing with fundamental, long-term issues in American society — things like employment and wages and how poor people fit or don't fit into our society — that are going to require years of study and social investment and advocacy. And there has to be a willingness on the part of foundations to put these kinds of issues on their agenda, and to do so with a certain sense of urgency — a willingness, I might add, that has been lacking up to now.

Closer to home, I have to say there's very little energy being put into a thoughtful policy debate about the poor in New York City. In some ways, we're the test case for the rest of urban America. I'm not suggesting that the poor are entitled to live lives of luxury, but they shouldn't have to worry about losing their health insurance, their child supports, or their jobs every time the economy goes into recession. We just have to be more inclusive as a society. And again, while these are tough issues with serious ramifications, I don't sense much energy coming out of the foundation world to try to solve them.

The other thing is consistency. Everyone wants to get a sort of feel-good buzz out of this stuff, but foundations, as a rule, are not particularly connected with the communities they claim to serve. In fact, I've found that corporate law firms often have more racial and ethnic diversity and a better understanding of poor communities than some of the foundations I deal with. It's not that people in the foundation world don't have good

hearts; it's just that their understanding of the complexities of poor neighborhoods is sometimes suspect. I mean, I often attend meetings where the issues of the poor are discussed by people who have never spent a night in a poor neighborhood, who have no idea what the strengths and weaknesses of those communities are, and who often make assumptions based on chauvinistic attitudes. Don't get me wrong. It's not just foundations; the same thing can be said of charities. I mean, just because you're poor and live in Bed-Stuy or Crown Heights or the South Bronx doesn't mean you haven't fought, haven't struggled to make a better life for yourself and your family. But too often, in my experience, not-for-profits come into these communities with an attitude of, "Ah, these poor benighted souls. . . ." And that's something that has to be confronted more directly. As a sector, we really need to be vigilant about our prejudices and we need to constantly evaluate how they shape and influence our work and impact its effectiveness.

FC: If you could do three things right now to improve the lives of the working poor in New York City, what would they be?

DJ: It's hard to pick only three, but I'll try. First, I'd secure the safety net to make sure that poor people have complete and unfettered access to the benefits they're entitled to. The safety net of benefits that has been developed in this society since the New Deal is huge. But the problem today is that government frequently and often arbitrarily prevents people from accessing those benefits. We see it in every childcare study. If you're on welfare, you're supposed to get childcare supports. If you're transitioning off welfare, you're supposed to get childcare supports. But every study we see shows the same thing: Only a fraction of the people entitled to those supports are getting them. Health care, same thing. People whose welfare benefits have timed out are not being informed that they still have a right to Medicaid.

The second thing I'd pick would be health insurance for everyone at or below 250 percent of the poverty line. After that, we could start working on some of other things — an increase in the minimum wage, for example. In our survey, more than 90 percent of the people we polled said the minimum wage should be raised. In fact, we've been part of a living-wage coalition that has called for a \$10-dollar-an-hour minimum for all private and public agencies that receive city funds. We think that would go a long, long way to stabilizing poor and low-income families in the city.

FC: Are you optimistic about the future of New York City? Was 9/11 just a temporary setback on the road to a safer, more just and economically diverse New York? Or was it a harbinger of tough times ahead?

DJ: I hate to say it, but I think we're headed for some fairly tough times, particularly for the poor. Having said that, I think it's important to put it in historical perspective. This is not the worst of times for New York. This city has seen much harder times and survived. It has enormous strengths, and the resilience of poor people in this city is something to behold. We will rebuild, although it won't be easy. And part of that struggle will involve coming up with a new concept of the role New York plays in the overall U.S. economy, as well as a new social contract that can be extended, fairly and equitably, to every New Yorker.

This city has seen much harder times and survived. It has enormous strengths, and the resilience of poor people in this city is something to behold.

I'd like to see the mayor and the governor and the leaders of the legislature . . . start talking with a bit more empathy and acknowledge that times are tough and are likely to get tougher.

But it's going to be tough, especially for our children and young people, for all the reasons I've mentioned — because we have such a dysfunctional public education system, because we really haven't geared job training and other supports to the poor, because it's going to take time to bring more affordable housing on line. So what I'd like to see is for the mayor and the governor and the leaders of the legislature — city, state, and federal — to start talking with a bit more empathy and acknowledge the fact that times are tough and are likely to get tougher. At the same time, they need to articulate the idea that, in order to get through this, there's going to have to be a certain amount of shared pain. That would go a long way, in my opinion, toward changing the climate of uncertainty and fear that has settled over the city. If, on the other hand, that doesn't happen, I think it will ultimately lead to a level of bitterness among certain New Yorkers that will haunt us for years to come.

FC: Well, thanks again, David, for talking with us this morning.

DJ: You're welcome.

Mitch Nauffts, *Philanthropy News Digest's* editorial director, interviewed David Jones in December 2002.

Forging Connections in Response to Disaster

The terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon shocked every American. For hours that morning, people in offices, in their homes, or at the local cafe watched in disbelief as the now-familiar sequence of events played out on television. By nightfall, however, with shock giving way to anger and the first stirrings of patriotic feeling, a single question began to dominate the national conversation: “What can I do to help?”

The answer to that question revealed itself the next day, as people around the country lined up to donate blood, bake sales and lemonade stands appeared on suburban sidewalks, and flowers, candles, and children’s artwork transformed New York City’s firehouses into shrines to civic pride.

That same sense of urgency and a desire to help fueled the decision of executives at the New York Times Company Foundation to create, on September 12, the New York Times

JACK ROSENTHAL
PRESIDENT
NEW YORK TIMES COMPANY FOUNDATION



9/11 Neediest Fund and, subsequently, to disburse the money contributed to the Fund — some \$60 million within six months of its inception — as speedily and efficiently as possible.

In March, *Philanthropy News Digest* spoke to foundation president and *New York Times* veteran Jack Rosenthal about the foundation's response to the September 11 attacks, media criticism of the philanthropic response to the disaster, and lessons learned by the philanthropic community in the wake of the attacks.

Rosenthal has worked for the *Times* since 1969, when he joined the paper as its chief urban affairs correspondent in Washington, D.C. He subsequently became an editor, editorial writer, and editorial page editor, and in 1982 won the Pulitzer Prize for editorial writing, the first such prize won by the *Times* in sixty years. From 1993 to 2000, he edited the *New York Times Magazine*, including its special centennial issues in 1996 and the special millennium series in 1999.

He was born in Tel Aviv, grew up in Portland, Oregon, and attended Harvard University, where he was executive editor of the *Harvard Crimson*. After graduation, he returned to Portland, where he was a reporter and editor at the *Oregonian*. In 1961, he went to Washington, D.C., as special assistant to Attorneys General Robert Kennedy and Nicholas deB. Katzenbach. In 1966, the Washington press corps voted him the outstanding press officer in the federal government. Later that year, he moved to the Department of State as executive assistant to the undersecretary.

During the academic year 1967–68, Rosenthal was appointed a fellow at Harvard's Institute of Politics, specializing in urban affairs. He was the principal editor of the presidential commission report on urban riots (the Kerner Report) and then, before joining the *Times*, was *Life* magazine's first urban affairs correspondent.

Rosenthal was named president of the New York Times Company Foundation in 2000. He and his wife, Holly Russell, a sculptor, live in Manhattan.

Foundation Center: The New York Times Company Foundation launched the 9/11 Neediest Fund on September 12, 2001, the day after the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. How did you and your colleagues arrive at the decision to create the Fund?

Jack Rosenthal: Like almost everybody on September 11, I began to wonder what we could do to respond to the attacks. And it occurred to me when I got home that night that the thing we should do is to do what we do best, which is philanthropy. Obviously, we had the New York Times Neediest Cases Fund, which is ninety years old and was already incorporated as a legal entity. And we had the phones, the Web site, the credit card processing capabilities, and so on. My thought was, Why don't we create a special subset of the Fund? So I went to the lawyers and the corporate people to see whether there were any objections or problems with that, and it turned out there weren't, and as a consequence, by Wednesday morning, the twelfth, everybody at the *Times* had signed on to the idea.

So we put the story in the next day's paper, thinking maybe we'd raise \$4 million or \$5 million and we could do some good with that. As it turned out, we raised that in a week — and ended up with \$62 million. I hate to say it about a disaster of this magnitude, but it was probably the most inspiring thing I've ever been involved with. Not just raising that much money, but spending it in creative ways and setting an example for other people and agencies. I mean, by the time were done, we figured we probably helped somewhere between twenty and fifty thousand families.

FC: Were donors to the Fund mostly from the New York metropolitan area?

JR: No, they were from all over the world. The biggest gift was \$2 million from Rolex International — which wanted to be sure we understood it wasn't just American Rolex — and the gifts ranged all the way down to \$20 and change, which we got from some kids on the Upper West Side who had set up a lemonade stand.

FC: Did you compare notes with your colleagues at other foundations and nonprofit organizations in the city during the first week after the attacks?

JR: Sort of. Our original thought was that we would raise the money and then distribute it through the seven large social service agencies that the New York Times Company Foundation has always relied on to disburse its Neediest Cases money. In this instance, that was doubly important, in part because Mayor Giuliani had already established the Twin Towers Fund for the families of firefighters and police officers killed in the collapse of the towers, and the restaurant workers' families were being taken care of through the Windows of Hope Fund. So what seemed necessary at that point was to help other needy people, which is why we called it the 9/11 Neediest Fund and decided to turn to Neediest Cases agencies like the Children's Aid Society, the Community Service Society, Catholic Charities, the United Jewish Appeal, and so on. And let me tell you, they did a wonderful job. These are agencies that are smart and experienced and really know the community. For example, Phil Coltoff, the head of the Children's Aid Society, knew as soon as he saw the plumes of smoke rising from the towers that kids with asthma were likely to be affected, so he immediately put out a call for two hundred thousand doses of asthma medication and inhalants, some of which came from as far away as Baltimore and all of which were snapped up by rescue workers within days. Of course, if the prevailing winds during that first week had blown the smoke over the city instead of the harbor, we would have been two million doses short. But the point is, you had to know what you were doing to have thought of that.

At any rate, toward the end of that first week I invited all seven agency directors to the *Times* building to talk about how we were going to spend the money. By September 15 or 16 we already had \$3 million or \$4 million, and my thought going into the meeting was to push the decisionmaking down as fast and as far as we could. We wanted to err on the side of speed. So we decided at the meeting to give every agency caseworker the authority to spend \$2,000 on their own say-so and not to worry about the paperwork, yet. In the meantime, money would be getting to the people who needed it.

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In this kind of disaster you have to reject standard procedures, such as waiting for people to ask you for money and doing lots of due diligence before you distribute any money.

Now, remember, this was based on back-of-the-envelope arithmetic that took into account how many cases we'd thought there'd be and how much money we had. But as things turned out, the contributions kept pouring in. And after maybe a couple of weeks, some of the agency directors said, "We hope you don't expect us to spend all this money, because we can't spend it that fast." Which is how we backed into what may be the most important lesson we learned after 9/11: In this kind of disaster you have to reject the standard procedures that prevail in the philanthropic world, such as waiting for people to come and ask you for money and doing lots of due diligence before you distribute any money. I mean, both of those things make perfect sense under normal circumstances. But 9/11 was different, and after a few days it began to dawn on us that those inhibitions ought not to apply in this particular situation.

So we decided to be proactive instead of passive and to look for categories of need, wholesale needs, as opposed to individuals or families who needed help — what one might call retail needs. As we saw in the weeks after 9/11, there are lots of agencies that know how to do retail. But for us, the question was, "How do you do wholesale?" Wholesale is hard, in part because the categories of need, by definition, will differ from disaster to disaster. Suppose, for example, that the numbers in this disaster had been reversed, that there had been only a few deaths and hundreds or thousands of injuries. We'd be having a very different kind of conversation today, right?

But once we decided to proceed, we soon identified four categories of 9/11 need. One was jobs. Job rescue, we called it. Tens of thousands of families saw their livelihoods vanish on the morning of September 11. Some organizations, like the September 11th Fund, made a distinction between short- and long-term needs. Our view was, "What in heaven's name is long-term about a poor family losing their income today? Can't we do something about that?" I mean, we eventually learned that on September 10 there were something like twenty-five hundred small businesses in the World Trade Center area; on September 12, five hundred of those had been either demolished or seriously damaged, many others were in danger of going under, and it was obvious that more jobs were going to disappear unless someone did something.

So I called up Carl Weisbrod, the president of the Alliance for Downtown New York, and Bill Grinker, the CEO of an organization called Seedco, which provides financial and technical help to poor neighborhoods. Bill said he wanted to do something and had the staff to do it, and likewise Carl said he wanted to help. So on October 7, the three of us sat at this table and cooked up the job rescue program. We gave them about \$3 million on the spot, the Ford Foundation chipped in with \$1 million, and eventually it ended up with something like \$29 million. And so far, the program has been responsible for saving six to seven thousand jobs, which is probably a conservative estimate.

But, the critical decision we made that day was to give the money in the form of grants. Forget loans. The federal loan program was infuriatingly irrelevant. You needed an accountant to fill out the endless application form, and by the time you got the loan four or five months later your business would be gone and the feds would be staring down your

throat looking for fraud. It was clear to the three of us that these were people who needed the money right now, and we had to decide whether we had the nerve to give them outright grants. So what if a couple months down the road the *New York Post* discovered some guy who had taken the \$10,000 or \$20,000 and hightailed it to Mexico — ha ha ha, stupid *New York Times* — so be it; we'd deal with it. The important thing was to get the money into the hands of the people who needed it. It was that simple.

FC: What about the other categories of need?

JR: The second was kids, specifically kids who went to school downtown, many of whom had seen and experienced horrible things, including people jumping from the towers. In addition, many lived downtown and were displaced not just from their schools but from their homes. So we began to ask ourselves what we could do to try to ease their parents' predicament and make life easier for parents and kids alike. Now, we'd had a lot of contact with the After-School Corporation, which works to provide quality after-school programs in the city's public schools. And it occurred to me that they probably had some programs downtown. So I called Lucy Friedman, the organization's president, and by perverse coincidence it turned out that although they had programs in something like a hundred and fifty schools around the city, none were in schools downtown. So I asked, "Well, how quickly could you get them started?" And she said, "Whoa. We'll call you back tomorrow." When she called back the next day, she said, "Well, we could get into all eight schools between now and the end of the year." And I said, "Well, I don't count eight schools, I count sixteen." And she said, "Yes, but you're including Chinatown." And I said, "Yes, let's include Chinatown. We're talking about kids who've really been traumatized, and Chinatown is as bad off in that respect as anyone." So Lucy said, "Okay, we can be up and running in three schools in a month, and we'll get the rest up by January. But it will cost a ton of money." And I said, "Well, this is one of the few times in my life I can say that's not a problem."

We ended up giving them \$2.6 million to do the program — not just for the fall term but through the end of the school year and the following year. And, by George, they got the programs up in fifteen of the sixteen schools — grade schools, middle schools, and high schools — and would have been in the sixteenth but for the fact that the principal and parents were happy with the after-school program they already had. We visited a couple of times, and it was just wonderful to be able to give those kids an island of peace, and to give their parents three extra hours a day to sort out their lives at a time when many of them were in serious distress.

Now, you probably know that five days before September 11, New York City schools chancellor Harold Levy had announced a 15 percent budget cut for the city's schools — and had compounded the pain by recklessly allowing principals to find the 15 percent any way they wanted to, which resulted in a lot of principals cutting all their arts programs just at the moment, as it turned out, when that kind of self-expressive therapy was most needed. So we decided we needed to do something about that. We went to a wonderful woman named Carol Fineberg, who had worked as a consultant for us and knows all about

So what if the New York Post discovered some guy who had taken the \$10,000 or \$20,000 and high-tailed it to Mexico. The important thing was to get the money into the hands of the people who needed it.

Undocumented aliens were afraid to show up at the Family Assistance Center. . . . Other people were having trouble getting death certificates, others were having trouble with landlords.

arts-in-education, and we sat around the table here and eventually cooked up something we called the School Arts Rescue Initiative. We invited the arts coordinators for the five community school districts most affected by 9/11 — Districts 1, 2, 6, 27, and 31 — to come to the *Times* for breakfast and presentations from a dozen arts providers — known, quality providers like Studio in a School, ArtsConnection, the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater, Teachers and Writers Collaborative, and City Lights Youth Theatre. These were all organizations we had funded in the past and had relationships with. After the presentations, we told the arts coordinators, “Here’s a million dollars — \$200,000 each, not in cash but in arts credits. You pick whichever program or mix of programs you want, and we’ll pay the providers, bypassing the bureaucracy at the Board of Ed.” Well, of course, the arts coordinators were thrilled — not least because if they’d had to do it through the Board of Ed, they’d still be filling out the paperwork.

But seriously, it worked out so beautifully we ended up providing another \$500,000 to give the same opportunity to suburban schools that had been affected by the attacks. I even tried to get the September 11th Fund interested, but Josh [Gotbaum, the first CEO of the Fund] and Frank [Thomas, the Fund’s chairman], were still getting organized — it was November before they had their first board meeting. So it was a real satisfaction when, the following spring, they called up and said, “Would you mind if we put up \$2.5 million to continue the program for a second year?” Would we mind! So it turned out to be a real success and became a model for other programs as well.

Again, I’m only giving you examples of the grants we made in each of the four areas of need.

The third area was law, which didn’t occur to us at first. But we quickly became aware that undocumented aliens affected by the attack were afraid to show up at the Family Assistance Center at Pier 94 for fear of being deported. Other people were having trouble getting death certificates, while still others were having trouble with landlords who were demanding the rent and so on. Well, it dawned on us that these were all legal problems. And then we received grant applications from the Legal Aid Society and Legal Services New York, both first-rate organizations and which between them have thirty-one neighborhood offices around the city. We sure didn’t want to choose between them. So I called them back and said I wasn’t going to read their individual applications but would be pleased to read a joint application. Well, they grumbled a bit, but within twenty-four hours they had sent in a beautiful proposal that called for the creation, in effect, of a full-service law firm for poor and undocumented victims of 9/11. And that worked out so well that, within a couple of months, we doubled their grants.

Do you know the story of Disaster Medicaid?

FC: No, I don’t.

JR: It’s a wonderful story, and it hasn’t really been told. It was cooked up by some of the young lawyers at Legal Services New York and Legal Aid in Brooklyn, who realized that large numbers of elderly people in Brooklyn who had no connection with 9/11 whatsoever were nevertheless suffering because they couldn’t file Medicaid claims. Why? Because the

collapse of the towers destroyed the city's Medicaid files, and without access to the records the state said it couldn't process claims. Well, the young lawyers kept hearing these tales of woe and finally said, "This is intolerable. We have to do something." So they went to the state and said, "We understand you don't have these thirty-five-page Medicaid applications. But we have an emergency on our hands. How about if we create a temporary program? Here's a five-question questionnaire. We'll get these things filled out if you process and pay them."

Well, the folks at the state office scratched their heads and finally agreed. And although the program was only in effect for four months — I think it expired in March or April of 2002 — they ended up registering something like a hundred and fifty thousand people for Medicaid who had not been registered before. The state wasn't too happy about it, but how can you be unhappy when you're providing something you're mandated to provide?

FC: And the fourth category?

JR: We called it trauma treatment, which is shorthand for mental health. But first, let me say that we took great care from the outset to be scrupulous about donor intent and tried to define "victims" clearly and narrowly. We were so grateful to the tens of thousands of people who contributed to the Fund, and we wanted to keep faith with them. In fact, we know from mail and e-mail we received that people were much taken by two aspects of our mission: One, the fact that our assistance was targeted to the "neediest"; and two, that the *Times* assumed all administrative costs associated with the Fund, allowing every dollar contributed to go directly to benefit victims.

Even within a scrupulous definition of victims, however, it was not hard to do the math and come up with two or three hundred thousand people who were subject to trauma. I mean, three thousand families lost a loved one. Another twenty-five thousand or so people escaped from the buildings before they collapsed. Eight to ten thousand school kids and their families were affected, not to mention all the residents of Lower Manhattan. And there were tens of thousands — maybe as many as fifty thousand people — who lost their jobs. Just doing a back-of-the-envelope calculation, you very quickly arrive at two hundred thousand direct or indirect victims of the attacks without straining the definition of "victim" at all.

Now, nobody's saying two hundred thousand people are going to experience post-traumatic stress. But as Betty Pfefferbaum's paper [i.e., *Lessons from the First Two Years of Project Heartland, Oklahoma's Mental Health Response to the 1995 Bombing*] makes clear, fifteen percent of the kids within a hundred-mile radius of Oklahoma City were still traumatized or having nightmares and acting out two years after the bombing of the Murrah Building. So, fifteen percent of two hundred thousand is thirty thousand people. Then we asked ourselves, "Are there enough qualified shrinks in the area to treat thirty thousand new patients?" So we asked around, and the consensus was that while New York may be the shrink capital of the Western world, and while every shrink in New York may think he knows how to deal with trauma, they don't. As one psychiatrist said, "What a lot of therapists think they know is, in fact, toxic."

Even within a scrupulous definition of victims, it was not hard to do the math and come up with two or three hundred thousand people who were subject to trauma.

We ended up giving a spectrum of different mental health grants . . . in many ways the most important was to establish the New York Consortium for Effective Trauma Treatment.

So we ended up giving a spectrum of different mental health grants, from New York Downtown Hospital, which was treating people off the street in the days after the attacks, to the International Trauma Studies Program at New York University, which created a community-based program to support families and educators in the downtown school communities that were most affected by the events of September 11.

The largest grant we gave in this area, and in many ways the most important one, was to establish something called the New York Consortium for Effective Trauma Treatment. That started when Erica Goode, the psychology writer here at the *Times*, recommended that I call Dr. Randall Marshall, who runs the Trauma Program at the New York State Psychiatric Institute at Columbia. Randall came in and, with becoming candor, said, “Look, you have to understand, we’re only one of four hospital-based trauma centers in the city.” The others were at Mount Sinai, St. Vincent’s, and Cornell Medical, which later moved to NYU. And I said, “Well, what are the chances of the four of you getting together?”

Well, he gulped — I mean, these were centers that competed with each other, and now they were being asked to collaborate. But he called me back a couple of days later and said, “Okay, we’ll do it.” So we cooked up an arrangement whereby each of the four institutions selected fifteen clinicians to be trained by trauma experts from around the world. The Neediest Fund put up \$225,000 to pay for the training, and then another \$2 million to cover fifty percent of the salaries of those sixty clinicians for a year so that they’d be able to not only treat trauma victims based on their new training but mainly to train other clinicians. And we’re now up to five hundred newly trained clinicians and counting, and it thrills me to realize that, beyond 9/11, this has become a permanent resource for the entire New York community.

Let me tell you a story. I went to the very first session, at the New York Academy of Medicine, for ceremonial reasons and because I was curious, and the guest speaker was Edna Foa, a professor from Penn who people in this field all bow down to. And there are sixty clinicians sitting in rapt attention as this sweet middle-aged woman with a honeyed Israeli accent is talking about prolonged exposure therapy, where you relive the incident that caused the trauma. And in the middle of the room is a TV monitor with a clip of a forty-year-old woman who had been gang-raped when she was sixteen and was still traumatized, and she’s saying, “I blame myself for having been so passive, for not having resisted more.” This is after twenty-four years, mind you. There’s a pause, and even though you can’t hear her therapist on the tape, you can see the woman’s reaction: Her brow darkens, and she says, “Well, yes, I was scared!” All of a sudden, it’s as if a light bulb has gone on over her head. “You’re damn right I was scared,” she says. And then she slaps her hand on the table and says, “And besides, the son-of-a-bitch was heavy. I couldn’t budge him!”

Well, in that moment, I understood what toxic meant. If this kind of therapy is done well, you can release the patient from the trauma, but if it’s done poorly you trap them in it. And that’s what the Consortium is about: helping professionals to do it well. Rachel Yehuda, who’s a professor of psychiatry at Mount Sinai and director of the Traumatic Stress Studies Division there, conducted a sample study in which she divided 9/11 patients into

three categories: those who were treated by their own shrinks, those who were treated by the original sixty clinicians trained by the Consortium, and those who were treated by the five hundred clinicians who were students of the original sixty. And she came up with two impressions: One was that there was a distinct difference between the first group and the trained group. The patients of therapists without the advanced training have done much less well. They dropped out of treatment more often and their problems were more severe. And two, she found there was no difference between those who were treated by the original sixty and those who were treated by the five hundred. Which was a wonderful, reassuring indication that the training was being passed on effectively.

Anyway, that's one slice of the spectrum. Another really big grant we gave was \$2 million to the American Group Psychotherapy Association. You know, even with all the ad hoc efforts that sprang up in the days and weeks after 9/11, there was no organized mechanism for providing mental health services to people — not just at ground zero or in the five boroughs, but in New Jersey, where something like forty percent of the direct victims lived, or in Boston, or Washington, D.C., or Los Angeles [the destination of two of the hijacked planes]. So we started to ask what we could do to help create some kind of mechanism that was flexible and open-ended and also addressed the stigma that often attaches to mental health issues.

Eventually, I went to AGPA, which, in effect, was a trade association of therapists around the country, and asked them whether they'd be willing to set up three hundred or so counseling groups wherever they were needed. After two or three weeks had passed, they had set up only one group, in a synagogue in central New Jersey. Well, I lost it. Here we were trying to get this stuff done quickly, and it just wasn't happening. So we had a painful lunch, and they saw that I was ready to end our relationship. But they went out and hired some staff, and before long we were calling them our "ugly duckling," because they just flowered. In fact, they've set up more than three hundred groups and have reached out in a hundred different directions to other programs and providers.

Let me tell you one more story. It was January of last year, 2002. And it occurred to us that many of these mental health professionals were doing wonderful work but had little or no connection with the work other people in the field were doing. So we decided to have them all over to the *Times*, and what started as a breakfast finally broke up around noon, with people so excited about all that was going on — and this was just among our grantees. At one point, Steve Cohen, who was in charge of mental health programs for the September 11th Fund, came over to me and, in mock outrage, said, "You have a lot of nerve doing what government ought to be doing." I realized in that moment that this was the closest thing to coordination that any of these people had experienced. Over the ensuing months, more and more people started to approach us in this role. I mean, everybody knows the *Times* and trusts it, and that gives us a certain convening power. In fact, last year I probably spent from a third to a half of my time on issues related to mental health coordination, protocols, lessons learned, and so on.

Even with all the ad hoc efforts that sprang up, there was no organized mechanism for providing mental health services to people.

We knew the Red Cross and the September 11th Fund had hundreds of millions of dollars for the long run. So what's the point of saving our funds?

There's a whole separate chapter of this having to do with providing school-based trauma treatment to kids, which, in my view, is the biggest failure of the post-9/11 recovery efforts. But it's a long story, and we're still far from writing the ending.

FC: Okay, here we are, eighteen months later. Do you have any regrets that you committed one hundred percent of the contributions you received within twelve months of the attacks?

JR: Zero. But there are reasons for that. For starters, we knew the Red Cross and the September 11th Fund were sitting there with hundreds of millions of dollars for the long run. So what's the point of saving our funds? If we can get money out usefully and quickly, we don't need to hold on to any of it. But there's a bigger reason. In the wake of 9/11, Nancy Anthony, the executive director of the Oklahoma City Community Foundation, came to New York and told a lot of us to hold a chunk of money in reserve because, she said, we would discover as the months passed that there would be a lot of needs we couldn't have imagined. We figured she had to be right, she'd been through all this. But it gradually dawned on me, as I read more about Oklahoma City, that what she was really talking about was mental health needs. It was nothing more mysterious than that. It was just that Oklahoma City was the first event of its kind, and it took people a long time to realize how long it would take for these mental time bombs to go off in people's heads. But once you understand that, what other mysteries do you need to save money for? And if we're spending our money intelligently on mental health now, well, the sooner you can get help to people, the better. Again, I could comfort myself with the fact that if there turned out to be longer-term needs, there was a ton of money elsewhere in the system to take care of them. But here we were, without a bureaucracy to speak of, free to turn on a dime and in a great position to do things sooner rather than later.

FC: You adopted three guiding principles at the Fund's inception — need, speed, and 100 percent, a reference to all administrative costs being picked up by the *Times*. The fourth principle was transparency. What did you do to ensure that your efforts in the wake of the attacks would be transparent?

JR: Two things. One was easy because we had the *New York Times*. Whenever we had something of interest or importance to announce, our colleagues would write a story about it.

Now, because we felt so strongly about this and were so overwhelmed by the volume of contributions, we also wanted to be specifically accountable to our donors and the public. So we created a six-month report and posted it to our Web site, followed by a nine-month report and a twelve-month report. The latter was particularly satisfying, because we were able to report that we'd spent something like \$60 million by March of 2002, which was about ninety-nine percent of everything we received. We've since received another couple of million and have been spending that in a variety of ways. But I was really proud that we were able to get the money out that fast. For the Fund's twelve-month accounting, we doubled the size of the foundation's annual report and devoted half of it to 9/11 activities, including detailed descriptions of many of the grants we made. All told, we have made more than a hundred grants, and I think the idea that

we would err on the side of speed was vindicated. I'm glad to say I'm not aware of a single case of fraud involving a grant we made. In some cases, recipients were a little slower in spending the money than I would have liked, but they spent it. In fact, I don't know of a single funder who experienced a serious case of fraud, which, if you think about the amount of money involved, is remarkable.

FC: Were you criticized by anyone for moving too quickly?

JR: No. On the contrary, we got a lot of credit for moving quickly. It was always a sort of secret, mischievous hope that we could, by example, goose other people to move faster. The one area in which we really failed in that regard was with respect to the Board of Education and school-based trauma treatment. In November, we were infuriated to learn that even though there was a ton of Project Liberty money available, the Board of Ed still had not provided school-based trauma treatment for a single child. I was damned if I was going to let those kids go home for Christmas break without anybody having done anything for them. So in two weeks, we cooked up a program called Strength in Schools — we wanted to keep mental health terminology out of it — and managed to get something going in ten downtown schools. It wasn't much, but it was something. For example, in one school the NYU Child Study Center was doing one hour of therapy a week. We gave them a grant and got them to do ten. Our main objective was to help the kids. If in the course of doing that we were able to send a message to the Board of Education, well . . . I mean, their attitude, as it was expressed to a reporter from the *Times* — “We're not going to allow our kids to be used as guinea pigs so that therapists can get federal dollars” — was just so frustrating. Even now, it makes me cringe to think about it. Guinea pigs!

FC: Why do you think the media was less eager to criticize federal and city agencies on the issue of speed than it was to go after the philanthropic community?

JR: That's a big question that concerns a lot of people, and I can only give you my own theories. The biggest one has to do with the Red Cross, whose behavior established the tone for the whole recovery effort. And I don't just mean on a single occasion; there were three different turns of the screw where they messed up. Don't get me wrong. I know Bob Bender and I respect the organization; they've done extraordinary work in the past and did so after 9/11. But in the wake of 9/11, they ended up fouling their own nest with some sheer elemental PR stupidity. I think it sort of established the climate for the charity bashing by certain elements of the media that followed.

There's another aspect to it — and this is wholly speculative on my part — but based on the speed and volume with which contributions began to pour in, I think the national mood in the days immediately following the attacks was dominated by one simple question: “What can I do?” A lot of people tried to give blood, but that avenue was soon closed to them. So people started to give money. And, of course, people wanted their contributions to help the victims. But in many cases it was given with such intensity of feeling that, in hindsight, I think of it as “vengeful philanthropy.” It was a way to strike back at the terrorist sons of bitches who had attacked us. Because people, through their

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contributions, were so emotionally invested in the response to 9/11, it almost didn't matter whether the money was being spent or not; the act of giving was what mattered.

Then along comes a careless or sensation-seeking TV interviewer who doesn't really understand the questions he's asking and who says, "Aha! You haven't spent the money yet, or you've done such-and-such. . . ." And it strikes a spark. People become disappointed, but in a different way than if it had just been money given for earthquake victims. If it were a case of not getting the money to victims so they could make repairs to the house, or for flashlights and blankets — well, that would just be ordinary incompetence. But for this money not to have been well spent was an outrage. It was contrary to the war effort. That's my take on it.

FC: Do you think philanthropic organizations in New York and around the country learned a lesson about public relations as a result of 9/11? And do you think they'll behave differently in the event of a future attack?

JR: You probably noticed that one of the conclusions — maybe the major conclusion — put forth by Tom Seessel in his report [i.e., *The Philanthropic Response to 9/11*] for the Ford Foundation is that philanthropies and nonprofit organizations, for the most part, performed wonderfully well in the wake of 9/11. But, far from getting credit for it, we were criticized. So what do we do about that in the future? Seessel suggested we employ a single spokesman for all agencies and service providers and funders in the event of another terrorist strike. That doesn't seem practical to me. For one thing, many of the agencies involved are very complicated, and you'd need to have an insider's view of them in order to speak for them. If a reporter calls up and asks a question about the New York chapter of the Red Cross, some newly minted central czar isn't going to know how or where to get the answer for that reporter to make his deadline. So I probably wouldn't endorse the idea.

But I do endorse the idea of coordination in general, even in a place like New York, where there are hundreds of philanthropic players. What we can do and should do — and what I would urge on other communities — is to create, area by area, an informal council of the big players and convene it every now and then to compare notes and take the lay of the land. I mean, you can't predict what kind of disaster we may face — there's no point in trying. But you can know who the players are and have a plan to get them all together in the mayor's office or wherever if something happens.

In late September, after the blowup of the attorney general's effort to coordinate things, Vartan Gregorian [president of the Carnegie Corporation of New York] and Susan Berresford [president of the Ford Foundation] convened a meeting of the various players at Carnegie. And Vartan started the meeting by saying something like, "Look, this is not coordination; this is just information, so I know that if you're giving shoeshines, I can give haircuts." That seems to me to be a terrific model, both for the coordination process generally, and also for media relations.

You know, I think from time to time that if the September 11th Fund had set its sights a little higher, it could have played that role. I half-thought when I learned on September 12

that they were up and running that maybe we should fold our thing into theirs. And I suppose we didn't because we had the newspaper and the next day we were able to put a story in the paper, and things kind of developed their own momentum after that. But if they had decided to go bigger — not to run things, per se, but to take the lead in creating a sort of coalition of organizations — and if they had started to offer a daily press briefing as part of that effort, who knows what might have happened?

FC: The September 11th Fund is going to spend itself out over the next few years. Is there another organization that could fill that role?

JR: I don't know. It's not brain surgery. We just need to use common sense. Nobody has to subordinate themselves to anybody else. The Red Cross doesn't have to subordinate itself to the Robin Hood Foundation; Robin Hood doesn't have to subordinate itself to the September 11th Fund. We could all be players, and if there's some overlap as a result, so what? We're not talking about an automobile plant that has to produce a certain number of SUVs a day.

FC: Is the philanthropic community in New York better prepared to respond to a major terrorist attack or catastrophe than it was on September 10, 2001?

JR: Yes, decidedly. For one thing, we all know each other better now — and like each other, and respect the different things we each have done in the wake of 9/11. For another, I think the experience has made us all far more receptive to joining quickly in cooperative efforts. Several of us are cooperating right now, for example, in trying to get the lessons of 9/11 across to philanthropic communities in other cities.

FC: As a long-time New Yorker, how long do you think it will take for the city to recover from 9/11?

JR: There are a lot of New Yorks. In a superficial sense, I suppose many of them have already recovered from 9/11 — or wish to pretend they have. That's probably a healthy kind of denial. But for a lot of New Yorkers, their mental palette will always be shaded a bit darker than it was before September 11, 2001. I mean, you can feel it in the air every time there's a new Code Orange alert, or a squadron of police cars at the tollbooths on the George Washington Bridge or at the tunnels. So, I don't know. A long time.

FC: Well, thank you, Jack, for taking the time to speak with us this morning.

JR: My pleasure.

Mitch Nauffts, *Philanthropy News Digest's* editorial director, interviewed Jack Rosenthal in March 2003.

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Helping the Arts and Artists Recover in the Wake of 9/11

In the days following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, New York City's museums, performing-arts venues, and community-based arts organizations provided New Yorkers with a place to reflect and remember. Small memorials composed of flowers, candles, and photographs appeared spontaneously throughout the city. Public parks and spaces were converted into communal canvasses of grief by artists and non-artists alike.

In the almost two years since, New Yorkers have struggled to regain the confidence, optimism, and *joie de vivre* that is their birthright. Even the city's arts and culture scene, one of its crown jewels, has been in a funk, with attendance at many events and performances off and its support system of contributed and earned income, both public and private, in tatters. According to the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs and the New York State Council on the Arts, more than

THEODORE S. BERGER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
NEW YORK FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS



two hundred cultural organizations are located below Fourteenth Street, within a few miles of the World Trade Center site, along with an unknown number of individual artists. In many cases, their future is cloudy.

In May, *Philanthropy News Digest* spoke with New York Foundation for the Arts executive director Theodore S. Berger about the impact of 9/11 on a community already reeling from a slumping economy and a tough funding environment, NYFA's response to the attack, and what the future holds for the city's artists and cultural institutions.

Berger joined NYFA in 1973, developing its Artist-in-Residence program, and was named executive director of the organization in 1980. With an organizational budget of \$13 million, NYFA is one of the nation's major providers of grants and services to individual artists in all artistic disciplines and also serves arts organizations, the educational community, and the general public through a variety of national and international initiatives.

Mr. Berger has written and spoken extensively on the arts and artists for national publications and conferences, and has served on numerous cultural and educational boards, panels, and committees, including the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, the New York-Israel Cultural Cooperation Commission, the New Jersey Council on the Arts, the National Campaign for Freedom of Expression, the Connecticut Commission on the Arts, and the Alliance of Artists' Communities.

He currently serves as an adviser and board member of the Arts & Business Council, Inc., ArtsAction of the Alliance of New York State Arts Organizations, ArtsConnection, the Association of Hispanic Arts, the Colleagues Theater Company, the Design Trust for Public Space, and the New York City Arts Coalition, and was formerly assistant dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and the School of International Affairs at Columbia University.

Foundation Center: Tell us about NYFA. When and why was it established, and how long have you been with the organization?

Ted Berger: I've been there too long. [Laughter.] We were established by the New York State Council on the Arts in 1971. The state constitution prohibits a government agency from giving monies directly to individuals, from funding other city or state agencies such as schools, and from raising money from the private sector. So NYFA was set up as an intermediary to do those kinds of things. And although NYSCA remains our largest donor, other sources account for about sixty percent of our contributions. We're an independent, private organization, but we're not a foundation in the sense that we sit on an endowment. We're a public charity, and more and more we're becoming something like a community foundation in that we raise money from public and private sources in order to give it away. But because we focus on the arts exclusively, we're not a community foundation in the true sense of the word.

FC: Does NYFA help individual artists?

TB: Over the years, NYFA has done many things, but increasingly our focus is on supporting individual artists in all disciplines, as well as artist-centered organizations. We're very concerned about the centrality of working artists to the whole arts community and to a better understanding by the broader public of the role artists play in art making as well as in society. So we provide both grants and services and information to individual artists. And since we recognize the fact that there's never going to be enough grant money out there to support arts organizations or individual artists, we've been looking at ways of supplying information that helps artists take charge of their own careers.

One of our important information services is the continued development of our Web site, NYFA Interactive, and within that something called NYFA Source, which we worked very closely with the Urban Institute on. It's a searchable database designed to help artists get free access to information on grants, programs and services, and publications, allowing them to download that information in any way, shape, or form.

Increasingly, we're also looking at the issues arising from the broader landscape in which artists function. We're very involved in advocacy, for example, and we're also working with non-arts resources in an effort to help artists survive in the current rather dismal economic climate. For example, NYFA is part of a group called the Labor Community Advocacy Network, or LKAN, that is advocating for a jobs program as part of the redevelopment of downtown Manhattan and the rebuilding of New York. The program would include both private- and public-sector jobs; the nonprofit arts sector — nonprofit arts organizations and artists — would be built into the subsidy program. This has grown out of NYFA's partnership with the Consortium for Worker Education (CWE), which we developed for a recent wage-subsidy initiative for small and mid-size arts organizations to help avoid staff layoffs.

FC: I've heard anecdotally that there is now less funding available directly to artists, and that more funders are going through regranting agencies. Has this been your experience? What reason would a funder have to go through a regranting agency?

TB: It certainly feels that there is less money available directly to artists, but until we as a field start to gather more verifiable information about this matter, I have no solid data. Obviously, the demise of NEA direct support to artists in all disciplines except for literature has had a negative economic impact and sent a negative message to the funding community. Some funders do not want to be associated with any "controversy," so they have stayed away from this. Some funders may not want to take on the administrative load that can come with processing applications from individual artists. At NYFA, for example, we receive nearly four thousand applications for our fellowships every year. But despite the growth of new foundations, many may not necessarily want to jump through the IRS hurdles in order to support individuals.

Regranting agencies such as NYFA allow funders to vastly expand their grantmaking without expanding their staff. It's a very efficient means that a number of major funders have recognized. At NYFA, we've been privileged to collaborate with Pew and Rockefeller, for example, as well as NYSCA. It's a good investment for donors of all kinds.

Regranting agencies such as NYFA allow funders to vastly expand their grantmaking without expanding their staff.

In the wake of 9/11, thousands, if not tens of thousands, of people spontaneously turned to the arts as part of the healing process.

FC: In the summer of 2000, NYFA launched a special project called the Cultural Blueprint for New York City. What was the principal objective of the project?

TB: The Blueprint project grew out of our realization that, as a result of term limits recently approved by city voters, New York was going to have a major turnover of its elected officials, and we wanted to make sure arts and culture was on the radar screen of the new officials coming into office. We also realized that, despite all the talk about New York as the cultural capital of the world, the last serious survey of the arts and culture in New York had been done almost thirty years ago, and so the time was right for another look at the field. In the process, we wanted to ascertain the value of the entire New York arts community, not just from an economic perspective — most people understand the economic argument for the arts — but in a way that spoke to larger institutions. A blockbuster exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art or the Museum of Modern Art certainly leverages multiple dollars for restaurants, hotels, transportation, et cetera. Because of the successes of the Brooklyn Academy of Music, a BAM Cultural District is now being developed. But because the majority of the working community in the arts is composed of small, mid-size, often community-based organizations, as well as artists — the people who make art happen in the first place — we felt it was equally important to point out what the arts mean in neighborhoods throughout the city as well as in the daily lives of New Yorkers.

We'd been involved in discussions over the years about various cultural indicators. But the Fordham study was the first survey that enlisted participation from a broad cross section of New Yorkers. And it confirmed what we heard when we met with people — not just artists and attendees at arts and cultural events but regular people — in town meetings and focus groups: Art is important. People want it in their neighborhoods. They want it for their kids.

So, again, we decided that the time was right for a statistically valid study that canvassed a broad cross section of people and went beyond the economics of the field to consider the impact of arts and culture on ordinary people. And the report that grew out of that survey was called *Culture Counts*.

FC: What was City Hall's response to the report?

TB: Well, we were at the printers with *Culture Counts* when the September 11 attacks happened. And because there were so many other things that needed our attention, we literally had to stop the presses. We just weren't sure it was the right moment to release it.

When we finally thought it was appropriate to go ahead, we looked at the report very carefully to see whether it was still relevant — and, remarkably, it was. What had been true on September 10 was just as true on September 12, so to speak, if not more so. So we added a prologue that reflected on how the arts and cultural community had really been there for New Yorkers in the wake of 9/11, as thousands, if not tens of thousands, of people spontaneously turned to the arts as part of the healing process. In the dark days that followed the attacks, New Yorkers needed to connect with something that was basic to the

human spirit. And in many ways, 9/11 made very real what we had heard in our town meetings and focus groups, as well as what we knew from the public participation survey. It reinforced all of the advocacy and research that had gone into our work over the years.

Once the report was off the press, we distributed it to members of the City Council and Kate Levin, the commissioner of cultural affairs, among others. And they've been able to use it in the way for which it was intended: as a primer and a tool for thinking about the arts in New York City.

Certainly, with many issues facing New York in the aftermath of 9/11 and an eroding economy, *Culture Counts* has continued to serve as a basic starting point for advocacy and subsequent budget processes. The issues identified then continue to be critical issues to the present and future of the arts in the lives of all New Yorkers.

FC: What kind of impact did 9/11 have on the arts community in New York? Did it affect one field or discipline more than others, or was everyone equally hard hit?

TB: No one was exempt from the impact of 9/11. We think of it in terms of concentric circles. Obviously, the impact was greatest in the immediate vicinity of ground zero, but like rings that spread outward when you throw something into a pond, the impact rippled throughout the city, the state, the region, and the country. Everybody was hurt by 9/11 in some way. And because NYFA is located below Houston Street, we were affected rather dramatically: We saw the fires and the black smoke and the people jumping from the towers and the towers collapsing.

But the economic impact of this event was terrible — and not only downtown, where it was devastating. Performing arts groups lost audiences and bookings here and across the country; exhibitions were cancelled, or, if they took place, people stayed away; few people were buying art; arts organizations and artists lost revenue when schools cancelled programs and residencies; individual artists not only saw reduced sales, they also lost their day jobs. Remember, there were a lot of problems before 9/11. And, in my opinion, a lot of people were in denial about those problems and what was happening with the economy. The arts community in New York is enormously proud and resilient, and it's gotten used to doing things with smoke and mirrors. But the fault lines were there. One important factor we've been tracking is the impact the attacks had on earned income. And as we've learned, if it was bad for organizations in the aftermath of 9/11, it was even worse for individual artists. In a sense, people didn't really want to deal with the impact 9/11 had on individual artists. Certainly, the press was more interested in the impact on organizations and institutions than it was in the impact on individuals in the arts.

FC: Do you have a theory about that?

TB: I think the press is simply more used to dealing with institutions and organizations, and I think the public doesn't really understand the role individual artists play in the cultural ecosystem. The stories about individuals seem fine in terms of human interest appeal, but it seems easier to codify the economics of organizations than it is for individuals.

We've been tracking the impact the attacks had on earned income. . . . If it was bad for organizations in the aftermath of 9/11, it was even worse for individual artists.

Talking to artists around the city, it became clear that most of the money in the funds was designated for direct victims of the attacks. . . .

FC: What did NYFA do in the months after 9/11 to help the arts community in New York get back on its feet?

TB: Part of what we did was to analyze what was happening with individuals. Because we cover all disciplines and because we deal with individual artists, we worked with our colleagues at arts service organizations like ART/NY, DanceNYC, the Asian American Arts Alliance, and the Association of Hispanic Arts, as well as funders such as the Andy Warhol Foundation and Grantmakers in the Arts. We also held a series of town meetings, just to get a sense of what was happening.

As we gathered information, we also tried to figure out how the various 9/11 relief funds that had sprung up would impact artists and arts and cultural organizations. So the first thing we did was to get together with the New York City Arts Coalition to create brochures that offered a road map to the various public and private funds out there and explain what they could or couldn't provide for. And in the course of doing that and talking to artists around the city — but particularly artists downtown — it became clear that most of the money in the funds was designated for direct victims of the attacks and not indirect victims. It also became clear that there wasn't going to be a way to access most of the money that had been raised.

So I went to our board president, Peggy Ayers, and said, "We have to do something about this." And in talking about what we might do, we realized that, over the years, we had really become a sort of community foundation for the arts in New York and already had a grantmaking infrastructure in place. So, on the spot, we decided we needed to develop a special initiative to deal with the impact of 9/11. Then I called some colleagues in San Francisco and Seattle — people who had dealt with earthquake emergencies — and they were extremely helpful in getting me to think through the steps involved in a rapid, emergency-type response. At the same time, we formed a special committee of our board to handle governance issues related to the initiative and created an ad hoc committee to deal with policy issues.

Next, we formed a collaborative effort with our sister service organizations — ART/NY, the American Music Center, the Asian American Arts Alliance, the Harlem Arts Alliance, the Association of Hispanic Arts, and the New York City Arts Coalition, among others — and decided to call it the New York Arts Recovery Fund. From the beginning, the Fund was designed as a citywide effort, and we decided that grants would be awarded on the basis of demonstrable financial need. So artistic excellence, which is usually part of our regular grant criteria, was not a consideration.

NYFA then began to raise the critical funds to get going. Our first leadership grants — in the amount of \$350,000 and \$250,000, respectively — came from the Rockefeller Foundation and the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation. Then the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation committed \$2.65 million each to three Fund partners — Art/NY, which regranting it to small and mid-size theaters; the American Music Center, which regranting it to composers and small and mid-size music groups; and NYFA, which was charged with

regranting it to everybody else, including individual artists. In addition, we were able to raise another \$2.58 million from a variety of sources, for a total of \$5.23 million. So that by August 2002, we could say we had given away about \$4.6 million to a hundred and thirty-five arts organizations and had made about three hundred and fifty grants to individual artists. Having said that, we knew it was only a Band-Aid — and in some cases maybe a tourniquet — applied to a range of problems, and that the needs remain.

Now we're involved in a follow-up initiative called Arts Rebounding, which includes peer coaching and mentoring for artists and for arts administrators, wage subsidies for small and mid-size arts organizations, and capacity-building grants. Obviously, we haven't experienced the same kind of emotional response from donors we received in the wake of 9/11, but we're very grateful to the funders that have responded despite the rough funding climate. And we continue to look at what's going to be needed to get people through the present economic slowdown, which we believe is going to continue for some time.

FC: Were you consulted on the distribution of the two anonymous \$10 million gifts to the New York City arts community, which, it was later revealed, were given by Mayor Michael Bloomberg?

TB: We were. But the only conversation we had was when we met with representatives of the Carnegie Corporation of New York — before the first round of grants was made — to discuss the needs of the various fields. It was a very broad discussion, and it tipped me off to the fact that something might be in the works. The second \$10 million was manna from heaven.

FC: How are arts organizations in the city faring now?

TB: Other than that, Mrs. Lincoln, how was the play? [Laughter.]

FC: Right. Are they recovering?

TB: In some ways, the past year has been a little bit better than I predict the next few years are going to be. I believe we are in the midst of a perfect storm, economically. While we've had reductions in government funding in the past, and while private funding may come and go, this time the loss of earned income is adding to the inability of arts groups to stay afloat. But I sometimes look at this as a half-empty/half-full situation. Because of the weak economy, it's easy to say we're faring poorly. But on the other hand — and even despite the resources and attention being devoted to the rebuilding process downtown — arts and culture is very high on the agenda. So you've got this sober economic reality, but you also have a kind of raised public awareness of the arts and their importance to New York City.

The other thing I think has happened since 9/11 is that we're collaborating with many more non-arts sectors — maybe because we all realize we're in the same leaky boat together. But I see that as positive. Is it going to be rocky? Yes. But it also means that, down the road, more people will understand why we need arts and culture in our lives.

FC: Has NYFA had to cancel or postpone any programs this year?

We knew it was only a Band-Aid — and in some cases maybe a tourniquet — applied to a range of problems. . . .

Like everyone else, we've been cutting back where we can . . . while focusing our efforts maintaining our core services to the field.

TB: We've been very thoughtful about what's ahead and have had to constantly readjust our thinking and programs over the course of the year. We were hoping, for example, that we could expand our fellowship program for artists, but that's not going to happen — even though we were fortunate to have a new donor make a million-dollar gift to help us maintain the program and increase our information resources over the next three years. In this climate, we consider staying steady a step forward. But like everyone else, we've been cutting back where we can — no raises, staff reduction through attrition, and we're looking at possible layoffs — while focusing our efforts on making sure that we can maintain our core services to the field. Of course our big challenge is that we have to raise money in order to fund and run these programs. And even though we know that certain programs are really outstanding, we don't know whether we'll have the resources to keep them going.

FC: Do you have any programs or any new initiatives in the works?

TB: We do. [Laughter.] Despite everything, we've been in the pilot phase of one our Arts Rebounding initiatives, which we call the NYFA Leadership Initiative. It's designed, through the use of leadership circles and peer coaching and mentoring, to help arts administrators run their organizations more efficiently in this difficult climate. We're trying hard to keep the program going, and it has been well received. Another interesting new initiative is a collaborative effort with the Municipal Arts Society, the Consortium for Worker Education, and the New City Arts Coalition that is looking at adapting the Handmade in America model to urban areas. Handmade in America is an extraordinary economic and community development model developed in rural North Carolina that has brought economic vitality and attention to the craft artisans in that area. We believe that many New York neighborhoods have similar hidden assets and are fertile ground for cottage industries, and we're trying to look at how the city can soften the negative aspects of gentrification by encouraging spaces that serve not only artists but also artisans.

In addition, we've long been interested in education issues — art education as well as artist education, at all stages of their careers. So we're working with the Tremaine Foundation to develop a curriculum in conjunction with six artists-training institutions — CalArts, the Parsons School of Design, the Art Institute of Chicago, the School of the Arts at Columbia, the Museum School of Boston, and Virginia Commonwealth University. The initiative is designed to augment and increase basic survival information for graduating MFA students in the design, visual, and media arts.

So despite everything that's going on, we're trying to move ahead.

FC: Looking ahead five to ten years, do you think New York will retain its standing as the cultural capital of the world?

TB: One of the key issues raised in the *Culture Counts* report is this whole idea of New York as a cultural capital. It's something that can't be taken for granted, but too frequently is. Putting the recession aside for the moment, there's no question that there is a concentration of creative people here in New York that you won't find in too many other

places. What's increasingly important is that we look at the environmental factors that affect artists' lives and make that concentration possible.

When we did a survey last year to get a sense of the effect of 9/11 on various disciplines, we learned that 82 percent of the artists in the city had lost over 46 percent of their income. They'd lost their day jobs and their arts jobs. Work that was selling before 9/11 stopped selling after 9/11. We also saw a decrease in arts education activities. As I say, one of the concerns I have about the future of New York City is that too many of us will take this stuff for granted. So our job at NYFA is to keep people thinking about what is happening to the arts and artists in New York. All of the issues that were raised in *Culture Counts* — space, recognition, jobs — is just as relevant as it was when we commissioned the report. And make no mistake, it's going to be a rough couple of years for artists and arts organizations.

FC: Well, thank you, Ted, for your time this morning.

TB: Thank you.

Kevin Kinsella, *Philanthropy News Digest's* managing editor, interviewed Ted Berger in May 2003.

This whole idea of New York as a cultural capital. . . . It's something that can't be taken for granted, but too frequently is.

Working to Expand Access to Higher Education for All Americans

The September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon and the crash of United Airlines Flight 93 in a field in southwestern Pennsylvania claimed the lives of more than three thousand individuals. The murder of so many people was a devastating loss for the country and a tragedy for the families of the victims.

In the days that followed, Americans responded to the plight of the families with unprecedented generosity. Donations — of blood, emergency supplies, and cash — poured into the Red Cross, Salvation Army, and other relief agencies. Meanwhile, in Indianapolis, executives of the Lumina Foundation for Education, which works to expand access to higher education for all Americans, struggled to come up with a response that would be both meaningful and appropriate in the context of its mission. The answer they arrived at was a scholarship fund for the dependents of those who were killed or injured on 9/11.

MARTHA LAMKIN
PRESIDENT AND CEO
LUMINA FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATION



In March, *Philanthropy News Digest* spoke with Martha Lamkin, president and CEO of Lumina, about the Families of Freedom Scholarship Fund and the foundation's partnership with Scholarship America. Lamkin also shared her thoughts about skyrocketing postsecondary education costs, steps that need to be taken to ensure that a college education is available to all Americans, and the role of Lumina in raising and addressing critical issues related to postsecondary education.

Lamkin has directed the Lumina Foundation since its inception in 1997 and was instrumental in developing the concept of the foundation during her tenure as executive vice president of corporate advancement at USA Group, Inc., which she joined in 1991.

During her thirty-year career, she has served as president of the Cummins Engine Company Foundation in Columbus, Indiana, and as executive director of corporate responsibility and government affairs at Cummins; as manager for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Indiana office; and as an attorney with the firm of Lowe, Gray, Steele and Hoffman, in Indianapolis. She has, in addition, extensive leadership experience in both higher education and philanthropy and is a trustee of the Indianapolis Foundation — the nation's second oldest and Indiana's largest community foundation — and a co-founder and the current chair of the Central Indiana Community Foundation, which combines more than \$355 million in assets of the Indianapolis Foundation, the Legacy Fund, and other community endowments.

A dedicated community leader, Lamkin has been a member of the board of visitors of DePauw University and the president's cabinet of Indiana University, and has served as board chair of the Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis, vice-chair of the Citizens Gas and Coke Utility Company, and on the boards of Independent Colleges of Indiana, the Indianapolis Economic Development Corporation, the Indiana Fiscal Policy Institute, and the Hoosier Capital Girl Scouts of America Council Advisory Board.

She graduated summa cum laude from California Baptist University, received her master's degree in English and American Literature from Vanderbilt University, and earned her law degree from Indiana University.

Foundation Center: Tell us about the Lumina Foundation — when was it founded, what is its mission, and what is the focus of its grantmaking?

Martha Lamkin: Lumina Foundation for Education is a private, independent foundation based in Indianapolis. As our name implies, we serve an educational mission — specifically, to expand access to education beyond high school. The foundation was created on July 31, 2000, when USA Group, the nation's largest nonprofit administrator of student loans, sold most of its operating assets, which were then valued at \$770 million, making the foundation one of the sixty largest in the country — and the largest one focused exclusively on educational access nationwide. Initially, we were called the USA Group Foundation, but we moved quickly to change our name to better communicate our identity. On February 26, 2001, the foundation officially adopted a new name, Lumina Foundation for

Education. By 2002 the average market value of our assets exceeded \$930 million, placing us among the top fifty private foundations in the country, according to data gathered by the Foundation Center.

Today, we're using those assets to fund national research, innovative programs, and broad communications efforts around issues that are important to higher education access, with a focus on issues related to financial access, student success in completing their goals beyond high school, and opportunities for underserved students — all in an effort to help people achieve their full potential by pursuing education beyond high school.

FC: Do you make grants to individuals?

ML: No. We focus on research and programs that assist a broad spectrum of students and institutions, either because of the program's scope or the scale of its innovation.

FC: On September 17, 2001, the foundation, in partnership with the Citizens' Scholarship Foundation of America — now called Scholarship America — announced the creation of the Families of Freedom Scholarship Fund for dependents of those killed or permanently disabled as a result of the September 11 terrorist attacks. Can you describe the discussions that led to the creation of the Fund?

ML: Like all Americans, we struggled to find an appropriate way to respond to the events of September 11. As we talked about those events in the days after the attacks, it seemed to us that other funds were, quite rightly, focusing on the critical short-term needs of the victims' families. But given our mission and the fact that we believe education beyond high school is essential to meeting life's challenges and triumphing over its obstacles, we felt that whether the need for expanded access to postsecondary education was immediate — for example, in the case of family members who were already in school — or wouldn't arise for eighteen or nineteen years, when the babies and infants of some of the victims had reached college age, we were in a position to do something about those needs. So, because we do not give scholarships ourselves, we contacted a knowledgeable partner with long experience in the field, Scholarship America, and, within six days — by September 17 — had provided \$3 million to launch the Fund. In return, Scholarship America agreed to manage the program and raise additional funds.

FC: How were you able to secure the participation of former President Clinton and former Senator Dole as honorary co-chairs of the Fund?

ML: Scholarship America and one of its other donors negotiated that arrangement as one of several strategies that emerged to help the Fund grow. Through the efforts of Andy McKelvey, chairman and president of TMP Worldwide, which owns Monster.com, Scholarship America was able to make the appropriate contacts and join forces with Clinton and Dole, who joined as co-chairs of the campaign fund effort and held a press conference in Washington, D.C., on Saturday, September 28, 2001, then produced a public service announcement and agreed to assist in raising monies for the Fund.

Like all Americans, we struggled to find an appropriate way to respond to the events of September 11.

We were amazed and inspired by the overwhelming support the Fund received from people of all ages and dozens of countries.

FC: Having reached its goal of \$100 million, the Fund was closed to contributions on September 4, 2002. Can you give us a breakdown, by donor type, of contributors to the Fund?

ML: Let me first say that we were amazed and inspired by the overwhelming support the Fund received from people of all ages and dozens of countries. Here are a few highlights: The families of Freedom Scholarship Fund received 16,500 gifts from individuals, ranging in size from 50 cents to almost \$1 million, and 1,500 corporate gifts, ranging in size from \$50 to \$2 million. That includes contributions from corporations that collected employee gifts for a general 9/11 fund and then empowered employee committees to decide on the final destination of those funds. We also received gifts from 1,450 organizations, ranging in size from \$10 to \$8 million, including many gifts from smaller groups such as churches, Scout troops, youth groups, and schools. Again, those gifts were usually made up of contributions from many individuals. And the Fund also received 200 foundation gifts, including major commitments of \$20 million from the Citigroup Foundation and \$10 million from the DaimlerChrysler Help the Children Fund.

FC: Who's eligible to receive assistance from the Fund?

ML: When we established our fundraising goal, Scholarship America estimated that \$100 million would cover approximately 70 percent of the financial needs of qualified applicants. The remainder of the funding would be picked up by other entities, such as federal, state, and institutional sources. If contributions to the Fund exceeded the \$100 million goal, the Fund would be able to cover a higher percentage of applicants' needs.

In terms of eligibility, all dependent children and spouses of the victims of 9/11, including domestic partners, are eligible for assistance and are asked to register with the Fund. That way, we can continually evaluate their needs.

FC: Will the Fund provide scholarship assistance to the dependents of Pentagon employees and the crew and passengers of the planes that were hijacked?

ML: Yes. The Families of Freedom Scholarship Fund will benefit dependents of September 11 victims, including airplane crew and passengers, World Trade Center and Pentagon workers and visitors, and firefighters, emergency medical personnel, and law-enforcement personnel.

FC: Do you have an idea of how many people will be aided by the Fund over its lifetime?

ML: We believe it will be in the thousands, but it's an ongoing challenge to identify and register everyone who is eligible. Each year, there will be an actuarial assessment of the number and age of eligible beneficiaries — children and adults — and that information will be used to project how many scholarship recipients can be expected in the remaining years. From that, we can project how much money is needed and allocate the funds so that everyone who is eligible will receive the support they've been promised.

FC: Financial assistance offered by the Fund is need-based. Did you make that decision early on?

ML: Yes. We take a look at school costs and then consider family finances as well as other sources of aid, including scholarships, and then calculate the difference. However, other funders indicated that their donations could be given regardless of need, so we think that, at a minimum, most applicants will receive \$1,000 per year for out-of-pocket expenses.

FC: Are awards from the Fund pegged to the rate of inflation?

ML: Well, to the extent that the Fund and the number of applicants are re-evaluated on an annual basis, it will take into account such factors as inflation.

FC: Do you plan to take into account the changing financial circumstances of individual applicants over time?

ML: Yes. When a dependent is ready to apply to school, that will be the appropriate time to assess the financial circumstances of his or her family, the costs he or she is facing, and the level of his or her need.

FC: Can awards from the Fund be used for non-traditional postsecondary programs?

ML: Yes, as long as the program is offered by an accredited postsecondary institution or, in the case of vocational programs or trade schools, has an approved license or an endorsement from an industry association.

FC: Earlier, you mentioned other programs that are providing scholarship assistance to 9/11 dependents. Are you coordinating your efforts with entities such as New York State and the September 11th Scholarship Alliance?

ML: Yes we are. Again, because Lumina Foundation is not a scholarship organization, this is an area where we rely on the expertise of our partner, Scholarship America. It really manages the Fund, makes the actuarial determinations, and so on. Scholarship America partnered with Citigroup on the 9/11 Scholarship Alliance effort, which is a coordinated effort to assist the dependents of 9/11 victims as they reach college age. For instance, because the New York State fund provides financial assistance toward the cost of attending a public institution in New York, the Families of Freedom Scholarship Fund will provide assistance for incidental expenses. If 9/11 dependents want to attend a private institution in New York, they can, as I understand it, still receive scholarship assistance equivalent to what they would get if they attended a public institution, and then the Fund would help them meet the difference between the cost of the public and private institutions.

FC: Have you taken steps to ensure that, twenty-five years from now, you achieved what you set out to accomplish with the Fund back in September 2001?

ML: Scholarship America plans to stay in close contact with the eligible families over time. And, of course, it will need to rely on those families to stay in touch with it, as well.

If you're talking about transparency and accountability, Scholarship America, under its previous name, the Citizens' Scholarship Foundation of America, has repeatedly been listed as one of the most effective nonprofits in the country, which is one reason why we chose to partner with it. Its credibility as a good trustee of funds held on behalf of

Scholarship America partnered with Citigroup on the 9/11 Scholarship Alliance effort, a coordinated effort to assist the dependents of 9/11 victims as they reach college age.

Expected demographic shifts and increasing financial barriers could push a postsecondary education further out of reach for students who already face significant challenges.

organizations across the country is impeccable, and I'm sure that, after taking into account the needs of all the participants, it will make the proper investment decisions over time.

FC: Have you established a termination date for the Fund? What happens to assets that haven't been disbursed by that date?

ML: Yes. Any assets remaining in the Fund as of December 31, 2030, may be used by Scholarship America to support its other postsecondary education scholarship programs.

FC: A final question related to the Fund: Have you and Scholarship America had discussions or developed a contingency plan that takes into account future terrorist attacks?

ML: We have not undertaken that discussion at this point.

FC: I want to switch tracks and talk about the foundation's work in the field of postsecondary education. Are minority and low-income students increasing their representation on college campuses, falling behind in terms of representation, or holding onto the gains they've made over the last two decades?

ML: Higher education has made significant strides in terms of reaching out to and increasing the numbers of underserved students. But a major concern for all of us is the fact that expected demographic shifts and increasing financial barriers could push a postsecondary education further out of reach for students who already face significant challenges in trying to continue their education beyond high school — especially if they come from a low-income family, a family of color, or if they are the first in their families to attend a postsecondary institution.

Let me give you a few facts. Historically underrepresented students are expected to constitute an increasing proportion of the college-age population in the coming years. According to a 2001 study by the National Center for Education Statistics, over the next ten years the number of students pursuing a postsecondary education will jump by more than two million. The Hispanic student population will account for nearly fifty percent of that growth, while the growth in the Caucasian and African-American student populations is expected to come in around eighteen and sixteen percent, respectively. So we think demographic trends are important.

Another issue is financial. As you undoubtedly know, many states across the country are facing significant budget shortfalls, and those tend to have a cascading effect, particularly on public education institutions, where most of the underserved students I alluded to will begin their postsecondary careers. As a society, the challenge going forward will be to figure out how to help larger groups of college-age students with significant financial needs even as state and federal pools of financial aid are stagnant or shrinking.

But we need to take the college access question a step further. For underserved students, getting into college is only the first hurdle. Researchers who examine graduation rates have noted a growing difference in the rate at which students of different income levels finish college. This attainment gap is not shrinking significantly. Recent research from the University of Virginia revealed no real improvement over time in the overall share of low-

income students receiving a college degree. We need to continue to improve college access and increase our efforts in helping these underserved students achieve their higher education goals.

FC: The cost of a college education has consistently outpaced the rate of inflation over the last two decades and even now, in a near-zero inflation environment, continues to rise. Why?

ML: It's a complex problem to which there are no easy answers or solutions. Colleges and universities are struggling to meet the costs associated with an increased use of technology. They have to replace aging infrastructure. They have talented faculty — a fixed cost — who need and deserve ongoing support. And, as I mentioned, federal and state government support has either not kept pace with rising costs or, in some cases, has been cut. Two-thirds of the states have budget shortfalls, representing a total shortfall of roughly \$26 billion, and from 2001 to 2002 state spending on higher education nationwide increased just one percent. Overall, appropriations for higher education actually dropped in fourteen states. So, while overall state spending on financial aid actually increased by eight percent, to \$5.5 billion, from 2002 to 2003, tuition costs on average increased ten percent. In other words, when it comes to postsecondary education, there's a growing affordability gap for those with limited financial means.

FC: If these trends persist, can you imagine a time in the not-too-distant future when a college education is priced beyond the means of most young Americans?

ML: Because education is so important and prized by our society, I am convinced that, as a society, we will figure out a way to address this issue. On an individual level, education improves the quality of our lives, fuels the long-term economic gains we need to sustain our economy, and is vital to the health of our civic life and participation. So while it will require broad partnerships between public and private stakeholders, I am convinced — and hopeful — that we will come up with a solution to the problem.

FC: Do you see potential in new communication technologies such as the Internet to mitigate these problems?

ML: While technology can improve access to postsecondary education, it's not the solution for every issue in the field, or every audience. For instance, I recently visited a community college in Florida that has a high degree of online engagement with its students. I found it interesting, however, that most of the students traveled to campus to participate in online classes. And that's because, by being on campus, they have better access to on-site tutors, guidance counselors, and their peers. The human element is still a very important part of the postsecondary experience.

FC: Lumina Foundation puts considerable resources into research and evaluation. What do you hope to achieve through those activities, and who are the target audiences for that work?

ML: In the early days of the foundation we consulted with a number of opinion leaders in the field, and one of the valuable things they shared with us was the idea that quality

Education improves the quality of our lives, fuels the long-term economic gains, and is vital to the health of our civic life and participation.

We made a conscious decision to emphasize research because we believed, and continue to believe, that it would inform our grantmaking. . . .

research can be a foundation's most lasting contribution to society. As a result, we made a conscious decision to emphasize research because we believed, and continue to believe, that it would inform our grantmaking and, we hoped, also contribute to the public conversation about higher education. Today, as much as ever, we want our grantmaking to be grounded in data, and we are eager to learn more about the issues that concern us through evaluation and to communicate the lessons we learn. In the final analysis, we hope that policy makers, institutions of higher education, nonprofit groups, and others with an interest in higher education will find the research we support helpful in furthering their own missions.

FC: Does the foundation have any plans to spend itself out? And if not, how do you think your mission and objectives will change over the next few decades?

ML: We think there are more than enough challenges and opportunities in the areas of higher education access and success to keep the foundation engaged for years to come. For instance, the Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that occupations requiring a postsecondary vocational or academic degree will account for forty-two percent of total job growth between 2000 and 2010. We also see a number of foundations shifting their focus away from higher education. Because of that, we believe we have an even greater opportunity and, one could argue, obligation to stay the course with our current mission.

Beyond that, postsecondary completion rates are still disappointingly low, and we think more needs to be done to assure that students have successful careers beyond high school, so we plan to evolve our work to meet that need. But for the foreseeable future, we'll remain focused on access to education beyond high school.

FC: Well, Martha, thank you for speaking with us this morning.

ML: You're very welcome.

Mitch Nauffts, *Philanthropy News Digest's* editorial director, interviewed Martha Lamkin in March 2003.

Philanthropy in a Post-9/11 World

Fourteen months after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the question is no longer whether the world has changed, but how much and to what end. Have our actions in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, the Philippines, and the Middle East since September 11 made us more or less secure? Has our determination to prevent weapons of mass destruction from falling into the hands of terrorists strengthened the hand of the United Nations or alienated allies we will need in the struggle that lies ahead? Have we struck the right balance between homeland security and civil liberties, or have we sacrificed the rights of a few for the many? And what is the role of organized philanthropy in all this?

In an environment in which difficult questions are matched by elusive answers, it's easy for individuals to feel overwhelmed. But that's a luxury, many would argue, we can no longer afford. In an increasingly interdependent world, it is the responsibility of every individual, in every country, to think globally and act locally.

VARTAN GREGORIAN
PRESIDENT
CARNEGIE CORPORATION OF NEW YORK



In a wide-ranging interview conducted in October 2002, *Philanthropy News Digest* spoke with Vartan Gregorian, president of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, about many of these issues, including the global challenges confronting the United States, the importance of accommodation between the West and mainstream Islam, the philanthropic response to the terrorist attacks, and the philanthropic legacy of Andrew Carnegie, both here and abroad.

Dr. Gregorian is the twelfth president of Carnegie Corporation of New York, a grantmaking institution founded by Andrew Carnegie in 1911. Prior to his current position, which he assumed in June 1997, he served for nine years as the sixteenth president of Brown University.

Gregorian was born in Tabriz, Iran, of Armenian parents, receiving his elementary education in Iran and his secondary education in Lebanon. In 1956 he entered Stanford University, where he majored in history and the humanities, graduating with honors in 1958. He was awarded a Ph.D. in history and humanities from Stanford in 1964.

Dr. Gregorian has taught European and Middle Eastern history at San Francisco State College, the University of California at Los Angeles, and the University of Texas at Austin. In 1972 he joined the University of Pennsylvania faculty and was appointed Tarzian Professor of History and professor of South Asian history. He was founding dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at the University of Pennsylvania in 1974 and four years later became its twenty-third provost, a position he held until 1981.

For eight years (1981–1989), he served as a president of the New York Public Library, an institution with a network of four research libraries and eighty-three circulating libraries. In 1989, he was appointed president of Brown University.

Gregorian is the author of *Emergence of Modern Afghanistan, 1880–1946*. A Phi Beta Kappa and Ford Foundation Foreign Area Training Fellow, he has been the recipient of numerous fellowships, including those from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, the American Council of Learned Societies, the Social Science Research Council, and the American Philosophical Society. In 1969 he received the Danforth Foundation's E.H. Harbison Distinguished Teaching Award and in 1986 was awarded the Ellis Island Medal of Honor. In 1989, he received the American Academy of the Institute of Arts and Letters' Gold Medal for Service to the Arts, and in 1998 he was awarded the National Humanities Medal by President Clinton.

Foundation Center: Earlier this year, you wrote that the United States was facing a crucial era in its history, an era in which global challenges had become national ones and problems around the world have immediate impact on American daily life. Are we, as a nation, prepared to meet the challenges of a post-9/11 world?

Vartan Gregorian: I don't think we are. First of all, I think one of the problems we face is whether we can have a national policy that changes every four years. You have to understand, the rest of the world sees our foreign policy as one of continuity, whereas

Americans tend to see foreign policy as an extension of domestic developments and politics. That kind of thinking used to be fine, but now, in our increasingly interdependent world, changes in our foreign policies have great ramifications and we must be aware of that.

Second, having buried it twice, in the First World War and again in the Second World War, we still don't understand the importance of nationalism as an historical phenomenon. We have gotten better at understanding ethnic conflicts, racism, and racial politics, but we haven't yet understood that nationalism works in similar ways, with similar consequences. Excesses of nationalism erect barriers when we need to be dismantling them.

And third, there is still a misunderstanding in this country about the importance of multilateral institutions and the urgent need to make them an absolutely integral part of the global political system. So, in my opinion, we are not ready to cope with certain realities of a post-9/11 world, not least because we still have lots of self-analysis and educating to do.

FC: What is it that the American public needs to learn? And whose responsibility is it to teach them?

VG: It is critical that Americans become more knowledgeable about the complex world beyond our borders. We must acquire a better understanding of how our national interests fit, or don't fit, with the national interests of other peoples — and we have to learn how to address conflicts that arise. The media, not to mention our elected leaders, schools, and universities, have a primary responsibility for helping us understand the world and the global implications of our policies. We are belatedly recognizing the enormous importance of journalists in the success of our democracy, much as we are recognizing the contributions of teachers and librarians. With this recognition comes the imperative to greatly increase society's investment in the education and training of the professionals who are responsible for transferring knowledge and objective information.

FC: As a scholar of the history and culture of Afghanistan specifically, and South Asia in general, do you see the September 11 terrorist attacks and the U.S. government's response to those attacks as harbingers of a clash of civilizations between Islam and the West?

VG: No. As a matter of fact, I've just written a seventy-page report entitled *Islam: A Mosaic, Not a Monolith*. There is no single Islamic civilization, just as there is no single Christian civilization, Jewish civilization, or Buddhist civilization. And while I do not believe in the clash-of-civilizations theory, I do believe that we have seriously neglected the study of religion as a political phenomenon. In the sixteenth century, during the Renaissance and Reformation period, secular powers in Catholic and Protestant Europe used religion to advance their secular goals. Now, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, it's the other way around: Religious organizations all over the world are using secular authorities to advance religious goals. So religion is a very important factor in the current geopolitical climate, and it needs to be studied both as a cultural and as a political phenomenon.

Having said that, I've learned, through my work on the report, that in the entire history of Islam there has never been unity. Islam, like Christianity, is divided along racial, cultural,

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Nationalism and religion are serving as vehicles for people desperate to hold on to their cultural identities.

ethnic, historical, and class lines. So, I do not believe a clash of civilizations is inevitable, although I do believe we need to do much more to understand religious phenomena at a time when globalization is spreading cultural uniformity and conformity to every corner of the globe and nationalism and religion are serving as vehicles for people desperate to hold on to their cultural identities.

FC: Given the militant nature of radical Islam, can the West fashion an effective response to the threat posed by that segment of Islam that does not include a military component?

VG: Again, one of the things we have to be careful about is to not allow all of Islam to be identified with its more radical elements. There are many, many brands of Islam, but only the radicals are eager to claim a monolithic Islam — because that allows them to claim that they represent all Muslims. It would be like any Christian sect pretending to represent all Christians. So, first of all, we need to be careful not to legitimize the radicals who claim to speak for all of Islam. And we must recognize the dangers of mindlessly applying Cold War theories to the current situation — Islamism is not replacing Communism as our new nemesis.

As a matter of fact, Carnegie Corporation, in partnership with the MacArthur Foundation and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, sponsored a major international conference in October in Grenada, Spain, that addressed that very question: “Who Speaks for Islam?” Again, it’s easy for any Muslim radical to say he represents Islam, whereas no single Catholic can say, “I represent Catholicism,” because there’s a Vatican that has filled that leadership role for centuries. Islam, in contrast, does not have a central controlling authority, which leaves it susceptible to misinterpretation and abuse, and that’s one of the things we have to clarify. We have to isolate the militant fundamentalists and not legitimize them by accepting them as spokesmen for Islam. The same kind of thing has happened in this country. We have accepted Minister Louis Farrakhan as the voice of the Nation of Islam, whereas in reality, Prophet Elijah Mohammed’s son and successor, Walid, disbanded the Nation of Islam and gradually integrated that community into the orthodox Muslim community. Farrakhan’s organization merely revived the Nation of Islam name and revived the original organization’s image as intolerant, racist, and militant. Because Walid is not controversial, few people pay much attention to him, while everybody discusses Farrakhan precisely because he is provocative and controversial. So we need to deny that kind of publicity and legitimacy to the militant extremists who are seeking it and, instead, call them what they are: extremists or terrorists who do not represent Islam and, in fact, violate the tenets of mainstream Islam.

FC: Tell us a little about what the Corporation did in response to the events of September 11?

VG: We did a number of things early on that were important. First, as you probably know, I was asked by the mayor’s office and the governor’s office whether the Corporation could coordinate the philanthropic relief efforts. Of course, we were not equipped to do that, so I politely declined. We did, however, invite sixty different organizations, including the local chapters of the United Way and the Red Cross and FEMA [Federal Emergency

Management Agency] and large New York foundations like Ford and the New York Community Trust, to our offices in late September to discuss basic issues of coordination. And out of that came a good many collaborative measures.

Second, I was very much involved in advising the New York State attorney general's office, which had the jurisdiction to monitor the relief efforts but not to coordinate them, about how they should organize that effort.

And third, we created a \$10 million relief fund — on top of, not in lieu of, grants we were already making. At the urging of FEMA, we decided to hold much of the fund in reserve for medium- and long-term needs, many of which, the agency told us, would not emerge until two or three years out. To date, we have used those funds to help pay for the reconstruction, in a different location, of the transmission tower destroyed in the collapse of One World Trade Center that broadcast programming for WNYC, the local public radio station, Channel 13, and other television and radio broadcasters. We've also supported public broadcasters' 9/11 news and analysis efforts, and we helped several schools in Lower Manhattan, including opening two libraries in honor of all the public school teachers downtown who performed so admirably on September 11 — I believe they were the only major group of people whose efforts were not duly recognized during this entire tragic event.

FC: So the plan is to dip into those funds to meet needs that emerge over the next couple of years?

VG: Yes, exactly. We're already looking for the next set of needs, and we're also looking at the situation in Washington, D.C., where we may do something like a scholarship fund for minority and other kids in memory of those who died in the attack on the Pentagon.

FC: What, if anything, did the philanthropic response to the events of September 11 tell us about the field of philanthropy? And if 9/11 was supposed to change everything, did it change philanthropy?

VG: There has been lots of propaganda and misinformation about 9/11. Many people felt that, after September 11, New York received all the charitable dollars in the country. But as you know from the various analyses that your organization and others have done, the 9/11 relief effort attracted roughly \$2 billion in contributions, the equivalent of a few days' worth of the nation's annual charitable giving, which reached a record \$212 billion in 2001. In other words, that \$2 billion did not take the air out of everybody's tires — that's one thing that needs to be corrected. Yes, it was an extraordinary response, with seventy-four percent of Americans contributing to 9/11 relief funds. Americans are a giving people, and their generosity in a time of crisis and need was overwhelming. But it did not greatly warp patterns of giving, and, with few exceptions, the rest of the nation's charitable and philanthropic work was not neglected as a result of 9/11-related contributions.

Secondly, because September 11 was a unique event on an unprecedented scale, the New York philanthropic community was not adequately prepared to cope with it. As a result, we

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We have not adequately explained to the public what philanthropy is, or what charity is, what our mission is, and what we can and cannot do.

learned that, in the future, we have to do a better job of cooperating, we have to have information in order to act appropriately, and, most important of all, we have to exchange that information freely and not worry about who does or doesn't get credit. What needs to be done is more important than who does it, and in this regard, I'm happy to say, there was a great deal of discovery as we went along.

In a sense, I compare the philanthropic response to 9/11 to a potluck dinner following a disaster. There was an enormous tragedy that required everyone to pitch in whatever they could. And then somebody said, "Wait, this isn't a balanced meal. Where's the menu?" Well, there was no menu. That's something we're trying to develop now in the event, God forbid, that a similar tragedy happens. But at the time we did not know what was needed, and to a certain degree we still don't.

Overall, however, I think New Yorkers did a great job and the nation did a great job. My only plea, as I commented to the *New York Times*, was that the kind of generosity and outpouring of kindness we saw should also be met with gratitude, rather than by people complaining about the amount of money they did or didn't get. Look, one of the things we're not used to — and have to do a better job of explaining — is the difference between need and equity. FEMA and the Red Cross and others have a lot of educating to do; they need to make it clear to people what emergency assistance in a disaster situation really means. Let's say there's a disaster that results in tragic loss, and you need to pay your \$6,000 mortgage, otherwise your house will be taken; that's an emergency. My rent is \$200; that's an emergency for me. But once the public realizes you got \$6,000 and I only got \$200, they're going to think that was inequitable. Meeting both needs is the goal, not equalizing the payments. So one of the factors that has to be explained to the public is the idea that basic emergency relief can mean different things in different circumstances.

Similarly, the Red Cross needs to explain that it should *always* have cash on hand, therefore it needs to put aside X-amount for a rainy day, because that's the only way it will be able to distribute blankets and cash assistance and food within a few hours, in New York or anywhere else, the next time disaster strikes. That needs to be clarified.

In a sense, we discovered, as a result of September 11, that we have not adequately explained to the public what philanthropy is, or what charity is. As a field, we have not adequately explained to the public what our mission is, and what we can and cannot do, and why we cannot do certain things. I guess what I'm saying is that we need an open accounting of what the relief effort was in the wake of September 11 in order to educate the public. At the same time, we shouldn't forget that Americans have a short memory. They forget, and therefore we all have to make a concerted effort to periodically explain what we're about and what we can and will do in the event, God forbid, that another disaster happens.

FC: Do you think 9/11 will spur more foundations in the U.S. to think locally and act globally?

VG: Absolutely. Because the other thing we have to realize — and this is very hard for people to process — is that AIDS and tuberculosis, water pollution, global warming, and many other issues are not isolated phenomena anymore; they're part of the global family phenomenon. And sooner or later they will affect us.

FC: These kinds of transnational phenomena are, by definition, beyond the scope of any one government or stakeholder to solve. Do you think governments, multilateral organizations and NGOs, businesses, and foundations can put aside their different agendas and join forces to actually eliminate some of these threats?

VG: Yes, but the big question is when? After crises unfold? Or before they do, when prevention is at least feasible.

FC: From the rapid introduction of information technologies to the dramatic growth in foundation assets and giving, to the development of new styles and forms of charitable giving, we've seen tremendous changes in the field of philanthropy over the last decade. Are foundations doing a good job of responding to these changes? Are they still positioned — as they were a hundred years ago, at the dawn of the modern age of philanthropy — to be re-shapers and re-inventors of American society?

VG: That's a big question.

FC: [Laughs.] It is, isn't it.

VG: Well, let me take a stab at it. First, the fundamental thing we have to realize is that America's greatness lies in its diversity, including the diversity of its nonprofit organizations and institutions. We have something like one-point-four million nonprofit organizations in this country, not including religious organizations, that go about their business each and every day. And because there is such great diversity, it's simply impossible to say whether all these organizations are fulfilling their historical mission or meeting their goals.

Now, in terms of foundations, I would say this: As long as we obey the wishes of our donors, and as long as we are transparent and accountable and do our work in the public domain, where we are subject to both praise and criticism, we're doing our job well. I have no problem with a foundation spending all its assets in pursuit of a single cause or mission. And I have no problem with a foundation such as ours or Ford or Rockefeller existing, as their founders wanted, in perpetuity, as long as it remains open to adjusting its goals and strategies as needs arise. I believe that American foundations are unique and the envy of the world because they provide things — programs, ideas, projects, experimentation, demonstration, unbiased research, nonpartisan advocacy, and so forth — that no other nation has in such abundance. In fact, they've become an indispensable part of America's fabric of progress, as well as of its growth in terms of social, economic, and political justice.

FC: Not too long ago, venture philanthropy looked like it was going to be the next new thing. But, following the collapse of the dot-com bubble, much of the buzz around it has

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American democracy's real strength lies in its participatory nature. . . . It is all the organizations we have and are continually creating that makes our democracy so successful.

dissipated. Do you think the term will still be used five years from now? And is there anything in the venture philanthropy critique of the traditional philanthropic model to which the field should pay attention?

VG: I think you're going to see the term used less and less. The "venture" part of the term was picked up from venture capitalists, and in the current economic climate — a climate in which venture capitalists are on the defensive — nobody wants to be engaged in ventures; they want to be engaged in sure things. But I, for one, have a high opinion of venture philanthropy — of any philanthropy, for that matter — as long as the people engaged in it are doing what the organization was intended to do. That's the important thing. If a donor decides to give away his or her money while they're alive, such as my friend Mrs. Astor or Irene Diamond, that's wonderful. I don't think we should criticize them; we should judge them by results. And some results unfold over the long term. Take Mrs. Diamond's AIDS Research Center. The fact that she created it is great, but it's going to take years for researchers to find a solution to the AIDS epidemic. Is that venture or traditional? I think it's both. Or, say, we decide to invest in scholarly research, the results of which may not be known for ten or fifteen years. School reform — any kind of systems reform, for that matter — can take fifteen, twenty years. We can do that, because there's room in the system for experimentation and demonstration. On the other hand, if somebody wants to build public housing tomorrow, that's also welcome. As long as we're on the right path and get yearly check-ups to ensure that we're making progress toward the goals we set, I don't have a problem with it.

FC: Does the view of wealth that Andrew Carnegie promoted in his career as a philanthropist — namely, that it was the obligation of those who had amassed it to use it for the betterment of society — still resonate with Americans?

VG: Absolutely. But not only Americans. I'm getting lots of calls to speak in Europe these days, and, of course, the whole idea in Europe has been that the state is responsible for the progress of society. In America, in contrast, from the seventeenth century on we have believed that progress, including the public's health and welfare, is the responsibility of everybody, not just government. In fact, there has been a revival of the Tocquevillian view of American democracy over the last twenty years, in Europe as well as here, that American democracy's real strength lies in its participatory nature, that it is all the organizations we have and are continually creating — from the PTA, to Elks and Rotary clubs, to grassroots nonprofit organizations — that makes our democracy so successful. And in that sense, Andrew Carnegie's vision still resonates, not only in the United States but, increasingly, around the world.

FC: You're the president of what many people consider to be the prototypical modern foundation. And in many ways, you've taken the foundation's program back to its roots by re-emphasizing support for libraries, higher education, programs in the developing world, and so on. Does the Corporation's historic position in the field give it special leverage in these areas?

VG: What's special about what we do at Carnegie Corporation is not about money, it's about ideas. Our role, in my view, is to constantly challenge the conventional wisdom. We're the yeast, if you will, not the bread. I'll be honest with you; I get frustrated when people use money as an excuse for lack of ideas, because Carnegie has always been about ideas — ideas about international peace, about reform, about education — always challenging and questioning the norm and building models and institutional capacity. In that sense, we're still doing, and accomplishing, what our founder intended.

FC: What are your ambitions for the Corporation going forward?

VG: Well, we've set ourselves some big challenges. One is district school reform. Until now, we had always bragged about how individual schools had been reformed. But we now see that the time has come to reform not just individual schools but entire school districts. So we've selected seven urban school districts to work with in an effort to transform the entire district school system — not just elementary and middle schools, but high schools as well.

The second challenge we've set ourselves is teacher education reform. Frankly, I'm troubled by the quality of our schools of education. Most of them are mediocre at best. I don't think our teachers, or the next generation of our children, deserve that. I'd like to see those schools be transformed into real intellectual centers, not just training centers for teaching skills, where teacher education is viewed as challenging, rewarding, and replenishing.

Then we have the challenge of increasing civic engagement, especially among immigrants and young people. You know, there are hundreds of thousands of young men and women who do volunteer work on a regular basis but who don't participate in the political process. So we're engaged in doing something about that.

We're also helping regional universities in Russia, because we're worried about a potential brain drain in Russia that would weaken democracy there and have major ramifications for the rest of the world. In the realm of international security, we've expanded our research and public policy work to include the concern that terrorists, not just hostile states, may obtain weapons of mass destruction. And in the area of libraries and higher education, we're working with a number of library systems and universities in Africa. It's very important that Africa maintain centers of academic and intellectual excellence during these times of crisis on the continent.

And, of course, we intend to do something on Islam, not the least because it is the fastest-growing faith in the United States and the world. We need to learn how to create bridges between the three Abrahamic faiths — Judaism, Christianity, and Islam — in this country and abroad. So that's another challenge for us.

FC: You've already touched on this, but I'll ask it a little differently. Given the general loss of confidence in all institutions, both public and private, over the last few years, what should the field of philanthropy do to retain and build on the trust of the American public?

We need to learn how to create bridges between the three Abrahamic faiths — Judaism, Christianity, and Islam — in this country and abroad.

VG: Transparency and accountability. As a field, philanthropy needs to be more analytical. We can't be afraid to point out where we failed — it can't just be a stream of successes. If we don't tell the public about our failures, as well as our successes, we will lose the public's trust. It's as simple as that.

FC: Well, thanks very much, Dr. Gregorian, for your time this morning.

VG: Thank you. I enjoyed it.

Mitch Nauffts, *Philanthropy News Digest's* editorial director, interviewed Vartan Gregorian in October 2002.

If we don't tell the public about our failures, as well as our successes, we will lose the public's trust.

Democracy As an Antidote to Terrorism

Rarely, as Richard Falk writes in *The Great Terror War*, has an event exerted such leverage on the imagination of a society as did the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. In a few moments on that perfect late-summer morning, Americans' collective sense of security was shattered and geopolitical assumptions that had been fixed for the better part of five decades were suddenly cut loose from their Cold War moorings. One day later, on September 12, President Bush vowed to fight global terrorism, and nine days after that, before a joint session of Congress, he expanded the scope of the war to include governments that harbor and support terrorists. The opening campaign in that war, the military operation in Afghanistan to unseat the Taliban regime and deny safe haven to al-Qaeda, the terrorist group behind the 9/11 attacks, commenced in early October and, with startling swiftness, achieved its major objectives by early December, when Hamid Karzai was sworn in as the leader of an interim Afghan government.

BENJAMIN R. BARBER
AUTHOR
JIHAD VS. McWORLD



At that point, however, members of the Bush administration and Congress were already looking ahead to the next phase of the war — the elimination of Saddam Hussein’s weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). On December 11, 2001, the House passed Joint Resolution 75, which declared Iraq’s refusal to allow United Nations weapons inspectors “immediate, unconditional, and unrestricted access to facilities and documents covered by United Nations Security Council Resolution 687 a mounting threat to the United States, its friends and allies,” and called for the Iraqi leader to disarm or face the consequences.

In an interview conducted in February, *Philanthropy News Digest* spoke with political scientist Benjamin Barber, author of the international best-seller *Jihad vs. McWorld*, about 9/11, the continuing threat from global terrorist organizations, the efficacy of military action against Iraq in response to that threat, and democracy as an antidote to the disintegrative forces that threaten the stability of the international order.

Barber is the Gershon and Carol Kekst Professor of Civil Society at the University of Maryland and a principal of the Democracy Collaborative, a nonprofit institute committed to strengthening democracy and civil society locally, nationally, and globally. His fifteen books include *Strong Democracy* (1984); *Jihad vs. McWorld* (1995); a collection of essays, *A Passion for Democracy* (1999); *Marriage Voices* (1981), a novel; and *The Truth of Power: Intellectual Affairs in the Clinton White House* (2001).

Dr. Barber’s honors include Guggenheim, Fulbright, and Social Science Research fellowships; honorary doctorates from Grinnell and Connecticut College; the Berlin Prize of the American Academy of Berlin (2001); and the John Dewey Award from the John Dewey Society (2003). He writes frequently for *Harper’s Magazine*, the *New York Times*, *The Atlantic*, *The Nation*, as well as other scholarly and popular publications in America and Europe, and was a founding editor and, for ten years, editor-in-chief of the international quarterly *Political Theory*.

For television, Barber co-wrote with Patrick Watson the prize-winning CBS/PBS series *The Struggle for Democracy* (1988; re-released in 2000), and also contributed to the Channel Four (U.K.) series *Greek Fire* and the American series *The American Promise*.

He lives with his wife, the choreographer and performer Leah Kreutzer, and daughter in New York City.

Foundation Center: Your book, *Jihad vs. McWorld*, was published in 1995, long before most Americans had heard of Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda. What motivated you to write the book?

Benjamin Barber: The book originated in the puzzlement I felt in looking at two different genres of commentaries about the world at that time which seemed to me to be deeply contradictory. One genre was perhaps best reflected in a book like Robert Kaplan’s *The End of the Earth* and, a few years later, by Sam Huntington’s *The Clash of Civilizations*, a genre that suggested the world was falling apart. Tribalization, urban breakdown, the

breakup of the nation-state, the Balkan crisis that had begun with the breakup of Yugoslavia, the breakup of the Soviet Union, the Northern League in Italy, the ongoing Basque separatist movement in Spain — all of those things had created a sense, quite literally, that nation-states, which had defined the world for centuries, were breaking down into their constituent parts. Indeed, if you opened up the front page of any newspaper, that's the sense you got. On the other hand, there were books like Francis Fukiyama's *The End of History* which suggested that the nation-state was disintegrating because of the emergence of a global society, a society in which capitalist markets had triumphed and the old polar divisions among ideologies had disappeared. It was a world coalescing around communications, technology, trade interdependence, global markets, transnational corporations, and the like. And that world — a world that was, in effect, coming together — was perhaps best reflected in your newspaper's business pages.

So here you had these two portraits of the world, one showing the world falling to pieces and the other saying it was coming together, and both of them seemed to me to be true, however contradictory. So I set out to write a book to try to map and explain a world in which both those statements could be true at the same time, and indeed were true in ways that related to one another and actually had something to do with some of the same forces. Obviously, I used *jihad* as a general rubric under which I could examine the zealous, anti-modern, disintegrative forces that were helping break the world into pieces, and I invented the term McWorld to refer to the axis of global communication and global pop culture, global technology and global trade around which the world was coming together.

FC: You've argued that the struggle between these two forces, *jihad* and McWorld, is not a clash of Islam versus the West, as suggested by Huntington in *The Clash of Civilizations*, but is in fact a war within a single civilization. Can you elaborate?

BB: Indeed, I suggested it is not only a war within a single civilization, but that it's a war within each society — and to some extent a war within each of our own heads. Let's start with the individual, because it's most clearly seen there. Most moderns who I know live in large, cosmopolitan cities and are drawn to the effortlessness of their technology-driven world and the ease with which they can communicate or travel, by jet or, indeed, instantaneously via the Internet, to any country on the planet. At the same time, many of them have a feeling of loss that stems from the absence of the tight-knit family and neighborhood ties that so many of us grew up with and that represented a kind of parochial but nourishing sense of community.

In other words, *jihad* vs. McWorld is a kind of clash between the values of a global, cosmopolitan, free-market society on the one hand, and the precious and intimate values of the family, neighborhood, and clan that all of us still feel some attachment to. Moreover, in writing about *jihad*, I wasn't referring only to Islam but, for example, to Protestant fundamentalists within the United States, two million of whom have opted out of the public school system and, because they are so appalled by what they regard as a public culture dominated by the corrupt values of Hollywood, Madison Avenue, and the mall, home school their children instead. I mean, if you read Pat Buchanan or Bill Bennett or

Here you had these two portraits of the world, one showing the world falling to pieces and the other saying it was coming together, and both seemed to be true, however contradictory.

The fact that a clash of this kind will erupt in violence, if not dealt with by other means, can hardly come as a surprise. . . .

some of the other so-called cultural conservatives on the right, their critiques of American culture are not too much different than the critique you might hear from a mullah in a Wahabbi mosque who preaches against the corruption and aggressive secular materialism of the West.

FC: Were you surprised by what happened on the morning of September 11, 2001?

BB: Astonished, appalled, but not surprised — in the sense that while I used the terms *jihad* and McWorld in my book as metaphors to describe the dialectical opposition of the forces of secular materialism and cosmopolitanism on the one hand, and of tribalism and anti-modernism on the other, I did not predict a violent denouement of the kind represented by 9/11. That said, my analysis did suggest that as time progressed, the contest between these two sets of forces would grow more and more intense and was likely to erupt in various ways, some of which could involve material violence. So, as I say, as appalling and astonishing as the events of 9/11 were, they did strike me as the physical, albeit horrendous, manifestation of underlying tensions that were not being dealt with within the global system.

You know, infection is a manifestation of a systemic illness that has not been remediated, medically. If you don't do that, the infection can get worse and can even cause a fever that can kill you. In a sense, terrorism is a kind of fever associated with the growing tensions between *jihad* and McWorld. And, to extend the analogy, if those tensions are not remediated by forms of democratic medicine, they are increasingly likely to erupt in pathological ways. Now, who could have predicted that the pathology that erupted on September 11 would be quite so complete and devastating? I mean, even Osama bin Laden was surprised by the efficacy and success that his agents achieved. But the fact that a clash of this kind will erupt in violence, if not dealt with by other means, can hardly have come as a surprise to anyone who has thought about the collision of these forces.

FC: In the days immediately following September 11, many Americans were stunned by the images broadcast on network television of ordinary Arab women and children celebrating the success of the attacks and, by extension, the deaths of thousands of American civilians. What did those images say to you?

BB: Well, a couple of things. First of all, it's clear we have to differentiate between people who perpetrate the kind of dastardly acts that were perpetrated on 9/11 and those who take some comfort or even pleasure from them. I mean, there's a tendency to think somehow that there's no boundary at all between such people, but I don't think that's true.

The second thing we have to acknowledge is that if thousands, even tens of thousands, of people seem to be taking some pleasure in what was obviously, even to them, a horrendous event in which thousands of civilians — not just from the United States but from something like sixty other countries and including many Muslims — perished, then clearly a lot more is going on here that we need to be thinking about. And I think what it points to is the fact that an awful lot of people around the world — and, by the way, the celebrations weren't confined to Arab or Muslim countries — clearly see America as not the solution to

the world's problems, as we like to think it is or want it to be, but as part of the problem. In particular, I think there are many people around the world who feel that the United States has been much too insulated from the pain that so many people around the world suffer on a daily basis. I mean, one person I know from a developing country said that while he didn't take pleasure in what happened on September 11, a part of him was glad that the United States got a taste of the suffering that his friends and their families experience as a matter of course. In one horrendous hour or two, he said, you experienced what our children, our mothers, and our fathers experience, slowly, over decades of starvation, impoverishment, injustice, and oppression. For some of us, he added, 9/11 was a wakeup call that said to America, "You now live in a world where if others suffer, you will suffer. You now live in a world whose interdependence means that if our children are not safe, maybe your children won't be safe anymore."

So, I think a lot of what we saw in those images of celebrating women and children was not so much a vulgar or evil pleasure in our pain as it was a kind of satisfaction that maybe, finally, America would begin to appreciate how insecure so many people around the world feel and would begin to understand that it had to do more than it was doing to address the problems that affect other people, in other countries. In fact, I would say that that's the central meaning of the term "interdependence," which is a term I didn't speak much about in *Jihad vs. McWorld* but have been writing about more recently. It's the sense that we're all passengers on a single vessel, and if steerage is flooding and the people in fourth and fifth class are going to drown, so are the people up in first class.

FC: In a new introduction to *Jihad vs. McWorld* you wrote after 9/11, you suggested that the attacks had changed the dynamic in the ongoing struggle between the forces of *jihad* and *McWorld*. Is that still your view?

BB: Well, actually what I'd said in the original book was that although the two forces were manifestations of common, central developments in our civilization and to some extent would always co-exist, I believed that in the long term *McWorld* and modernity would overcome the forces of anti-modernity represented by *jihad*. Ultimately, in other words, we wouldn't go backward; we would go forward. But I also said there might be some mighty dangerous curves along the road. And I would still argue that while in the long term cosmopolitanism, globalism, and modernity are likely to prevail, what 9/11 shows is that those who are in rebellion against those forces, those whose interests and ends aren't incorporated into the goals of these larger forces, and those who suffer injustice and inequality as a consequence of *McWorld*'s dynamism are in a position, because of that same interdependence I mentioned a moment ago, to actually obstruct growth, progress, and modernization in ways that are deeply dangerous. While the chances are pretty good that, in the long term, we will continue to see positive change and progress, the fact is that 9/11 demonstrated that a relatively small group of angry people, using the power of their enemies, *jiu-jitsu* style, can actually do a lot to thwart and obstruct change and progress. And that suggests that, if we continue on the course we're on without altering some of our strategies and taking more into account the just claims and needs of people around the world, we are likely to be in for a very, very bumpy ride.

Many people around the world feel the United States has been too much insulated from the pain that so many people around the world suffer on a daily basis.

If we are really going to try to take out every state that harbors terrorists, we're going to have to take out New Jersey and Florida as well.

FC: Is it your belief that a U.S.-led invasion of Iraq will lead to further radicalization of the Arab and Muslim worlds?

BB: I've just completed a book on what I call the profound mistake of the new preventive-war doctrine unveiled by the Bush administration as its chief instrument against terrorism. And in that vein I would certainly make the argument that a war on Iraq, though I believe it is being pursued for better motives than just those of oil or vengeance, is nonetheless a catastrophe for the long-term interests of democracy and justice around the world — not least because the war is, in effect, directed against the wrong enemy. Terrorists are not states. As Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld himself said, "Terrorists are stateless individuals without fixed interests or addresses." That's what makes them so dangerous. However, because they are stateless, and because they are without fixed interests and addresses, it's very hard to find them, let alone take them out, as we learned in Afghanistan, where most of the Qaeda cadres, including Osama bin Laden and the Taliban leader Mullah Omar, got away. And to now move on to the next state, Iraq, and think that by knocking out the regime of Saddam Hussein we're going to get al-Qaeda is simply a deep and disastrous mistake. Whom do we go after next? Iran? Yemen? Sudan? Maybe Egypt, or Indonesia, followed by the Philippines? I mean, if we're really going to try to take out every state that harbors terrorists, we're going to have to take out New Jersey and Florida as well.

Let me be clear. You cannot make war on an invisible enemy that inhabits the interstices of the international system by attacking states, even if you can prove a link between those states and terrorism. Terrorists are like parasites; they move into a host body, where they are harbored and maybe even nourished, but when the host dies or, as often happens, the parasite kills the host, the parasite just moves onto the next body. That's why it's the wrong war against the wrong target.

Of course many Americans and, I think, many Europeans feel that instinctively. They keep saying, "Yes, Saddam Hussein is not a nice guy, but what about Osama bin Laden? What about al-Qaeda? Isn't this just going to encourage the terrorists?" And our own government would appear, to some degree, to accept that logic and has seen fit, as it gets ready to go to war in Iraq, to raise the terrorist threat level from yellow to orange.

So in many different ways, the Bush administration's current policy vis-à-vis Saddam Hussein and Iraq seems to be disastrous. Don't get me wrong — I'm not a pacifist. I'm not arguing that America doesn't have a right to strike back at terrorists and terrorism. The problem, simply put, is that Iraq is not a terrorist state, and even if it harbors and supports terrorists, states are not surrogates for the terrorist enemy we're after.

FC: If, as you've suggested, an exclusively military response to the phenomenon of global terrorism is as bad as the disease itself, what should the West's response to the terrorist threat focus on?

BB: Well, there's a saying that goes, "If you want to kill the mosquitoes, drain the swamp," and I think that's a pretty useful way to look at the problem. You're never going to get anywhere swatting one mosquito after another, because even if you swat a whole bunch of them, they'll continue to breed as long as the swamp is still there. The swamp in this case is —

to mix my own metaphors — the so-called “axis of evil.” I think President Bush is right: there is an axis of evil. But to some degree it’s the brutal reflection of what I would call an axis of inequality, an axis of impoverishment. There’s no question that unstable, undemocratic, impoverished states are the best breeding ground for terrorism, particularly states that feel threatened by secular, materialist, global markets — in other words, by McWorld. And if we’re serious about getting rid of the conditions that breed terrorism, then we need to begin to address the questions of global inequality, of predatory capitalist speculators around the world, of the deep inequalities between rich and poor.

It’s not just an economic issue, although that’s an important piece of it. There’s also an important cultural component — and this comes back to our Protestant fundamentalist, to Jewish fundamentalists in Israel, to Hindi fundamentalists in India, as well as Islamic fundamentalists, all of whom see in our aggressively secular, aggressively materialist, entertainment-saturated culture a violent, sexualized, corrupt society bent on undermining the values they hold most dear. Most of us completely ignore the fact that, in many ways, our culture is corrupt, even though we know it had something to do with what happened in Columbine, we know it has something to do with the persistent violence in our society, we know it has something to do with the corruption of ethics in religion, we know that predatory capitalism, unrestrained by regulation, can lead to Enron-style greed and lying. But we continue, heedlessly, to export this same culture via the global marketplace to countries where there is no regulation, where there is no SEC, where there is no democratic oversight and then are amazed that people in those countries fail to welcome it as something that liberates and enriches them — even though it can, in fact, do that — but instead see it as an aggressive assault on the values they hold dear and wish to pass on to their children.

So until we begin to operate on the world stage with some self-restraint and moderation and understand that the secular materialism we export so aggressively is viewed elsewhere as a corrupting influence, I think we’re going to have a lot of trouble. We need to begin to understand that rather than simply relying on a single-minded military response to the phenomenon of terrorism, we need to respond to it economically, diplomatically, and culturally. I mean, it’s fine for McDonald’s to open a couple of franchises in Beijing and maybe even a hundred in China as a whole. But do we really need to have nine hundred McDonald’s franchises in Beijing? Is that really good for the Chinese and Chinese culture? Do we really need a Starbucks on every corner of every city in the world? That’s not economic competition; that’s cultural monopoly, and it ends up destroying local cultures. Again, it requires self-restraint on our part, but it absolutely has to be part of a package of strategies that tries to address the problems of the world in a way that drains the swamp that breeds terrorists.

FC: In a number of books you’ve written since *Jihad vs. McWorld* was published, you’ve suggested that we already possess the tools to address these inequities, and one of the most important is democracy. How can democracy be used as tool to combat terrorism?

BB: In the book I mentioned earlier, the term I actually use is preventive democracy, to contrast it with preventive war, the new doctrine of the Bush administration. What I mean by that is instead of using war to preempt and prevent further terrorist attacks, we need to

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Most wars are fought between tyranny and tyranny or between tyranny and democracy. It's very hard to find . . . a true democracy that has gone to war against another democracy.

use democracy as a prophylactic, as a preemptive strategy, and I think the logic behind that statement is fairly straightforward. It's another truism or cliché of our culture — one that Tom Friedman, the *New York Times* columnist, has done a lot to popularize — that on the whole democracies don't make war on each other. Historically, that's true. There are a few exceptions, but on the whole truly democratic countries do not make war on one another. Most wars are fought between tyranny and tyranny or between tyranny and democracy, but it's very hard to find in the historical record a true democracy that has gone to war against another democracy. In fact, I would take it a step further and say that true democracies are incapable of breeding international terrorism. That kind of terrorism is an expression of powerlessness, frustration, desperation, zealotry, and extremism of a kind that simply doesn't evolve inside democratic societies, where people are able to participate in civil society and the economy in legitimate ways. To put it very simply, only in states governed by illegitimate authority are illegitimate forms of dissent and rebellion necessary. Where you have a legitimate democratic government, people are empowered rather than powerless, and as a consequence terrorists tend not to be a problem.

Now, I won't deny that from time to time within Western regimes — Germany in the seventies with the Bader-Meinhoff gang, for example, or Spain today with the Basque nationalists — terror is used as a device by groups that have interests related to self-determination or a radical critique of society. But international terrorism, of the kind represented by Hamas or al-Qaeda or Qaddafi ten or fifteen years ago, tends to be fermented and nourished by undemocratic states, like Egypt or Saudi Arabia or Pakistan. And that's because democracy, as theory and practice, pulls the rug out from under terrorism, which is all about people who are dis-empowered. In a sense, the argument that democracy is a prophylactic that prevents the spread and, indeed, even the engendering of terrorism, is simply an argument that says democracy is about empowerment, while terrorism is about dis-empowerment. When you empower people, terrorism loses its traction; it's no longer necessary. And, in that sense, democratization is a far more powerful response to terrorism than war, and preventive democracy is a far more appealing and effective strategy than preventive war. I don't condemn preventive war on moral grounds; I condemn it because it's unrealistic and will fail to contain and eliminate terrorism.

FC: At the same time, you've also argued that democracy is in danger of becoming a victim of the struggle between *jihad* and McWorld. How so?

BB: The problem is that if we believe, as we tend to have done recently in the West, that democratization is nothing more than marketization, that if we think that by simply giving people capitalism, we're giving them democracy, then we're making a deep categorical mistake. Capitalism is not the same thing as democracy, and the fact is that free markets can be perfectly compatible with tyranny. We saw that in Chile in the 1970s, we saw it in South Korea and parts of Asia in the 1980s, and, of course, we're seeing it with a vengeance today in communist China, which boasts the most oppressive one-party state in the world and probably the most robust market economy in the world, an economy that has been growing between ten and eighteen percent per annum for the last eight years or so.

Furthermore, this myth that marketization and democratization are the same thing, when in fact they're not, can be quite harmful. We saw that in Russia after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent disintegration of the Soviet Union. At the time, a lot of very smart people thought an economic cold shower of privatization and marketization would lead to the democratization of Russia, but of course just the opposite has happened. The thugs who used to control the economy through the apparatus of the Communist party now control the economy through the private market, and while you do have a certain amount of competition and capitalism in Russia today, you've got nothing like democracy. We see the same sort of dynamic at work in places like Poland and Hungary and East Germany, where people were promised democracy but instead got shopping and markets, and they're disappointed and disillusioned as a result, and that has led to a revival of the fortunes of the Communist party, or its successor, in some of those countries.

In other words, when we pit the forces of reactionary *jihād* against the forces of aggressive global capitalism, democracy often is the first casualty. But without democracy, we're actually giving fuel to the *jihād* enemies of modernity and the West and making it much more difficult to contain terrorism. And without a conscious effort to deploy democratization as a weapon for social justice and against terrorism, we're going to see a continuing struggle between the secular, materialist marketplace and the forces of religious fanaticism, and the longer that struggle goes on, the greater the chances that democracy itself will be the ultimate loser.

FC: Is it realistic, on the other hand, to expect democracy to take root in regions of the world — say, the Middle East or Central Asia — that lack democratic traditions?

BB: I have a chapter in the new book called “You Can't Export Democracy.” Yes, it's a mistake to think that American-style democracy, with its two-party system, independent judiciary, and separation of powers, is going to take root in every undemocratic country in the world. But I prefer to talk not about democracy but about democracies, in the plural. There are many roads to democracy, and many styles of democracy. Generic democracy is simply the recognition that all human beings would like to participate in the institutions of power by which they are governed. I know of no people, anywhere, who don't want some control over the political decisions that impact their lives. That's a universal aspiration. But there are many, many different ways to realize that aspiration, and there are many, many different cultures that have to be accommodated on the way to realizing that aspiration. Of all people, we should know that. Even within the thirteen colonies, there were many different approaches to self-government, from the New Jersey freehold, to the New England town meeting, to the proprietary charters of Maryland and Pennsylvania. And, of course, within the Western tradition there is the Anglo-American common-law tradition, with its emphasis on individual rights, and the continental Roman-law tradition, with its emphasis on communal or group rights.

So democracy doesn't have to mean Americanization or democracy American-style. The great tribal council of Afghanistan, the *loya jirga*, is a traditional, participatory body that embodies representatives from all the tribes of Afghanistan and from time to time was used

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to assuage and ameliorate the tensions among them. In Africa, the tribe itself, which has a paternal structure and is quasi-democratic, could play a useful role in establishing democracy. Gandhi maintained that the Indian village ought to play that role and attempted to make it the building block of Indian democracy. So, again, there are many, many different approaches to democracy that allow and accommodate participation, empowerment, and some sense of self-governance by the people. Seen that way, there is no culture, there is no society, that is not capable of being self-governing and democratic. That's why I prefer to talk about democracies instead of democracy. And that's why I think we need to approach the question with great respect, looking for ways in which, on a country-by-country basis, we can cultivate historical traditions and internal cultural features that are compatible with the concept of government by the people. If we do that, then I think we'll have a much better chance of making democracy work in different cultures and different societies around the world.

FC: You're the director of something called the Democracy Collaborative. What is the Collaborative, and what is it working to achieve?

BB: The Democracy Collaborative is a remarkable coalition led by the University of Maryland and eight or nine principals there that include William Galston, Linda Williams, Gar Alperovitz, and leading members of the faculty and administration whose goal is to make American higher education an asset for local communities, the national community, and the global community. We believe in the engaged university, a university that takes responsibility for the welfare of the community of which it finds itself a part. We want to see public and private universities emphasize their role in teaching civic responsibility and in the training of civic leaders and practitioners. We want universities — and we have over two dozen participating universities and colleges in America, Europe, and South Africa — to come together to develop common strategies and make common cause in dealing with the pressing problem of the democratic deficit around the world. We want to break down the walls between theory and practice.

The Collaborative is also our way of trying to bridge the gap between one of the great strengths of America, our remarkable system of higher education, and one of our great embarrassments, namely, the often sorry state of the communities in which those colleges and universities are located. We need only remember that Yale University, one of the world's great universities, sits inside of New Haven, which has one of the highest infant mortality rates in the nation. We need only remember that Stanford University, one of the great private universities of the West, sits at the edge of East Palo Alto, a town that has the highest gang mortality rate in the nation. And yet there is almost no connection between those universities and the communities in which they find themselves.

FC: Is there a role for private philanthropy in this endeavor?

BB: We sure hope so. [Laughs.] We believe that one of the great strengths of America has been the powerful role of what I would call civic philanthropy in the affairs of the country. There is no sector of society as robust and strong, I think, as the philanthropic sector in America. In fact, I know of no society in the world that has as powerful and influential a

philanthropic sector. But, as is true of our universities, there is perhaps a little bit of self-indulgence, a little bit of insularity, a little bit of remoteness within the philanthropic sector from what I believe are the impending dangers and urgent problems we face. And I think our philanthropic foundations need to recognize the vital role they play and do more to demonstrate that they understand the urgency of the crises confronting us. They need, as a consequence, to streamline their procedures to facilitate grantmaking in areas that really count and maybe take a few more risks than they've been used to taking. American philanthropies are appropriately insulated from politics in order to maintain their tax status. But sometimes insulation from politics becomes insulation from anything that is even remotely political, and since everything of importance is in some sense political, that can result in a defanging of our philanthropic institutions and a distancing from the real issues that have to be faced. Whether the problem is homelessness or AIDS or the civic deficit of our young people or the decline of social capital that Robert Putnam and his colleagues have charted, sometimes it's not enough to say let's hold a conference next year and publish the proceedings the year after and, based on those proceedings, initiate a small pilot project three years hence. Because in many cases, by the time three or four years have passed, the cost exacted by the problems we're trying to address is already horrendous. We've maybe lost another generation of children in the schools, or Head Start has gone down the drain, or maybe a new epidemic has gotten a foothold in a particular community.

So I think our philanthropic institutions need to think a bit more like America's corporations think and America's military is trying to think. They need to have faster reaction times. They need to identify new problems quickly and to act in response to those problems before they become entrenched. And that means, I think, that they need to become more flexible and, on occasion at least, to take risks that they've avoided in the past in order to make themselves more effective.

FC: A final question: What can ordinary Americans, who have not been asked to make sacrifices in the war on terror, do in this time of danger and profound uncertainty to make themselves safer and the world a safer place?

BB: Well, I think President Bush made a terrible mistake, although I believe he made it out of good intentions. After 9/11, the president was anxious to say to Americans, "It's okay to get back to normal; it's okay to lead your normal lives. We have to show the terrorists that they haven't succeeded in terrorizing us and disrupting the life of the country." As a consequence, he told us that what we all should do to fight terrorism is to get back into the stores and shop. Shopping, in his formulation, became a kind of civic imperative. Again, I understand why he said that, but I think it was a terrible mistake, because, in fact, after 9/11, Americans felt deeply that they wanted to respond in a meaningful way, they wanted to make a difference, they wanted to play a role in the great historical moment that had been unleashed by the attacks. And I think that would've been the ideal moment to call on them to engage civically, to encourage them to become more deeply engaged in philanthropic activities, and church and synagogue and mosque activities, to become more engaged in their municipalities, to take more responsibility for the well-being of their fellow citizens, to maybe even pay some extra taxes to help New York deal with the fallout of the

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huge hit it took for the rest of the country and to pay for some of the homeland security measures that will need to be paid for.

But instead, as you said, we've been asked to sacrifice nothing. Because we don't have a conscript army and because the administration seems hellbent on reducing taxes even as it responds with massive military force to the threat of terrorism, the war in Iraq, the war in Afghanistan on al-Qaeda and the Taliban appear to be enterprises with little or no cost attached to them. At the same time, the president is basically saying, "Don't worry. Just go about your business." But I think that's a mistake, because there's nothing more helpful to those who would terrorize America than to create a nation of spectators. Spectatorship and anxiety go hand in hand. To witness a car accident is to feel fear. To get involved and try to save the people inside the wreck is to put aside fear. I mean, probably the best place to be after the tragedy of 9/11 was to be working at ground zero, because at least you could feel that you were doing something and making a difference. And despite the fact that it was perilous work, I suspect the men and women at the World Trade Center site felt less afraid than a lot of people elsewhere who could do nothing except watch on television.

I'll close with this thought: America has become too much a nation of spectators. We watched the horror of 9/11 on TV over and over again. We watch politics on television instead of getting involved in politics. We will watch the war in Iraq, as we watched the war in Afghanistan, not as citizens but as spectators. The two are at the opposite ends of the civic spectrum. Citizens are active, engaged, responsible partners in changing the world for the better. Spectators merely watch the world happen to them. And, as a result, invariably they are fearful and anxious. Citizens, by contrast, are always fearless, not because they are without fear, but because in their activities and actions they have found a way to overcome fear.

So I think it's imperative, now more than ever, and even though the administration is not calling on Americans to participate or be part of not just the war on terrorism but the struggle for global justice and democracy, that we volunteer and find ways on our own to engage with the world around us. That doesn't necessarily mean joining the Peace Corps and going overseas. What it does mean is being part of a community service program in your church or synagogue. It means participating in philanthropic activities and making sure you take responsibility for your political citizenship at the local and national and global levels, not just by voting, but by being informed. Citizenship is not just a remedy for terrorism, it's a remedy for fear and anxiety. It gives us a role to play and empowers us. And if we're empowered, then neither terrorists nor cynics can make us feel fearful or disempowered.

FC: Well, thank you, Dr. Barber, for taking the time to speak with us this afternoon.

BB: Thank you.

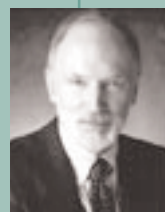
Mitch Nauffts, *Philanthropy News Digest's* editorial director, interviewed Benjamin Barber in February 2003.

Development and Democracy in Post-9/11 Asia

Asia boasts the most populous country in the world (China), the largest democracy in the world (India), and the world's largest archipelago and Muslim-populated nation (Indonesia). Its extremes of wealth and poverty — both within certain countries and between countries — have been the subject of countless articles, policy papers, and documentaries. And its growing importance as an engine of the global economy has generated both admiration and concern in economic and foreign policy circles.

Before September 11, 2001, however, it registered little on the consciousness of an America that had grown prosperous and self-absorbed during the boom years of the '90s. The attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon changed that, as did a series of events that followed: the military campaign in Afghanistan to oust the Taliban and hunt down the leaders of al-Qaeda; the escalating confrontation between India

WILLIAM FULLER
PRESIDENT
ASIA FOUNDATION



and Pakistan over Kashmir in the spring of 2002; the spread of the SARS virus in early 2003; and the continuing nuclear brinkmanship of North Korea.

In February, *Philanthropy News Digest* spoke with Asia Foundation president William Fuller about recent developments in the region, including the standoff between the United States and North Korea over the North's revived nuclear program, the reconstruction of Afghanistan, the prospects for democracy in Pakistan, and the impact of 9/11 on the region as a whole.

William P. Fuller has been president of the Asia Foundation since 1989. Before joining the organization, he served from 1987 to 1989 as deputy assistant administrator of USAID, with responsibility for U.S. foreign assistance in the Near East and Europe, and prior to that was director, from 1981 to 1987, of the USAID mission in Indonesia.

From 1971 to 1981, Dr. Fuller served with the Ford Foundation in Asia, first as an advisor to the National Education Commission and Ministry of Education in Thailand and subsequently as representative for Bangladesh. In addition, he has worked with the World Bank in Paris; with UNICEF in Beirut, Cairo, and New York; and as a visiting lecturer at the University of Chicago.

Fuller was vice chairman of the board of Winrock International, a nonprofit organization that works around the world to increase economic opportunity, sustain natural resources, and protect the environment, from 1995 to 1999 and chaired the organization from 1999 to 2001. He is also a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations and sits on the boards of the World Affairs Council of Northern California, the Institute for the Future, the Bank of the Orient, and the Japan Society of Northern California.

Dr. Fuller has been a recipient of the President's Meritorious Service Award (twice), USAID's Distinguished Honor Prize, and South Korea's Hueng-in Jang Medal for Diplomatic Service. A graduate of Stanford University, where he also earned his M.A. and Ph.D., he received the Asia Pacific Leadership Award from the University of San Francisco in 2002.

Foundation Center: You recently returned from a visit to South Korea. How serious is the situation on the Korean peninsula?

William Fuller: It's very serious. It is unclear whether the North intends to use its nuclear program as a trading card to obtain more foreign assistance and/or some kind of security understanding with the United States. Or, alternatively, whether the revival of its nuclear program really represents the North's intention to join the nuclear club. If it is the latter, you can imagine the implications. Everybody is concerned about the possibility of the North selling fissile material to other countries or terrorist groups. Unfortunately, given the terrible condition of the North Korean economy, that is a distinct possibility and we have to be concerned about desperate acts being committed by a regime that increasingly feels as if its back is against the wall. I also worry about the effect that such an

act would have on other countries in the region — South Korea and Japan, for example, both of whom may feel compelled to become nuclear powers themselves — and what that would mean for the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Finally, I think it is important to recognize that the situation on the peninsula is creating a wedge between the United States and South Korea, as well as between the United States and Japan and the United States and China — all of which, at least at this point, have articulated a different approach to defusing the situation.

So, for all those reasons, I worry about the situation on the Korean peninsula. And I will repeat what I said initially, which is that North Korea's intentions are still very unclear, and the assumptions in South Korea about the North's intentions seem to be different than those articulated by some members of the U.S. administration.

FC: It seems as if one way to gauge the intentions of the North would be to sit down and talk to them. Why has the Bush administration been unwilling to engage in direct bilateral talks with the government in Pyongyang?

WF: For a couple of reasons. One is the administration's concern that direct bilateral talks with the North would be viewed by others as rewarding blackmail. Second, the U.S. has always argued that the situation on the Korean peninsula is a problem that needs to be solved multilaterally — quite a different view than the one held by South Korea. South Koreans very much want the United States to deal directly with the North, partly because they believe the U.S. is the only country that can help defuse the situation, and partly because the North wants bilateral negotiations with the U.S. Having said that, I think the administration will, at some point, sit down and talk with the government in Pyongyang. In fact, I believe there are creative efforts under way to find a forum with some multilateral dimensions to it that would satisfy both the North, which hasn't wanted multilateral talks, and the U.S.

FC: If the U.S. continues to insist on a multilateral framework, will other regional powers — South Korea, Japan, China, and Russia — be willing to sit down with the North?

WF: Yes, I think so. In fact, I believe China has offered to help put something together.

FC: Has anti-American sentiment in South Korea grown as the crisis has intensified?

WF: I haven't seen poll results recently, but polls from a few weeks ago certainly indicated that it is alive and well with respect to feelings about the U.S. government. The point to remember, however, is that anti-American sentiment in South Korea is not merely a reflection of U.S. handling of the North — although that's certainly an ingredient — it is also a reflection of the belief held by many young, well-informed people in the South that the U.S. has not been responsive to their country's interests.

But there are other reasons for the anti-American sentiment in the South, including the presence of 37,000 U.S. troops, which has been a cause for student demonstrations. And there have been some unfortunate episodes involving American military personnel, including one in which two young girls were accidentally killed.

We have to be concerned about desperate acts being committed by a regime that increasingly feels as if its back is against the wall.

In Asia, it is not uncommon to hear the U.S. criticized as arrogant and unilateral, and the preemptive-strike policy reinforces those perceptions.

The final point to remember is that South Korea's new president, Roh Moo-hyun, whom I met in Seoul in late February, was elected partly on the basis of a platform that called for a more equal partnership with the United States. While the nature of that partnership has not been defined specifically by the new Korean administration, I think the implication is that there is a desire for more consultation between the two countries, particularly on major issues.

FC: In terms of a resolution of the situation, is it possible for the U.S. and its allies in the region to get what they want through diplomacy?

WF: Frankly, I'm not sure at this point. As I said earlier, it is hard to gauge the North's intentions. Under the agreed-upon framework that the Clinton administration negotiated with the North in 1994, a so-called red line involving the reprocessing of spent fuel rods by the North was established, and implicit in that agreement was an understanding that if the North crossed that line, it could face a U.S. military response. But I don't know what the red lines are right now, and I don't think the North Koreans know what they are, either.

The best-case scenario is that discussions with the North begin and, through negotiation, a deal is reached whereby the North agreed to freeze or dismantle its nuclear program and accepted an extensive verification regime in return for aid and assistance from the international community. As I said, the important question is whether the North's goal is to join the nuclear club. Some have argued that the North may be thinking of the development of nuclear weapons as a means to deter regime change and provide a measure of security. They're also uncertain about the extent to which the military in North Korea has gained strength in recent years. Of course, nobody knows the answer to that question. But it could affect how the negotiations play out. Either way, I think we should all hope there will be a successful negotiated settlement to the crisis.

FC: In recent months, the Bush administration has unveiled a new and, some would argue, radical re-thinking of America's role as the world's sole superpower. The administration launched the war on terrorism, in part, as a result of that re-imagining and has suggested that, going forward, it reserves the right to strike preemptively against countries that pose a threat to American interests and security. Beyond the obvious case of Afghanistan, how has the war on terrorism changed the geopolitical situation in the Asia-Pacific region?

WF: The U.S. position on preemptive strikes was a real issue in the discussions we had in Seoul in February. It raises important questions about U.S. leadership and intentions, the future of multilateralism, the role of the United Nations, the issue of who determines when and which countries are violating agreements or moving in unacceptable directions, and so on. It's also a topic that has contributed to some of the anti-U.S. sentiment I talked about earlier. In Asia, it is not uncommon to hear the U.S. criticized as arrogant and unilateral, and the preemptive-strike policy reinforces those perceptions.

In terms of geopolitical changes in the region post-9/11, I think they've been dramatic. Look at what has happened to the U.S. relationship with China. Prior to 9/11, concerns about China revolved around its emergence as a tough competitor on the global economic stage and human rights issues. But since 9/11, those concerns have been subordinated to

the issue of terrorism and how the Chinese and Americans can work together on the problem. That's quite a change.

Or consider the new attention being given to countries like Indonesia and the Philippines. Prior to 9/11, the U.S. government's aid program to Indonesia was expected to shrink; now it's one of our biggest. Similarly, I think our relations with Mr. Putin and Russia have been put on a better footing since 9/11, and we have new relationships with countries in Central Asia like Uzbekistan that would have been unimaginable a few years ago.

I think 9/11 and the American response to it has also created new pressures on fragile regimes in some parts of the region, for example Indonesia. Elected leaders like President Megawati have to walk a fine line between the domestic pressure from mainly Islamic groups on the one hand and the United States' insistence that her government cooperate in the war on terrorism on the other. That said, the terrible Bali bombing has proven to be a wake-up call for Indonesia's population and has resulted in greater public support for the Indonesian government's efforts to deal with suspected terrorist groups. It's also a reason why moderate voices in Indonesia are increasingly able to command the attention of the Indonesian media.

FC: Do the relationships you've described have the potential to be something more than marriages of convenience? By that, I mean are closer ties between the U.S. and its new friends in Asia based solely on military and security arrangements, or can we expect to see an era of improved relations that results in increased development aid and civil-society assistance for those countries?

WF: Certainly there have been offers of more assistance to countries like Indonesia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the Philippines. But whether these are and will continue to be marriages of convenience, as you say, or in fact could lead to more substantial relationships over the long term remains to be seen. Preventing terrorism, however, is clearly a long-term proposition that will require sustained support and cooperative relations between the U.S. and many countries in the region.

FC: Well, let's talk about one of those countries. Has the United States kept the promises it made to the people of Afghanistan?

WF: I don't know the answer to that question. I think the Afghans would say no, that much of the aid that was promised at the meeting in Tokyo in February a year ago has yet to materialize. I think the aid will materialize eventually, but it is coming more slowly than the Karzai government had anticipated. Part of the reason for the delay reflects the fact that most of the governments and aid organizations involved in the effort are still concerned about security inside Afghanistan, as well as the capacity of local entities to make good use of aid. Generally, however, I think the international community is committed to Afghanistan, and the people I talk with in the U.S. government believe that the reconstruction of the country is a long-term project to which they're committed, regardless of what happens in Iraq.

FC: Is reconstruction of Afghanistan an American show at this point?

I think 9/11 and the American response to it has created new pressures on fragile regimes in some parts of the region.

Our primary focus has been to help Afghanistan rebuild some of the institutions that were compromised or damaged by twenty years of civil war and an oppressive regime.

WF: No, there, there are several other countries involved — Japan, Britain, Turkey, the Netherlands, and Germany among them — and that's encouraging. You also have the United Nations Development Program, the World Food Program, UNICEF, and a number of large NGOs like World Vision, Save the Children, and others, including the Asia Foundation.

FC: Your organization reestablished its office in Kabul in 2002 after a 23-year hiatus prompted by the Soviet invasion of the country in 1979. What is the Asia Foundation doing to help the Afghan people deal with the tremendous challenges they face?

WF: Our primary focus has been to help Afghanistan rebuild some of the institutions that were compromised or damaged by twenty years of civil war and an oppressive regime. We were active, for example, in supporting the *loya jirga* process that resulted in the election of Hamid Karzai as interim president. In fact, we brought twenty-seven monitors from all over the world who were fluent in either Dari and Pashto to Afghanistan to ensure that the process moved forward in accordance with the Bonn agreement.

Following the *loya jirga*, the Asia Foundation was asked to help with the development of a new constitution and judicial system. At the moment, we are providing technical support — again, using specialists from different countries around the world — to the Constitutional Commission as it tries to reconcile the agendas of various interests in the process. Ultimately, of course, there will be another *loya jirga*, which will review the proposals from the commission and reach a decision about them. It's a tough go, because the constitutional discussion clearly highlights all the different competing interests in Afghanistan — the warlords, the government in Kabul, the various provincial authorities, different ethnic and religious groups. But the process is moving along and should continue to do so provided security does not deteriorate.

Beyond supporting the development of the constitution, the Asia Foundation is working to help girls who were denied educational opportunities during the Taliban period. To that end, we have joined forces with the National Geographic Society to establish a school in Kabul that serves young women, and we are looking at possibilities of expanding remedial education programs.

We're also considering a request from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which asked for help in obtaining advice and assistance as they plan a foreign service training program. As you know, Afghanistan is located in a rough neighborhood, and skilled diplomacy and an excellent grasp of international affairs are going to be critical for the government going forward.

FC: One important factor in the successful reconstruction of Afghanistan would seem to be the stability of its neighbor, Pakistan. What are the prospects for the return of democracy and civilian rule in Pakistan?

WF: My own view is that the possibility of increased *instability* in Pakistan remains relatively high, and that the prospects for a return to some form of democratic rule, at least in the short term, are not promising. The situation is complex.

First of all, efforts to curb extremism in the country have pitted Pakistan's president, General Musharraf, against a number of powerful domestic constituencies. You are no doubt aware that the elections called by Musharraf last October led to significant showings by some of the Muslim opposition parties — a development that was greeted with surprise by many observers in the West. The upshot is that General Musharraf has to balance his role as an ally of the United States in the war on terrorism with certain concessions to those opposition groups. And that is going to be an increasingly hard act to pull off as the war on terrorism unfolds and the search for terrorists in Pakistan continues.

Second, democracy in Pakistan is what I would call a procedural democracy, at best, in the sense that there is a National Assembly, provincial parliaments, and elections. But in many parts of the country, clan and tribal relationships still determine to a large degree how people vote. So the notion that Pakistan had, or has, a wide-open democratic system is mistaken.

Having said that, the Asia Foundation currently is involved in helping the new members of the provincial parliaments and the National Assembly to become familiar with the duties and responsibilities of a parliamentarian, including, among other things, the importance of being respectful of members of the opposition, following parliamentary procedures, participating in committees and budget processes, and so on. And I am pleased to say that even in the provinces, including the rugged Northwest Frontier Province, that effort is proceeding.

At the same time, Pakistan is confronting a constitutional crisis. Last fall, President Musharraf issued a Legal Framework Order that, in addition to allowing the general to remain as president and head of the army for five more years, also granted him constitutional power to dismiss the prime minister and dissolve the National Assembly at his discretion. Not surprisingly, the opposition groups were upset by the order, and even some of his supporters were concerned. My view is that while the war on terrorism is front-page news, Musharraf's friends and supporters will cut him some slack with respect to these powers. But over time that support will wane, and if some of the more conservative opposition parties start to get out of hand and President Musharraf responds by actually dismissing the prime minister or dissolving the parliament, then you could see a real public outcry, or worse.

FC: What, if anything, can the international NGO community do to blunt the hostility of the mullahs and promote more moderate, secular elements in Pakistani society?

WF: NGOs can play an important role in helping to curb extremism by providing good education, health and other services, by providing knowledge and skills related to human rights, and by supporting efforts to mediate conflict and to open up economic opportunities, in turn creating jobs. Also, NGOs can help by indirectly strengthening government and political processes through advocacy, watchdog organizations, and even, when conditions permit, by making use of the political system to advance their own interests.

But we need to be careful about establishing a dividing line between Islam and tolerant, secular elements in society. They are not mutually exclusive. The vast majority of Muslims

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are tolerant and secular. NGOs can help by providing a forum for those with different views — for example, facilitating an exploration of the relationship of Islam and democracy, or Islam and secular political administration, or Islam and the rights of women.

Finally, I believe that international NGOs will need to further refine their understanding of Islamic traditions to be effective in supporting tolerance and curbing extremism. Take *shari'a*, or divine law, in Islamic societies, something that is often viewed as shorthand for intolerance in the West. Yet if you ask a Muslim whether he or she favors *shari'a*, you are in effect asking whether he or she is a believer. Therefore, it's not surprising that broad-gauged surveys show that *shari'a* is strongly supported in Muslim countries. The issue is not *shari'a* per se, but what constitutes *shari'a*, who interprets it, and who enforces it.

FC: Is Islam incompatible with democracy?

WF: No. The Asia Foundation has been involved in programs that have encouraged debate on this topic, and we have supported groups that are examining a range of issues affecting Islam and civil society in countries like Indonesia and Pakistan. There are groups in Indonesia, for example, that are working with state-sponsored Islamic universities on a curriculum that promotes tolerance, secularism, and democracy.

However, there is substantial debate within the Islamic community around this question, and it's going to take time for that debate to play out. But as Turkey, parts of India, and the movement toward democracy in Indonesia illustrate, Islam as a faith is not, in my view, inherently anti-democratic.

FC: Do you agree with *New York Times* columnist Tom Friedman's view that globalization has replaced the Cold War as the defining framework of the new world order? And if so, do you see the rise of international terrorism as a response to globalization and the disruptive socioeconomic changes that often follow in its wake?

WF: I'm not sure — I suppose it depends on the level of abstraction we're talking about. There's been some interesting work done on the extent of global trade in the decades leading up to the First World War, which was, of course, substantial. There were fewer players in the game, but the variety and volume of exchange was substantial.

Fast-forward to today and you see government, civil-society, and private-sector leaders around the globe trying to figure out what this new wave of globalization means for their countries. One of the interesting aspects of the debate is the notion that globalization creates winners and losers, which, in turn, has raised questions about social safety nets, the environment, and legal and regulatory systems. The challenge for all of us is to understand the pros and cons of globalization, what it means in terms of who wins and loses, and what policy adjustments need to be made in order to give developing countries improved access to a more level playing field.

FC: What role can NGOs and the private sector play vis-à-vis globalization and its discontents?

WF: There are several. For starters, think tanks, academic institutions, and NGOs can do impartial assessments of who's winning and who's losing. They can serve as advocates for those who aren't part of the system or are competing on an uneven playing field. They can provide technical support.

Another interesting question is the extent to which NGOs can play a role in curbing extremism. Globalization has encouraged more open political systems around the world, which, in turn, have created more space for all kinds of political groups, including fringe and extremist groups. How do you deal with that in a globalizing society? More effective government is part of the answer. Obviously, police and military forces have responsibilities, too. But to curb and prevent extremism longer term, local NGOs have to play a role. I was reminded of that on a recent visit to Indonesia when I met with leaders of the country's largest Muslim organizations and one of those leaders made what I thought was a compelling point. "In your country," he said, "you're concerned about homeland security, you're concerned about sharing intelligence information related to terrorism. But in the end, real prevention is going to be done by local organizations, by NGOs, whether they're providing microfinance services to individuals, or are focused on human rights, or are working in the areas of agriculture or health. Those are the organizations that are winning the hearts and minds of Indonesians and, in the process, creating a less welcoming environment for extremists."

I was reminded of that comment thinking about Bangladesh, where there are three NGOs that reach something like eighty-five percent of the villages. While we see substantial extremist activity in Pakistan and Indonesia, there is relatively little of it in Bangladesh. And one reason is because the local NGO community, supported for many years by international NGOs, has been so effective in delivering services and protecting the rights of villagers throughout the country.

FC: Do you think the philanthropic community in the U.S. has done a good job of mobilizing its resources to meet the challenges of an increasingly interdependent world?

WF: Many people incorrectly assume that the level of private giving in the U.S. for international causes is relatively insignificant. That's not true. Actually, it's about fifty percent more than the level of U.S. government foreign aid. USAID reports that official development assistance and other government aid was \$22.6 billion in 2000, while private flows were \$33.6 billion.

My view is that more funding should be directed to long-term institution building at the local level for a range of activities, including education, health, micro-credit and small enterprise development, and improved agricultural systems.

I also think more attention should be paid to creating and strengthening mechanisms for dispute and conflict resolution. The Asia Foundation has done some interesting work in this area. In Sri Lanka, for example, there are costs associated with using the judicial system, particularly for rural families. If they have a petty claim — the theft of a cow or a land dispute — and wind up in civil court, they can end up litigating it for years, at

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It is important for the philanthropic sector to understand that in order to be creative in dealing with social and economic problems, it has to be more willing to accept failure.

considerable personal cost. In response, we decided to fund an experiment with mediation boards. There isn't a lawyer in sight and cases are dealt with in a day or two by mediators — school teachers, religious leaders, and trusted citizens. Local mediation boards now handle more than a hundred thousand cases a year in Sri Lanka.

I also think the philanthropic sector could do more to fund and support student exchanges, which enable young people from developing countries to come to the United States and Americans to go abroad for long-term graduate training. All societies are becoming more complex, and we need to invest in deeper understanding of the implications of that trend.

Those are a few examples of what I'd call content areas. I also think we have what I would call "style" or approach problems, although I think we have improved in that regard in recent years. But there's room for improvement. We need, for example, to listen to a wide range of people from all walks of life, not just municipal officials or government functionaries in the capital city. We need to do a better job of seeing problems as the people who wrestle with these problems on a daily basis see them, rather than sort of rushing in with a predetermined blueprint for change.

A final point I would make is that because we are all accountable for the funding we receive and because, sometimes, we are inordinately concerned about failure, it is important for the philanthropic sector to understand that in order to be creative in dealing with social and economic problems, it has to be more willing to accept failure.

FC: The Asia Foundation will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2004. Are you planning any changes in your programs or approaches to mark the anniversary?

WF: I think we're focused on the right set of issues — governance, law, and civil society; economic reform and development; women's participation; and international relations. In an organization like ours, however, we always look to the future, and there are some new issues that we'll probably give more attention to.

I mentioned one of them, which is focusing more on programs that help build tolerance — not just interfaith dialogue, but programs that bring representatives of different faith-based groups together to work on community problems. In Indonesia in 1999, for example, we supported the efforts of more than twenty faith-based groups, both Muslim and Catholic, to disseminate nonpartisan voter information to the public, and eventually those groups were able to reach more than a hundred million Indonesian voters. When I met with representatives of the various groups at the end of the process, one of them looked at me and said, "You know, we actually did something that was good for the country." It was an epiphany of sorts.

We also plan to pay more attention to mechanisms for dispute and conflict resolution. While most societies around the globe are becoming more open politically, many simply lack institutions that can effectively mediate political differences and conflict. In the U.S., of course, we have checks and balances and mediating institutions. But in countries like Indonesia, the parliament and legal institutions are relatively weak. So there's a real

need for mechanisms that can help communities mediate their differences without resorting to violence.

FC: Will you continue to promote development assistance at the nexus of Islam and civil society, despite the concerns of some in the human rights community that such work should be secular and not faith-based?

WF: Absolutely. One of the reasons I like the Indonesian example I used earlier is that it focuses on interfaith work. That's key. So the answer is yes, we're going to continue to be supportive of groups that are working for tolerance, for democracy, for the rule of law, wherever and whomever they might be.

FC: You've announced that, after fifteen years, you plan to step down as president of the Asia Foundation in early 2004. Why are you leaving at this particular point in time, and what do you plan to do next?

WF: While I look forward to a little more personal time, I would like to do some analysis and writing, focusing on the development field and how it has changed as well as where it is headed. I've been in this arena for forty years, and I'm particularly interested in some of the challenges that lie ahead, many of which are related to civil society and governance, to poverty and economic growth, to widening income gaps, to hopelessness and despair. After careful consideration, I concluded that the time has come to begin the process to ensure a good search for a successor and an orderly transition.

But I plan to continue my involvement as the Asia Foundation celebrates its fiftieth anniversary in 2004. And I remain very committed and want to stay involved in the issues confronting Asia. It would be exhilarating, for instance, if I could find a way to help mentor young people who are interested in philanthropy and development assistance. We need more young people in the field, and in philanthropy in general, and I'd like to find a vehicle to do that.

FC: Can you say a few words about the accomplishments of the Asia Foundation during your tenure?

WF: I think we have managed to establish a good, clear set of directions for the organization, and I think we've done a good job in our grantmaking program areas. Our highest priorities are institution building and supporting those with creative approaches to problems. I'm pleased that we have been able to strengthen our program in China and that we now have offices in Hong Kong and Beijing. We've also established a presence in Vietnam, as well as a presence in Mongolia. We've even managed, through exchange programs and a book-provision program, to have some involvement with North Korea for the last eleven years.

I'm also pleased that we've been able to diversify our funding base, although we have a ways to go. We created a successful new donor-advised instrument for philanthropy in the region called Give2Asia. In addition, we established a joint venture, the Asia Foundation in Taiwan, in 1997, and we launched the Asia-Pacific Philanthropy Consortium in 1994 to

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When you're in the development business, you are, by definition, in the business of optimism.

focus on problems that need to be resolved in order to move philanthropy forward in the Asia-Pacific region.

Because of our on-the-ground presence in the region, we are also becoming more engaged in providing insights through our grantees and field representatives to people in the policy community. We tend to see countries and organizations bottom up, rather than top down, and that often provides different insights into how a country and its institutions are developing.

However, the greatest sense of achievement is derived from the impact of the programs themselves. For example, I mentioned the June 1999 election in Indonesia. Learning that a group we had supported was able to disseminate information to a hundred million people and trained over a hundred thousand election monitors, or seeing legal aid in China develop, or meeting a young Cambodian woman from a poor rural family who was benefiting from an Asia Foundation scholarship program, or providing technical resources that helped the Mongolians draft their constitution — those are the kinds of things that really give you a sense of accomplishment.

The last thing I'd mention is how impressed I've been with our staff. As I've told them, it is a remarkable staff, both in terms of country knowledge and substantive knowledge in our program areas.

FC: The last fifty years have brought incredible change to the Asia-Pacific region, good and bad. Looking ahead to the next fifty years, are you optimistic about the future of the region?

WF: When you're in the development business, you are, by definition, in the business of optimism. Otherwise, you wouldn't be in the business. And what we and many others are trying to do is to support the development of good leaders and good institutions that are committed to finding creative solutions to tomorrow's problems.

Now, since 9/11, the United States has spent a lot of time, energy, and money on preventing additional acts of terrorism on American soil. Ultimately, however, long-term prevention, both at home and abroad, is going to require a broad and sustained effort on many fronts, and that's where organizations like ours can play a role. But yes, I'm optimistic we'll be able to manage and deal with these and other problems, and that's one reason why international philanthropy, along with official development assistance, is so important.

FC: Well, thank you for your time this afternoon. And best of luck in your future endeavors.

WF: Thanks so much.

Mitch Nauffts, *Philanthropy News Digest's* editorial director, interviewed William Fuller in March 2003.

Human Rights in an Age of Terror

The war on terror that began on September 12, 2001, is likely to be long and costly. Clear-cut victories will be elusive, and when they come are just as likely to occur in back alleys and private conference rooms as in the glare of the media spotlight. Setbacks will be random, unpredictable, and potentially catastrophic. And as the cost of the war — in terms of treasure and lives lost — mounts, so too will calls for the United States and its allies to prosecute it with every tool at their disposal.

That, according to civil liberties and human rights groups, would be a disastrous mistake. For, if in waging the war on terror, we proceed with an assumption of guilty until proven innocent and apply it to groups of people based on where they come from, what they wear, or how they worship, we will have lost the very thing we were fighting to preserve in the first place.

In May, *Philanthropy News Digest* spoke with Ken Roth, executive director of Human Rights Watch, the largest U.S.-based international human rights organization, about steps

KEN ROTH
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH



taken by the Bush administration to combat terrorism in the wake of 9/11, ethnic profiling as an anti-terror strategy, the human rights situation in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the importance of international humanitarian law in the post-9/11 era.

Prior to being named executive director of Human Rights Watch in 1993, Roth served as deputy director of the organization for six years and, before that, was a federal prosecutor for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York and the Iran-Contra investigation in Washington.

Mr. Roth has conducted human rights investigations around the globe, devoting special attention to issues of justice and accountability for gross abuses of human rights, standards governing military conduct in time of war, the human rights policies of the United States and the United Nations, and the human rights responsibilities of multinational businesses. He has written extensively on human rights topics for publications such as the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *Foreign Affairs*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *International Herald Tribune*, and the *New York Review of Books* and he appears often in the major media, including NPR, the BBC, CNN, PBS, and the principal U.S. networks.

A graduate of Yale Law School and Brown University, Roth was drawn to the human rights cause in part by his father's experience fleeing Nazi Germany in 1938. He began working on human rights after the declaration of martial law in Poland in 1981 and soon after became deeply engaged in fighting military repression in Haiti. In his nine years as executive director of Human Rights Watch, the organization has nearly tripled in size, expanded its geographic reach, and added projects devoted to refugees, children's rights, academic freedom, international justice, AIDS, gay and lesbian rights, and the human rights responsibilities of multinational corporations.

Foundation Center: Ken, tell us about Human Rights Watch. When was it founded, what is its mission, and what kinds of things does it do in pursuit of that mission?

Ken Roth: Human Rights Watch was founded twenty-five years ago in response to the crackdown on small human rights monitoring groups that had been set up in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in response to the Helsinki Accords. Among other things, the Helsinki Accords guaranteed the right of citizen groups to monitor the human rights practices of their governments, and when these small groups tried to do just that, they were promptly repressed. So they issued a call to the human rights community in the West and asked us to help them. Here in New York, we set up Helsinki Watch, followed over time by Americas Watch, Asia Watch, Middle East Watch, and Africa Watch — all of which, beginning in 1988, were brought under a single umbrella to form Human Rights Watch.

I often think of ourselves as a complement to traditional civil liberties organizations, which tend to focus on issues involving governmental infringement of rights that can be adjudicated in court. But if those kinds of classic judicial remedies are not working, the international human rights movement has developed an alternative methodology that

involves putting pressure on the political branches of government rather than appealing to the judicial branch. That's what Human Rights Watch does.

We begin by investigating human rights conditions in countries where, for the most part, there is no functioning legal system. We speak to the victims of human rights abuse, eyewitnesses, and government officials, and based on those interviews we put together as complete and accurate a picture as we can of the human rights practices in question. We then publish those findings in the form of a report. Each report, in turn, launches a campaign to pressure a government to change. Invariably, the press reports extensively on our findings, which not only is embarrassing to the government in question, it also leaves it open to criticism from other governments, multilateral institutions, and its own people.

Our next step is to enlist the help of influential countries and institutions — the U.S., Japan, the European Union countries, the United Nations, the World Bank, and so on — by asking them to condition their military aid or arms sales or targeted assistance to the government in question on improvement of its human rights record. Our aim in doing so is to make it costly for an abusive government to violate human rights, both in terms of its reputation as well as its pocketbook. That can be a powerful one-two punch. It doesn't necessarily work the first time around, but if you're persistent, we've found that it can change the practices of even the most powerful government.

Now, I've spoken about countries that, for all intents and purposes, lack functioning legal systems. But we also operate in countries in which the legal system has holes that impair the government's ability to enforce rights. Even in the United States, where we clearly have a well-functioning judiciary and a long constitutional tradition, there are areas where the courts are not operating effectively to protect human rights. Some of these areas have nothing to do with 9/11. Look at the issue of prison conditions. The courts have largely abdicated their oversight of prisons. If you're a prisoner who has been raped by a guard or by other inmates, you have very little practical recourse to the courts. That's an area Human Rights Watch has devoted an enormous amount of attention to. Similarly, if you're an immigrant, if you're gay or lesbian, if you're a migrant worker, there are broad areas where the courts, as a practical matter, are unavailable to you. And since 9/11, of course, there has been a whole new area of concern having to do with the judiciary either being excluded from human rights policy by executive fiat, or being inappropriately deferential to the executive branch.

FC: You have an unobstructed view of Lower Manhattan from your office on the 34th floor of the Empire State Building. Were you in the office on the morning of September 11, 2001?

KR: We were actually having a board meeting in our conference room, which also has a direct view of Lower Manhattan and the Trade Center. I happened to have my back to the window when a colleague across the table blurted out, "Oh my God! A plane just crashed into the World Trade Center!" Of course, we all turned around and couldn't believe it. In the case of the first plane, no one could conceive that it had been

Even in the U. S., where we have a well-functioning judiciary and a long constitutional tradition, there are areas where the courts are not operating effectively to protect human rights.

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a jetliner — that never crossed our minds. But it was also immediately clear to us that it was an act of terrorism. The hole in the north tower was simply too large for it to have been an accident. My initial thought was that it had been a smaller plane packed with explosives.

FC: Did you continue to watch from the conference room as the events of the morning unfolded?

KR: Well, after the second plane hit we evacuated. At that point, no one was willing to say there wouldn't be a third one, and we were sitting pretty high up in what we all felt could be the next target. Of course, the attacks changed our lives almost immediately, in that we didn't have access to the office for the rest of the week. But it also changed the focus of the work of the organization, which, since 9/11, has been very much about making sure that the legitimate and important fight against terrorism is waged in a way that is consistent with human rights.

FC: Let's talk about that. The Bush administration responded to the attacks by adopting a series of anti-terror measures — measures that included the detention of non-citizens for unspecified periods of time, the authorization of special military tribunals, eased requirements for search warrants, and expanded use of wiretaps. Those measures became law when President Bush signed the USA Patriot Act on October 26, 2001. Do you think those measures, and other measures that were adopted in the weeks after 9/11, played a role in preventing additional terrorist attacks on U.S. soil?

KR: It remains unproved whether steps taken by the administration to enhance security have thwarted additional terrorist attacks. There has been no concrete evidence put forward by the administration to support that contention.

But if I could, let me correct your question. I think there's often a misperception that Congress, in passing the USA Patriot Act, enacted the worst restrictions that have been implemented. While the Patriot Act is a troublesome piece of legislation that Congress did indeed pass, most of the more egregious restrictions on the civil rights of citizens and non-citizens alike since 9/11 have been adopted by executive fiat; they have not involved Congress, and they have nothing to do with the Patriot Act.

For example, the decision to keep proceedings against so-called special interest detainees after September 11 secret was an executive decision, not a congressional one. The decision to create substandard military tribunals was made unilaterally by the administration. So was the decision to move detainees from the Afghan conflict to the legal black hole of the Guantanamo Naval Base in Cuba, as well as the decision to go after José Padilla using a radical theory that he was an enemy combatant and therefore could be detained for life without access to a lawyer or judge. Those were all unilateral executive decisions, made without congressional consent.

FC: Do you believe those kinds of decisions reflect a preexisting agenda on the part of the administration? Or were they adopted specifically in response to the trauma of 9/11?

KR: Oh, I think they were responses to 9/11 — I don't think the administration would have conceived of setting up Guantanamo pre-9/11. However, they reflect not only an unnecessarily casual disregard for human rights, in my opinion, but a profoundly counterproductive one, in that they send a signal to the rest of the world that, when it comes to fighting terrorism, the ends justify the means — that it's okay to violate human rights standards so long as the cause is good. And nobody is going to quarrel with the cause of fighting terrorism.

I believe that's a dangerous and counterproductive signal to send, for several reasons. First of all, it's important to note the influence the United States wields as the world's only superpower. If the United States lowers the bar on human rights standards, it lowers the bar for everyone. Which is what it has done. So we find ourselves in the uncomfortable position of having countries like Egypt or Zimbabwe or China or Russia saying, "If the United States can do this, we can do it, too." It hurts human rights for everyone around the world.

It also breeds resentment. If people feel that their countrymen are being detained unfairly in Guantanamo, if they feel they're being singled out when they visit the United States, if they hear about U.S. moves in support of a local dictator, it tends to push them away from the United States and makes them less willing to join in the fight against terrorism. And one thing I'm convinced of is that the fight against terrorism is never going to be won from afar. On the contrary, it is going to require the cooperation of people in the very communities that spawn terrorism. Those are the people who are in the best position to identify suspicious conduct; they're the people who are going to dissuade would-be recruits from joining a terrorist group. If you alienate that key constituency through conduct that's viewed as dismissive of international human rights standards, you're actually making the world less safe, not more safe.

FC: How did the administration lower the human rights bar in the case of the seven hundred or so "special interest" detainees it rounded up?

KR: Let's assume that many of those people were picked up and detained for violating immigration laws. Ordinarily, they would have been released on bail, pending a formal deportation hearing. They also would have been given fairly ready access to a lawyer and would have been able to meet with family and friends. But instead, they were detained, held without due process, and treated as if they were criminal suspects until the FBI cleared them. Guilty until proven innocent. We felt that was an end run around the Constitution — that if the administration had been honest about what was going on, if it really thought these people had engaged in criminal activity, then they should have been treated as criminal suspects with the full panoply of rights, such as the right to government-appointed counsel or the presumption of innocence, instead of having those rights ignored.

FC: Has a complete list of the detainees' names ever been released?

KR: No.

If the United States lowers the bar on human rights standards, it lowers the bar for everyone.

Everything about the detentions has been done in secrecy, without the public scrutiny that most civil libertarians think is necessary to ensure the rights of those detained.

FC: How many people remain in detention?

KR: We don't know. We may never know for sure. I think it's considerably fewer than twelve hundred, which was the number bandied about in the weeks after the attacks, but we don't know for sure. The government has never given the American people a complete accounting, and the periodic statements made by government officials have contributed little, if anything, to efforts to compile a complete list of the detainees. Everything about the detentions has been done in secrecy and without the kind of public scrutiny that most civil libertarians think is necessary to ensure the rights of those detained.

FC: Have any of the detainees been tried by military tribunal?

KR: No. The military tribunals or commissions — which is the term the administration prefers — exist only on paper so far. There has been talk from the administration recently of using them for some of the six hundred and fifty detainees at Guantanamo — a separate set of detainees — but it hasn't happened.

FC: Is it the position of Human Rights Watch that the Guantanamo detainees should be held as prisoners of war under the Geneva Conventions?

KR: Yes, but with qualification. The Geneva Conventions require that every detainee picked up on the battlefield is entitled to a hearing as to whether that detainee deserves prisoner-of-war status. But none of the Guantanamo detainees has been given a hearing. Until they are, the Geneva Conventions require that they be treated as presumptive POWs.

Now, we suspect that if hearings were held, the Taliban detainees would clearly be found to be prisoners of war, since they were members of what was, in effect, the regular army of Afghanistan; they're classic POWs. On the other hand, the Qaeda detainees, as members of an irregular force, would have to pass a four-part test before they could be classified as POWs: Did they carry arms openly; did they wear distinctive uniforms; did they have a regular chain of command; and did they, in general, respect the rules of war. Most al-Qaeda operatives would fail that test. So we don't say that after hearings everybody in Guantanamo would deserve to be held as a POW, but rather that at least the Taliban detainees deserve to be held as POWs.

There are two reasons why this matters: First, POWs must be repatriated at the end of a conflict, and because the war with the Taliban government has been over for a year now, the Taliban detainees should have been sent home a long time ago. I recognize that there's still conflict in Afghanistan, but there is no conflict between the U.S. and the government of Afghanistan, and that is the test for determining repatriation of POWs.

Second, if you are a POW, the Geneva Conventions require that if you're going to be prosecuted, you have to be given the same procedures as the detaining power would give its own troops if they had committed a comparable crime. In the U.S., that means a full-fledged court martial, which most significantly allows for an appeal to an independent civilian court — something known as the United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces — and, ultimately, the right to petition the U.S. Supreme Court.

What the Bush administration has proposed for its military tribunals, however, is that indicted suspects can appeal, but only to a surrogate — in effect, another military panel. So, unlike a court martial, where you have genuine civilian review of what is initially a military trial, the administration's proposal is to have its surrogate serve as prosecutor, judge, and appellate judge. That's clearly an inferior process. It doesn't even pretend to apply the basic due-process standard of judicial independence. If it was applied to somebody who happened to be a POW, the administration would actually be committing a war crime under the Geneva Conventions. So it's a very serious matter.

FC: Al-Qaeda, which recruits the majority of its operatives from a handful of Arab and Muslim countries, has made it clear that it will continue to strike against U.S. interests, both at home and abroad. What is the position of Human Rights Watch vis-à-vis ethnic profiling of young men from Arab or Muslim countries who enter the United States?

KR: Well, let me begin by saying that while it probably is true that the majority of al-Qaeda operatives are young Muslim men from a handful of countries, the reverse is not true — that is, if you take Egyptians in the United States, the vast majority of them are decent, law-abiding people. The same goes for Pakistanis, Indonesians, Saudis, or whatever nationality you care to name. And that's important to remember, because if you begin to tar an entire people by the crimes of a few, you're not only doing an injustice to those people, you also risk alienating the very people who are critical to the ultimate success of the campaign to deter al-Qaeda.

Let's face it, we're never going to persuade Osama bin Laden to give up and pursue peaceful political change. Which means, in the long run, that the war against terrorism is going to be won or lost on the issue of recruitment. By that I mean, will people who are frustrated with their governments pursue peaceful alternatives for change, or will they join arms with terrorists? I believe that if people begin to feel they have been singled out as the enemy because of who they are or what they believe, if they feel that the United States is committing human rights violations in the name of the war on terror, it is going to make the battle for the hearts and minds of would-be terrorist recruits much more difficult. So this kind of over-broad tarring of entire communities is not only wrong as a matter of principle, it is dangerously counterproductive.

FC: Isn't it true that over the course of U.S. history the balance between national security and civil liberties has shifted in response to security crises, perceived or otherwise?

KR: Yes, we've certainly seen that in moments of national crisis there has been a tendency to crack down on civil liberties, often beginning with foreigners or aliens. But with the benefit of a little hindsight, those crackdowns are almost always deeply regretted. We certainly saw that with the detention of Japanese Americans during World War II, which most people at the time thought was a necessary security measure but which in retrospect was profoundly unfair and unnecessary. I think the willingness of the Bush administration to sacrifice civil liberties today in the name of security is going to be another one of these embarrassing chapters in our history that, with a little historical distance, we will deeply regret.

Over-broad tarring of entire communities is not only wrong as a matter of principle, it is dangerously counterproductive.

We are playing hardball with fanatics. But we also have to recognize that the battle is not only with today's confirmed terrorist, it's with tomorrow's would-be recruit to terrorism.

I also think it's a mistake to view security and rights as a zero-sum game. The United States clearly is facing an important security threat. But the response to that threat has to be two-fold. On the one hand, we do need to take classic security measures, because we're playing hardball with fanatics. But we also have to recognize that the battle is not only with today's confirmed terrorist, it's with tomorrow's would-be recruit to terrorism. If we want to do something about the growing resentment of America that we see in countries around the world — a resentment that can only bolster the ranks of al-Qaeda and like-minded groups — we need to use not only our hard military power, but also, to use a term coined by Joseph Nye, our soft power. We need to present a positive image to the world; we need to affirm human rights and show what it is that America stands for, at the same time that we pursue all legitimate means to protect ourselves.

This may strike some people as odd, but I think the case of Ronald Reagan is instructive in this regard. Reagan came into office determined to fight Communism and started off, in his first term, with a purely militaristic approach to that objective, funding the contras in Nicaragua and supporting a range of abusive rebel groups and governments around the world. It was a strategy that had no positive appeal or vision behind it. Quickly enough, however, Reagan realized the value of such a vision, and he found it in democracy. Now, Reagan's concept of democracy, as it applied to the developing world, often meant something pretty shallow and superficial. But Reagan and his advisors nonetheless understood that it wasn't enough to be against communism; you had to be for something, and the something they put forward was democracy.

Similarly, I think the Bush administration today has to learn a lesson from the Reagan era, and that is that it's not enough to be against terrorism; America has to stand for something. I think that something, that positive vision, should be one that respects and accords primacy to international human rights law even as we do battle with terrorism. After all, it is international human rights law that prohibits attacks against civilians — terrorism — in the first place. But if a casualty of the war on terror is the subversion of civil liberties at home and human rights abroad — the norms that proscribe terrorism — we will have succeeded only in doing long-term damage to the values that America is built on and will be left to fight terrorism one-handed, relying exclusively on our hard power.

FC: Well, let's look at one of the theaters of terrorist recruitment. What is the state of human rights in Afghanistan today under the government of Hamid Karzai compared to what it was pre-9/11 under the Taliban?

KR: There's no question that the United States did a real service to the Afghan people by ridding the country of the Taliban, which was a very abusive regime with an extraordinarily narrow interpretation of Islam that was a disaster for women, for political dissent, and for any kind of pluralistic civil society. How does that compare with life under the government of Hamid Karzai? Well, life under the government of Hamid Karzai is much, much better — but only for Afghans who are fortunate enough to live in Kabul. Security in the rest of the country has been delegated to a series of regional warlords. That was a conscious decision by the Bush administration, which hoped to buy security in Afghanistan on the

cheap and was unwilling to make the investment required to provide a long-term peacekeeping force for the entire country. Nor, for that matter, were its European allies. As a result, the international peacekeeping force is limited to Kabul, and in the rest of the country the U.S. has settled for alliances with various local warlords whose reign is not a whole lot better than the Taliban's.

Let me give you an example. Human Rights Watch recently went to the western Afghan city of Herat, where Ismail Khan is the local warlord, to see firsthand what life for ordinary Afghans was like under a warlord. What we found is that women had been bundled right back into their *burqas*. There's no political dissent, no civil society, no independent press. If somebody dares speak out or is even perceived as speaking out against Khan's rule, they face detention, torture, death threats. It's really Talibanization without the Taliban. And the same thing could be said for virtually every other part of the country. Some warlords are better, some are worse; but all fall far short of the promise that the United States held forth in invading Afghanistan, which was to bring a lawful, rights-respecting government to that troubled country.

Again, it suggests to people who are paying attention that the United States is not really concerned with promoting a positive vision of human rights and democracy around the world. Rather, it's concerned with just keeping a lid on things in Muslim countries with the help of local thugs who agree to cooperate with us. You can find parallels to that approach in the Bush administration's uncritical support of General Musharraf in Pakistan, where, instead of putting pressure on Musharraf to democratize, the administration has looked the other way as he has consolidated his power; or in its efforts to renew military assistance to Indonesia, even though the Indonesian military has a terrible human rights record; or in its unwillingness to push for a critical resolution at the U.N. Human Rights Commission on Russia's highly abusive conduct in Chechnya; or in its decision not to pursue a resolution against China despite the persecution of the Muslim Uighur population in northwestern Xianjiang province because of China's cooperation in the war on terror.

All of this suggests that if a country is willing to cooperate with the United States in fighting terrorism, U.S. advocacy for improved human rights in that country will essentially stop. That's a terrible message to be sending. Again, that is a message about the ends justifying the means — which, of course, is exactly what terrorists believe. The United States doesn't do itself any service by abandoning principle so widely in the name of short-term expediency.

FC: Has the international NGO community pressed the Bush administration to do something about the security situation in Afghanistan?

KR: Yes. Human Rights Watch, for one, has conducted a number of investigations in different parts of the country and has published reports based on those investigations in order to make it widely known that life under the warlords is terrible and that there's a pressing, ongoing need for an international military presence outside of Kabul. In fact, I think we've been a major contributor to public understanding of the situation on

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the ground in Afghanistan through the very detailed research we've done. The next step is to convince the public that the situation is intolerable and, ultimately, to mobilize public pressure on the Bush administration and its European allies to take the security steps that are needed to deliver on the promise of greater peace and security for the Afghan people.

FC: Is the administration making the same mistakes in post-war Iraq that it made in post-war Afghanistan?

KR: Certainly the immediate aftermath of the Iraq conflict is not auspicious. The United States seems to have been so eager to fight the war in Iraq before summer's heat arrived and before the political heat of opposition to the war rose even higher, that it went into the country with a force that was large enough to win the war but not large enough to maintain the peace. Moreover, there has been a complete abdication to date of the responsibility of the occupying powers, the United States and Britain, to provide basic security for the people under occupation. Indeed, the United States is refusing to call up the reserves, which is where most of its military police are, to provide the kind of vigorous patrolling needed to end the security vacuum that exists in much of Iraq today.

We've all seen the consequences of these policies — not only in the rampant looting that took place in the first few days after the war ended, but more recently in the disastrous anarchy that has set in around the many mass graves that have been discovered. I think it's a tragedy that the United States government is sitting by and allowing these graves to be randomly unearthed. While one in a hundred people may succeed in identifying lost family members, the chances of anyone else finding out what happened to their loved ones as remains are scattered about and intermingled is almost zero. The proper way to do this, both for evidentiary purposes and for purposes of allowing families the right to have some closure, is to do an orderly forensic examination of these graves that leaves open the possibility of positive identifications of remains and, at some point, their proper reburial. But to allow graves to be dug up with a backhoe and bones to be jumbled together in plastic sacks is shameful.

It is beyond me why the U.S. government is permitting this. I think it's some combination of simply refusing to deploy the policing resources required and, I fear, perhaps something more cynical, which is a desire to change the subject about weapons of mass destruction or whether the war was in fact justified. If people are talking about Saddam's atrocities — of which, tragically, there were horrendously many — then these other issues are seen as less pressing. But, as I say, that's a very cynical approach, because it means that in return for some cheap publicity, the families of Saddam's victims are losing the chance ever to determine for sure what happened to their loved ones.

FC: We could sit here and come up with a list of twenty countries where human rights are being horribly abused, and have been for years. Is Human Rights Watch categorically opposed to foreign powers intervening in countries where the abuse of human rights is routine?

KR: Not at all. We press for different kinds of intervention — diplomatic, economic, what have you — all the time. In many ways, that’s our bread and butter. Human Rights Watch is deeply involved in trying to shape the policies of influential governments and institutions in order to put pressure on abusive governments to change. On the question of military intervention, Human Rights Watch is not a pacifist organization. Sure, many people come to the human rights movement out of pacifist beliefs, but others come to the movement out of the belief that never again should terrible atrocities be permitted and a recognition that sometimes military force is needed to stop the worst atrocities.

Those two traditions come together at Human Rights Watch in the following way. First, on most military matters, we are neutral, because we see our principal job as monitoring the way a war is fought, and to do that effectively you can’t be seen as for or against a war. Human Rights Watch would have been much less effective in trying to shape the Pentagon’s approach in Iraq if we were viewed as confirmed opponents of the war. Our neutrality makes us more effective human rights advocates in that sense.

But there are occasions where, because of the level of slaughter and the lack of alternatives, Human Rights Watch has advocated military intervention. We did so, for example, in the case of Rwanda, to stop the horrible genocide there. And in Bosnia, to stop the genocide there. So we have a longstanding policy that in cases of genocide or mass slaughter, when there is no feasible alternative and military intervention will make things better rather than worse and can be conducted in a way that is largely respectful of international humanitarian law, we will advocate the use of force.

FC: Are there countries or regions of the world where, in your view, the Bush administration should be acting more aggressively to improve or alter the human rights situation on the ground?

KR: I think there are many areas where the United States is doing far too little to promote human rights. In this hemisphere, Colombia stands out. The United States continues to pump massive amounts of military aid into the country despite the army’s complicity with paramilitary groups that are largely responsible for the slaughter of civilians there. In Africa, there has been large-scale ethnic slaughter in Eastern Congo. It’s probably the most dangerous place on earth, and in the last few years or so it has suffered more than anywhere else. But the United States is utterly disengaged from the situation. Indeed, if anything, it’s been unhelpful even as other governments consider engaging there.

If you look at the U.S. allies in the war against terrorism — Russia, China, Pakistan, Indonesia — these are all countries with serious human rights problems. But for Washington, human rights seem to have been put on the back burner as strategic concerns have come to the fore. What the Bush administration doesn’t seem to understand is that the two are not mutually exclusive. It’s possible, for example, to have a military alliance with General Musharraf and still press him to democratize, instead of blessing the consolidation of his dictatorship, as the administration has done. It’s possible to enlist Russia and China’s support without ending U.S. support for resolutions at the

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A human rights issue often ignored is the almost apartheid-like conditions that have emerged in this country for undocumented migrants.

UN Human Rights Commission condemning their abuses against violent separatists in Chechnya and Xianjiang.

So again, I think this view of human rights and security as a zero-sum game, this unwillingness to have an anti-terrorism strategy that includes both hard and soft power, a positive as well as a negative vision, has been a real failure of this administration, and it's making its fight against terrorism less effective and is going to cost us in the end.

FC: When you look at the human rights situation in the U.S. and contrast it to the situation, say, twenty years ago, do you feel we've made progress?

KR: Well, obviously a whole new range of issues has come to the fore since September 11 — things like military tribunals and Guantanamo and the use of stress-and-duress interrogation techniques, which is something that's clearly prohibited under international law and amounts to cruel and unusual punishment. Issues of that sort are new and, in a sense, suggest a step backward in U.S. compliance with international human rights standards.

If you look beyond the response to 9/11, however, there remain serious human rights issues in the United States. I've already mentioned the issue of the treatment of prisoners and the injustice of the government's willingness to warehouse large numbers of people beyond public scrutiny and with little or no oversight by the courts. Over-incarceration, which has been aggravated by the war on drugs, is a major problem in this country as well. The fact that a huge percentage of our young, male, minority population is behind bars suggests that something is seriously wrong. Human Rights Watch did a study recently where we looked at the comparative rate of incarceration for nonviolent drug offenses, comparing white and black males. We found that in Illinois, the worst offender among the fifty states, if you were a black male you were over fifty times more likely to be imprisoned for a nonviolent drug charge than if you were a white male. Nationwide, it was thirteen-to-one. Whites would never put up with that level of incarceration. But because it's an issue that predominately affects a minority, it's tolerated, and that, I think, makes it a troubling human rights issue.

Another real tragedy that should be considered a human rights issue but is often ignored is the almost apartheid-like conditions that have emerged in this country for undocumented migrants. Let's face it, we've come to depend on undocumented migrants to do many jobs that American citizens or people with legal status would not consider doing. Rather than acknowledge that fact and make sure that immigrants who are willing to do that work are guaranteed certain basic rights — the right to form a union, for example; or the right to have a driver's license; or the right to seek police protection without fear of being expelled — the U.S. has taken the opposite tack and marginalized these people.

It's an issue that Vicente Fox, the president of Mexico, raised quite effectively in his first few months in office, and it looked, pre-9/11, that he might succeed in getting the U.S. to do something about it. But the Bush administration has utterly marginalized President Fox since 9/11 and has refused to deal with the issue. That's shameful — and not in America's best interests. We're passing up a huge opportunity to bolster the standing of

the first genuine democrat ever to occupy the presidency in Mexico — and, in the process, jeopardizing the process of democratization in that country. It's not only bad for Mexico, it's a disaster for the people who are suffering — not as second-class citizens, but as non-citizens without most of the basic rights that should attach to any human being in this country.

FC: You've talked about how democracy does not necessarily guarantee human rights. Is democracy a necessary precondition for human rights?

KR: First of all, democracy is a human right. People have a right to freely and periodically elect their government. That's a human right. Having said that, I do think democracies, in the fullest sense of the term, tend to be more respectful of human rights than other political systems; that is, governments that embrace the rule of law, that foster civil society, that encourage freedom in all respects tend to be more respectful of human rights. Where we sometimes run into trouble is with governments that have been elected in countries that don't have all the attributes of a democracy. Elections are no guarantee of democracy. In fact, without the rule of law and governmental accountability to the rule of law, and without institutions of civil society that can help bridge racial or ethnic or religious divides, elections can even foment human rights abuse.

FC: Lately, we've seen a related phenomenon in which the tools of democracy are used by anti-democratic elements to gain control of a government. What, if anything, can be done to keep extremist elements from hijacking democratic processes?

KR: This is an issue that's often brought up to justify support for authoritarian regimes in places like Egypt or Saudi Arabia. The argument goes, "Look, if we introduce democracy today, the Islamists will take over and we'll be worse off." And yes, the truth of the matter is that if you go from zero to a hundred in two seconds, you may well be worse off. If you try to democratize all at once, without taking any of the preliminary steps needed to allow genuine civil society and the rule of law to emerge, then the mere holding of elections might well make you worse off and allow extremists into office. But our experience has been that in places where political choices are given to the electorate — and that's something that takes time — extremists tend to end up in the minority. We've seen that in Pakistan, we've seen it in Indonesia, we've seen it in the Middle East in places like Morocco, Jordan, Qatar, Bahrain, and Kuwait, where small steps toward democracy have been taken without fueling extremism. So it's possible, but it requires patience and persistence. If, however, we use the threat posed by Islamic extremists not to even take the first steps, we run the risk of creating political tinderboxes throughout the region that will explode at some point and make everybody far worse off.

FC: We've been told that the war on terror could go on for decades. If it does, what are the prospects for improved human rights around the world — and especially in the Middle East and Central Asia?

KR: I think the initial response to September 11 has been a panicked response, and when people panic they tend to fall back on a purely security-oriented approach to the problem.

In places where political choices are given to the electorate — and that's something that takes time — extremists tend to end up in the minority.

We won't defeat terrorism if we adopt the view that the ends justify the means, because that is the logic of terrorism.

It's almost human nature, and it's understandable. But I hope that as we gain a little distance from September 11, and as we begin to ask real questions about what works and what doesn't work in the war on terror, basic considerations of pragmatism will lead us to an anti-terrorism strategy that gives much greater significance to the promotion of human rights. Because, as I've said, I'm convinced we will not defeat terrorism if we undermine the very international human rights standards that explain what is wrong with terrorism. We won't defeat terrorism if, by violating human rights ourselves, we breed resentment at our hypocrisy that discourages cooperation and even drives some people into the arms of the terrorists. We won't defeat terrorism if we adopt the view that the ends justify the means, because that is the logic of terrorism. And laudable as the end of defeating terrorism is, we can be certain that al-Qaeda thinks that its goals are laudable, too. So if we abandon human rights in fighting terrorism, we may win a battle or two but we risk losing the war. I hope our political leaders and national security people arrive at that realization sooner rather than later.

FC: I'm afraid we'll have to end it on that note. Thanks very much for your time this morning, Ken.

KR: Thank you.

Mitch Nauffts, *Philanthropy News Digest's* editorial director, interviewed Ken Roth in May 2003.

September 11 and the Arab American Community

For approximately fifteen minutes on the morning of September 11, 2001, the prevailing sentiment in America was disbelief. A plane had crashed into the World Trade Center? On a perfectly clear morning? Incredible. It was only after United Airlines Flight 175 sliced into the south tower of the WTC at 9:03 a.m. that the incredible was transformed into horrifying reality and one word, “terrorism,” came to dominate all subsequent conversation.

In the days that followed, as Americans learned that Osama bin Laden, a Saudi-born extremist, was suspected of masterminding the attacks and that fifteen of the nineteen hijackers were themselves Saudis, incomprehension turned to anger and, in many cases, blind hatred. As had happened after the bombing in Oklahoma City in 1995, cruel, unthinking individuals indiscriminately lashed out at and, in many cases, assaulted Arab and Muslim Americans for no other reason than the fact they could.

JAMES ZOGBY
PRESIDENT
ARAB AMERICAN INSTITUTE



SEPTEMBER 11: PERSPECTIVES FROM THE FIELD OF PHILANTHROPY

In May, *Philanthropy News Digest* spoke with Dr. James Zogby, president of the Arab American Institute, a Washington, D.C.-based organization that serves as the political and policy research arm of the Arab American community, about the backlash against Arab and Muslim Americans after the 9/11 attacks, the efficacy of ethnic profiling as a counterterrorism tactic, social development as a democratizing force in the Arab world, and the importance of finding a resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Zogby co-founded and has served as president of AAI since 1985. For the past three decades he has been involved in a full range of Arab American issues, first as co-founder of the Palestine Human Rights Campaign in the late 1970s and later as co-founder and executive director of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee.

He currently serves on the Human Rights Watch Middle East Advisory Committee and the national advisory boards of the American Civil Liberties Union and the National Immigration Forum, and is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. In January 2001, he was selected by President Bush to be a member of the Central Asian-American Enterprise Fund and serves on its board of directors. He also hosts a weekly television show called *Viewpoint with James Zogby* and writes “Washington Watch,” a weekly newspaper column.

Zogby received a Bachelor of Arts from Le Moyne College. In 1995, Le Moyne awarded him an honorary doctor of laws degree and in 1997 named him the college’s outstanding alumnus. He is married to Eileen Patricia McMahon and is the father of five children.

Foundation Center: Thanks for joining us this morning, Dr. Zogby. Tell us, where were you on the morning of September 11, 2001?

James Zogby: I was here in Washington. I’ll never forget it. My car radio was broken, and I was crawling down Connecticut Avenue. Then, at a traffic light, I looked to my left and the woman in the car next to me gestured for me to roll my window down. “What happened?” I said. And she said, “Didn’t you hear? A plane crashed into the World Trade Center.” I said, “Oh my God, what was it?” And she said, “I don’t know, but my father works in the building.” Then the light changed, and she drove on. I’ll never forget the look of horror on her face.

I finally made it to my office and, like everyone else, watched events unfold on television. We’re only a block from the White House, and they tried to evacuate us when the Pentagon was hit. We couldn’t leave, however, because we were getting phone calls from Arab Americans all over the country asking us what they should do. People were frightened. And then we started to get threatening phone calls and e-mails. So the morning was memorable in many, many ways, both personally and in terms of the community we serve.

FC: After the second plane hit the World Trade Center, did you assume there would be a backlash against Arab and Muslim Americans?

JZ: It wasn't even a question of assuming — the backlash started right away. People have asked me if I suspected terrorism after the first tower was hit, and the answer is no, I didn't. I had no idea what was going on. I was focused on the tragedy that was unfolding and thinking about the fear that everyone in that building must have felt. Then we got our first phone calls, people saying things like, "You must be happy now," or "You bastards did it," et cetera. Even though the first direct threat against my life didn't come until the next morning, it became clear to us early on that this was going to be a problem for our community.

Unfortunately, it's not new; it's happened before. The period after the Oklahoma City bombing was a pretty horrifying time in terms of the threats and overall backlash. It's something we've come to expect. There's a certain tragedy in that for us, because in addition to the trauma being experienced by everybody, we are denied the right to mourn like the rest of America. I mean, I'm watching events unfold, I'm in shock and grieving just like everybody else, and then somebody calls and says, "You bastard, we'll get you," or "We know where you are and we know where your children are." Besides causing you to look over your shoulder all the time, it has the effect of isolating you from your fellow citizens, and that's painful.

FC: How many incidents of violence against Arab or Muslim Americans were recorded in the months following the attacks?

JZ: I was asked to testify before the U.S. Civil Rights Commission on October 12, and I presented them with the first month's tally, which included about four hundred acts that we were able to verify. The actual number was most probably higher, since there was a lot of non-reporting and some conflicting accounts that we didn't include. We were careful to make sure the reports we counted in our tally had been either recorded with various law-enforcement agencies or had been reported in the press. The daily tally was quite high in the first few days, but then dropped rather significantly after about two weeks. The spike occurred in the first three or four days, as it had after Oklahoma City, even before it was clear that it was Arabs who had been responsible.

FC: What did your organization do in those first few weeks to mitigate the backlash against Arab and Muslim Americans?

JZ: Well, early on I found myself doing four or five news shows a day — the *Today* show had me on fairly often, as did the *Evening News with Tom Brokaw*, ABC, CNN, and others. And that gave me an opportunity to talk about our community, our history, our experiences — the fact that there were Arab Americans who had died in the attack on the towers, there were Arab Americans who were on the planes that were hijacked, there were Arab Americans who were first responders. There was a Zogby, a New York police officer, who risked his life and went into one of the towers as a first responder. People needed to know that; they needed to know that Arab Americans are Americans first. My family has been in this country for a hundred years. When people wrote, "Why don't you go back where you came from?" I wanted to say, "What? Utica, New York? Hazelton, Pennsylvania?"

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But thanks to those opportunities, we were able to speak to literally tens of millions of Americans, and that eventually resulted in a change in attitude as reflected in the e-mails we received. On the first day, for example, we received a few hundred e-mails, and they were split pretty much half and half. The few that were threatening we turned over to law enforcement. But we answered all the others, even the angry, nasty ones, because we felt it was important to engage in those conversations. Then, after our managing director and I started appearing on national news shows, the number of threatening and angry e-mails dropped to a very small percentage of the more than one thousand messages we were receiving daily.

We also designed educational material. We sent literally hundreds of thousands of pieces to school boards and school districts that requested them. We worked with the Department of Education, the National Education Association, and the American Federation of Teachers. We worked with the Community Relations Division of the Department of Justice. We produced two ads with the Ad Council — one for television and one that appeared in print — that were very successful in spreading the message of tolerance and urging respect for Arab Americans. So we were engaged in a full range of activities, all of which grew out of what we learned in the first few days.

FC: After 9/11, the U.S. government detained roughly twelve hundred people, most of them male and from the Middle East or South Asian countries. Later the department implemented a mandatory registration policy for certain non-immigrant aliens from twenty-five countries, again mostly from Arab or Muslim countries. What was AAI's position in regard to those policies?

JZ: We did not support them, for a couple of reasons. First, we felt that they were not effective law-enforcement tools; and second, we believed they further stigmatized a community that needed to be better understood, not demonized. This policy of . . . profiling, this confusing of immigration policy with counterterrorism policy, is troubling and, in our view, was more about public relations than a serious effort by the Department of Justice to combat terrorism. If you look at the Inspector General's report, as well as those that have been done by independent civil liberties and human rights groups, you can see that the detentions and all of the other Department of Justice initiatives had very little to do with terrorism. For example, only three people out of the twelve hundred detained originally were held on material witness counts. It was never even suggested that the rest had anything to do with terrorism. And most of the people who ended up being deported were given little opportunity to appeal or to be represented by legal counsel.

The voluntary registration program resulted in something like seventy thousand immigrants being questioned and a few hundred individuals being deported for technical visa violations. Out of those seventy thousand, the Department of Justice reported that eleven were determined to have some link with terrorism. Eleven. And when you ask them what the link is, they say they can't divulge that. Based on earlier claims made by the DoJ, but disproven by the Inspector General and GAO reports, I'm not sure I believe that. For example, when the DoJ claimed that sixty-two people had been detained in New Jersey as a result of links to terrorism, it turns out that fifty-eight of them had cheated on an English exam.

So, again, in our view these are not effective law-enforcement tools. What they do, instead, is create fear in my community and create suspicion about my community among the broader public. The public ends up saying, “Gee, if the attorney general is rounding up and questioning all these people, if they’re all being deported, then there must be a problem there.” It only serves to confuse and create suspicion. And that troubles us.

But not just us. Law-enforcement people are troubled as well. We have friends within the FBI and local police departments who have objected to these policies and have come to us and said, “Look, we know what needs to be done, and we want to build a relationship with your community.” Actually, we’ve had great relationships with law enforcement — relationships we didn’t have before 9/11. And that’s because we all want to work together to prevent this from happening again. Unfortunately, the people in law enforcement who share our view and are sympathetic to our community are being ordered to do things they know will waste their time and damage the relationships that have been established since 9/11.

FC: Do you believe that the lessons of September 11 — foremost among them that a small group of determined individuals can inflict catastrophic casualties on a civilian population — make it necessary to recalibrate the balance between civil liberties and national security? And do you feel the federal government has struck the right balance in its response to 9/11?

JZ: No, I don’t think the balance between civil liberties and national security needs to be recalibrated, and I don’t think the federal government has struck the right balance. Look, one thing we all know from experience is that the mosquito that buzzes isn’t the one that bites. The guys responsible for the September 11 attacks came here with a mission. They came here and secreted themselves in our society. They weren’t the guys preaching down at the mosque. They weren’t political activists or community organizers. They didn’t settle down and find jobs and put their children in school or see their future here. They not only had no roots here, they were specifically instructed not to develop roots, not to go to mosque, not to behave like believing Muslims, not to become involved in their local communities.

And yet the instructions given law-enforcement agencies so far is to go after the guys they know aren’t the problem. Well, we don’t have that many law-enforcement resources, and we have to be careful how we use them. At the same time, despite the best efforts of the terrorists, it appears that law enforcement had a lot more intelligence available to them and could have connected the dots if there had been some interdepartmental cooperation. So do we need to recalibrate? No. What we need to do is refine the way we do our intelligence work and develop better cooperation among the various intelligence agencies.

FC: Was the war in Afghanistan justified?

JZ: When the president first spoke after 9/11 and said this was going to be a long and at times almost invisible war, I thought he was on the right path. And I still think there are many hard-working law-enforcement people in this country and around the world who are doing a great job of ferreting out those who would do us and our allies harm. But I’m

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concerned that we confused things by going for a quick victory against the Taliban in Afghanistan, and further confounded the situation by going for yet another quick victory in Iraq. Quite frankly, I'm not sure that either of those military campaigns has been as effective in combating terrorism as the quiet work of law enforcement has been.

Look, there are many evil governments in the world, and the Taliban-controlled government of Afghanistan was one of them. But we confused getting rid of the Taliban with the problem of terrorism and al-Qaeda. As evil a regime as the Taliban was, removing them from power was not the same as stopping al-Qaeda. Instead, we now have a long-term commitment in Afghanistan that is distracting us from the goal of getting those who intend to do us harm. In Kabul, the government functions only in the capital district during the day; at night it's not safe to go out. Warlords are back in most parts of the country; in many parts of the country the Taliban and al-Qaeda are back. The threat remains.

FC: At this point, do you see any alternative to a long-term U.S. commitment, both military and financial, in Afghanistan and Iraq?

JZ: At this point, we have a huge responsibility. The world is watching to see how we deliver, especially in terms of our financial and nation-building promises. A military presence is something else entirely, but I think we have no choice — if only for reasons of self-interest — to help both those countries reconstruct.

Having said that, I think we ought to move in a different direction in Iraq and internationalize the reconstruction process. I think we overestimated what we could do in Iraq, and the best way to rectify that mistake is to bring in the United Nations — for reasons of legitimacy and because it would help rebuild frayed relations with some of our key allies. You'd also have a better security environment in Iraq if there were fewer American and British administrators around and more Arab and international faces helping out with the reconstruction of the country. We don't need or want to be the surrogate regime there — that will only make us more of a target than we already are.

FC: The United Nations Development Programme's *Arab Human Development Report for 2002* painted a picture of an Arab world beset by stagnant economies, gender inequality, and political extremism. Is the Arab world in crisis?

JZ: The Arab world has been beset by problems for the last hundred and fifty years. But Arab countries and Arab people have not been masters of their own destiny for much of that time. The legacy of colonialism and imperialism are little understood in the West. For example, a hundred and sixty years ago Egypt's gross national product was equal to that of some European countries. Largely due to colonialism, however, Egypt was transformed from a country that exported food to a food importer. It was Britain that transformed Egypt's agriculture into dependence on a single cash crop, cotton, in order to feed the mills of Birmingham during the American Civil War. And that proved enormously costly to Egypt's prosperity. The coup de grace was delivered in the form of the Suez Canal, which Egypt did not want, yet was pressured to build, and for which it assumed the debt, creating an enormous burden for that country.

Do problems remain? Yes. Do we have to find a way out of them? Yes. And I think the *Arab Human Development* report is very significant for one simple reason: It was written by Arabs, for Arabs, and it has been heralded throughout the Arab world as a guide for future action. Governments in the region are beginning to take note of serious problems and reforms are beginning to be implemented. Maybe not as quickly as some would like, but the role the world community needs to be playing is to help the leadership in these countries find ways of moving forward and implementing the recommendations that emerged from the report.

FC: To what extent do wholesale improvements in the political and economic conditions of the Arab and Muslim world depend on a resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict?

JZ: Wholesale improvements in the political and economic conditions need to be taking place even without a resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. There are problems that aren't being addressed that must be addressed — in every one of the countries in the region, and in the region as a whole. But if the Arab-Israeli conflict were resolved, followed by a demilitarization and normalization of the region, would it make finding solutions to some of those problems more likely? The answer is an unequivocal yes. Would it make it more likely that the United States would be viewed as a constructive partner rather than as a biased antagonist? Yes. Would it make it more possible for governments in the region to cooperate with the United States and not feel threatened by extremist elements in their own country? Yes. Would it ameliorate some of the conditions that spawn support for extremist groups in the first place? Yes.

For all those reasons, it is very important that we solve the Arab-Israel conflict. That doesn't mean we shouldn't be looking at and addressing other problems while trying to solve that conflict. Nevertheless, for all the reasons I've just cited, the Arab-Israeli conflict must be resolved.

FC: Are the U.S. and its allies doing enough in the Middle East to support the growth of civil society, democracy, and human rights?

JZ: No, not at all. But I worry when they try to do that, given the approaches that are sometimes used, because, frankly, I don't think there's enough understanding or appreciation of the region within the policy establishments of Western countries. There are too many Lawrence of Arabias running around, too many people who know a little about the region and want to save it — usually for reasons that have nothing to do with the welfare of the people who call the Arab world home. I mean, the idea that the Iraq war is going to democratize the Middle East is bizarre. This kind of thinking is troubling to Arab people.

One of the things I always advise is the importance of listening. As a rule, we don't listen enough and aren't respectful enough of what people in other countries are saying. Many of our diplomatic efforts have failed for that reason, as have many outreach and democracy programs. These programs need to be demand-driven. You can't sell a product in the

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marketplace unless people want to buy it, and people aren't going to want to buy it unless you know and respect them enough to design a product that meets their needs and expectations. We have yet to operate that way in the Arab world.

FC: Is Islam incompatible with democracy?

JZ: To ask that question betrays a failure to understand both Islam and democracy. One could ask the same question about Christianity in Europe a few hundred years ago. You could have asked that question about Christianity in Spain or Italy a hundred years ago. When John Kennedy ran for president in 1960, there were those who said Roman Catholicism was antithetical to democracy.

It's not a question about the incompatibility of a religion and a political system. On the one hand, you have a religion that embodies a timeless set of values that can be adapted to different eras, societies, and social structures; and on the other, you have a very particular system of governance that requires a degree of social development, industrialization, and modernization that simply doesn't exist in many of the countries we're talking about.

We will see democracies emerging in the Middle East as a function of social developments taking place in the region. And when democracy does emerge, we will see Islam adapt.

So Islam is not the issue; the issue is social development, and we need to look at these questions more sociologically and less theologically. There are no theological impediments, there's no ideational impediment in Islam to democracy. Yes, the kind of Islam practiced in much of the Arab world reinforces the social structure that currently exists in that world, just as Christianity reinforced monarchy and the divine right of kings in Europe for hundreds and hundreds of years. But as Europe's social structures evolved and became more democratic, Christianity began to reflect and reinforce those values. The same will happen in the Arab world.

FC: Is Islamic extremism a form of revolt against modernity?

JZ: To some degree it is, just as in some quarters Christian fundamentalism is a form of revolt against modernity. There have been many social movements in our own country over the last several centuries that were a function of people not being ready or willing or able to adapt to modernity.

But there are other reasons why extremism exists. Again, you need to look at this sociologically. And when you do, you see that extremism in Gaza occurs for very different reasons than it does in Saudi Arabia, just as extremism among urban dwellers in a city in the U.S. would be very different than the extremism that developed in a rural area in the South. So these issues need to be looked at quite differently than we're used to looking at them.

FC: A final question: How will we know the war on terror is over?

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JZ: I must say that the way the war on terror has been framed has set us up for failure. Terrorism is a particular kind of evil. It's a function of certain kinds of extremist groups rebelling against the established order and, for a variety of reasons, using violent means against civilians to spread fear. It's a function of their powerlessness, their alienation, and their anger, as well as a function of evil ideologies that they have adapted to their own ends. We will no sooner eliminate that evil than we will eliminate other evils that we've tried to eliminate over the course of the last several decades. We were going to eradicate racism, we were going to eradicate poverty, we were going to eradicate drugs. These are evils that you are not going to eradicate entirely. What you can do is try to limit and isolate them. You can ameliorate or remove the causes that give rise to them. But completely eradicate them? I don't think so. And so we have to be much more careful how we look at and frame some of these issues so as not to set ourselves up for expectations that we can never realize.

FC: Well, thanks very much, Dr. Zogby, for your time this morning.

JZ: Thank you.

Mitch Nauffts, *Philanthropy News Digest's* editorial director, interviewed James Zogby in May 2003.

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The Media Response to 9/11

For the news business, it is, as Dickens might have said, the best and worst of times. Over the last decade, the widespread networking of computers has reduced the cost of news gathering and dissemination for many organizations, while lowering the cost of entry into the business for others. At the same time, longer commutes, the rise of cable and the Internet, and the growing diversity of the American people have all contributed to a steady erosion and fragmentation of the once-monolithic audience for hard news.

Against this backdrop, the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, served to highlight the strengths and sometimes troubling weaknesses of the increasingly conglomeratized news business — from the unrivaled ability of the broadcast networks to focus attention on a single event and galvanize national opinion to their over-reliance on thirty-second analysis and personal tragedy as a narrative device.

HODDING CARTER III
PRESIDENT AND CEO
JOHN S. AND JAMES L. KNIGHT FOUNDATION



SEPTEMBER 11: PERSPECTIVES FROM THE FIELD OF PHILANTHROPY

In the fall of 2002, *Philanthropy News Digest* spoke to Hodding Carter III, president of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and a distinguished journalist in his own right, about the response of the national media to 9/11, the inclination of the news media and the American people to inform and be informed about world affairs, and the implications of long-term trends in the news business.

Mr. Carter was elected president and CEO of the Knight Foundation in September 1997 and assumed his responsibilities on February 1, 1998. Prior to joining the foundation, he held, from 1995 to 1998, the Knight Chair in Journalism at the University of Maryland's Philip Merrill College of Journalism.

He was born in New Orleans on April 7, 1935, son of Betty Werlein Carter and Hodding Carter, Jr., a newspaper publisher and editor whose editorials on racial and religious tolerance for the family-owned Greenville (Miss.) *Delta Democrat-Times* won the Pulitzer Prize in 1946.

Carter graduated summa cum laude in June 1957 from Princeton University and that same month reported to duty as a lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps. He returned to Greenville in 1959, where he spent nearly eighteen years as a reporter-editorial writer, editor, managing editor, and associate publisher of the *Delta Democrat-Times*. His time in Greenville was interrupted in 1965-66 for a year at Harvard University as a Nieman Fellow and for stints with two successful presidential campaigns — Lyndon Johnson's in 1964 and Jimmy Carter's in 1976.

From January 1977 until 1980, Mr. Carter served as spokesman for the Department of State and Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs. He then launched a career in television, first as anchor for the *Inside Story* media criticism series on PBS, where he won four Emmy Awards and the Edward R. Murrow Award, and subsequently as host, anchor, panelist, correspondent, and/or reporter for a variety of public affairs shows on PBS, ABC, CBS, CNN, and the BBC. Carter was president and later chairman of MainStreet, a TV production company that specialized in public affairs television, from 1985 to 1998, and was a Washington-based opinion columnist for the *Wall Street Journal* for ten years. A frequent contributor to the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and other newspapers and magazines, he has written two books, *The Reagan Years* and *The South Strikes Back*, and has contributed to seven others.

He has been married since December 1978 to Patricia Derian. Their extended family includes seven children and eleven grandchildren.

Foundation Center: It's been more than a year since the September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, attacks that many people at the time believed would change everything. What has surprised you about what has, or hasn't, changed?

Hodding Carter: I think what has most surprised me has been the essentially incremental and almost invisible series of changes adopted by the federal government that, taken

together, have in fact changed certain fundamental aspects of our criminal justice system and the flow of news and information in this country.

FC: Such as?

HC: I believe that a series of administrative decisions — adopted with very little Congressional input and incorporated into legislation in the immediate aftermath of September 11 — represented a direct assault on American citizens' right to a trial by jury and on our ability as a country to adhere to the norms of international law as it relates to prisoners of war. For that matter, virtually every step in the war on terrorism has incorporated a direct assault on freedom of information, up to and including the gutting of Freedom of Information requirements in the homeland security legislation.

As I say, all of this has been done in the name of the war on terrorism, which is fair enough. But what has been done has not appreciably advanced that war, in my opinion. It has, however, very appreciably curtailed what we consider to be basic American rights and has also had the effect of putting us in the lone-wolf category when it comes to international law and cooperation.

FC: Has the mainstream news media in the U.S. paid sufficient attention to those aspects of the 9/11 story?

HC: Little by little, the various journalism organizations and news outlets have awakened to the clear and present danger to civil liberties raised by aspects of the war on terrorism. What remains to be seen is whether there will be a sustained conversation.

FC: A few weeks after September 11, the Knight Foundation announced the creation of a \$5 million fund for 9/11-related activities, which included \$500,000 for a memorial to honor the passengers of United Airlines Flight 93, which crashed in a field in southwestern Pennsylvania on the morning of the eleventh. What other activities or initiatives do you plan to support with those funds?

HC: The foundation initially announced that it would do up to \$5 million, plus \$500,000 for the memorial. Later, at the behest of our board, we took that sum up to \$10 million, and eventually, in response to a number of RFPs we issued, we actually gave away about \$8.5 million in cash. The \$500,000 is being held in reserve for the day that the families, the Pennsylvania county where the plane went down, and the federal government all decide exactly how they want to approach the memorial.

Beyond that, the foundation has not undertaken any other initiatives in direct response to 9/11, although we have helped several organizations that we have supported in the past to address some of the issues I spoke of a moment ago. For instance, we helped endow and over the years have supported a reporters' committee working for freedom of the press that, since 9/11, has put out two editions of a white paper called *Home Front Confidential: How the War on Terrorism Affects Access to Information and the Public's Right To Know*. We've also supported a number of other journalism organizations, including the American Society of Newspaper Editors, with whom we have several ongoing collaborations, in its

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efforts to make public the nature of the administration's actions vis-à-vis the curtailing of certain basic rights and to help them sustain that campaign so that everybody understands the gravity of what's being done in the name of the war on terrorism. Those two things come immediately to mind.

FC: How is the news media doing in terms of balancing national security concerns with the public's right to be informed?

HC: To begin with, only a handful of media outlets in this country do original reporting on national security matters. There's the Associated Press, which is the main source of information for most news outlets in America about what's going on in the nation and the world. You also have the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, CNN, CBS, NBC, ABC, and a handful of outstanding regional papers like the *Dallas Morning News* and the *San Jose Mercury News*. You know, you can pretty much count the ones that have overseas correspondents or that cover the Department of Defense and the national security and intelligence agencies on one hand.

Now, among that handful, I would say that they have been and continue to be extraordinarily responsible in handling material that could endanger the lives and security of Americans and America. I would also say that almost every horror story offered up about the irresponsibility of the press in these matters has had its basis in a deliberate leak by a government agency or official, and in many cases the leak has come from the very agency that complained about the story. I say that categorically.

There are occasional instances, nonetheless, in which the press has endangered national security. However, far more dangerous, as far as I'm concerned, is the free pass the press too often gives to government when the best thing it could be doing for the health of the Republic is to sharply question, widely investigate, and occasionally publicize, with great vigor, the misuse of governmental power in the name of national security.

FC: Based on the latest update of the community indicator surveys your foundation conducts on a regular basis, it's clear that for Americans living outside New York City and Washington, D.C., the economy, unemployment, crime, and education are of equal or greater importance than homeland security or the war on terrorism. Do those findings reflect a disconnect between the concerns of ordinary Americans and the agendas of major media outlets?

HC: No, not necessarily. I think there is often a disconnect between the way people live their daily lives and the concerns of government — and therefore of the press — which tend to concentrate on what might loosely be called national and international issues. For instance, it does not surprise me that those who have not been directly affected by terrorism themselves would, over time and in the absence of further terrorist acts, be inclined to start thinking about the here and now, as opposed to the murky and uncertain future. And that's where we are right now vis-à-vis the war on terrorism. The horrible, harrowing, truly evil thing that occurred on September 11 was a national trauma. But as time passes and no other attacks of a similar magnitude occur, what had been a shared

experience begins to fade and becomes more of a concern and source of pain for those most directly affected — the victims, their families, and the government of the United States. On the other hand, if I'm living in Wichita, which is a long way from Pennsylvania or the Pentagon or New York City, the economic health of Boeing or the ability of Kansas farmers to make a buck is an ever-present concern.

I'll say this in defense of the news media, however: News, by definition, is that which is most emphatically different from that which is otherwise or routinely happening. In other words, it's simply impossible to conceive of major news outlets in the United States not concentrating their attention and resources on what was, after all, the second most disastrous day, in terms of lives lost on American soil, in our history, or concentrating on the aftermath of that day, which was a shooting war in Afghanistan and, judging by the administration's buildup of arms and material in the Persian Gulf region, a likely war with Iraq. These are major national stories. And in that regard, the press is merely reflecting a continuing national necessity, which is to reveal all it can about this very dangerous, shadowy enemy and, in the process, do what it can to secure the nation's security. But the average American, going about his or her business in small towns and cities across the country, including our twenty-six Knight communities, will continue to be most directly affected, until events occur that argue otherwise, by issues like the economy, crime, education, and so on.

FC: John Powers, a writer for *LA Weekly*, said of al-Qaeda and Islamic terrorists in general that "They hate us because we don't even know why they hate us." Do the news media in the United States do enough to inform the American public about events beyond our borders?

HC: No, they don't. They picked up the pace after the September 11 attacks because it was impossible not to, and we were made aware once again that we live in a world in which hostile forces, for reasons both good and bad, are arrayed against us. The events of September 11 and their aftermath gave us a healthy dose of history and education about the nature of both Muslim extremism and poor nations' disaffection with the policies of rich nations, particularly ours.

But the truth, overall, is that there's not much proof in the pudding beyond that. The news media, which spent a vast amount of money in the aftermath of September 11 to keep up with what was going on in Washington and the world, including Afghanistan, has unfortunately allowed its coverage of international affairs post- 9/11 to become an episodic act of recommitment to the public interest. There has been no general beefing up of overseas bureaus or reporting. There has been no renewed commitment to covering, in an international sense, tomorrow's stories. We have witnessed a steady decline in the commitment of the news business to covering world affairs since the collapse of the Soviet Union, and despite the blip upward after September 11, the long-term withdrawal from adequate coverage of the world continues.

FC: What about news media in the Arab world? Does something like Al-Jazeera, the Qatar-based television station, contribute to a constructive dialogue between Arab

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countries and the U.S. and its allies? And what, if anything, can a private institution with a relatively modest budget like the Knight Foundation do to bring a greater diversity of opinion to the Arab and Muslim worlds?

HC: That's an excellent question, and the answer to it is more complex than time allows. But let me begin by saying that virtually all domestic news outlets in the Middle East are far removed from being objective purveyors of something approximating a factual account of daily events, either in their own countries or around the world. For the most part, news outlets in the Middle East are organs of the state and/or different religious or party factions. They are most distinctly not, for the most part, purveyors of anything except whatever the official state or party line is. Al-Jazeera itself is a unique enterprise in that it has become a conduit for the opinion and views of a number of important players in the Arab world who are not government spokespersons per se, and because of that it has played a useful role in providing information and views that, in the past, have not always had an outlet. But by eschewing a more balanced presentation in favor of broadcasting what amounts to blatant misrepresentation and propaganda from the likes of al-Qaeda and others, it hasn't played a useful role. Call it what you will, but it's not journalism.

So the problem, in much of the world, is figuring out how to jump-start and accelerate a process that unfolded over several hundred years in the United States. How do you take an intensely partisan, intensely factional, often intensely corrupt press — which, by the way, is a pretty accurate description of the press in this country two hundred years ago — and move it into an era of professionalism where there is at least an attempt at fairness and objectivity and a commitment to using facts as a basis for what is being presented? How do you do that? Knight Foundation, for one, has done a number of things and spent millions of dollars to that end. We have funded efforts to provide professional training to journalists in places in which the idea of a freely functioning press is essentially nonexistent. We have supported the sending of journalism teachers overseas, including into areas in the Middle East, to help teach people the basics of straight news reporting. And, domestically, we have given money to help support access to things like Al-Jazeera, in an effort to enrich the menu of news and viewpoints available to the American people.

We are also working hard, through our support of two organizations, to make sure that the World Wide Web and the Internet are left as open and free as possible in countries around the world. Americans just assume, based on their own experience with it, that the Internet is and will forever remain a vehicle for the free flow of information from any place or country to any other place or country. But as the case of China periodically proves, as the case of Singapore periodically proves, as the case of Iran proves, that assumption has no basis in fact. Governments can and do filter and block the Internet when they believe it serves their purposes.

We are also exploring other ways to improve the quality of news abroad, mostly through existing organizations — I can think of three off the top of my head — whose major objective is the pursuit of press freedom and the safety of a free press abroad. One is the World Press Freedom Institute, another is the Committee to Protect Journalists, and the

third is the Inter American Press Association. All three spend a great deal of time spotlighting abuses of the press by government or factions in other countries as well as the direct and often lethal attempts by governments and various factions to silence journalists whose reporting they don't want to see in print or on the air. We spend a lot of money in those areas, and will continue to do so. Is it enough? No. But we have to try.

FC: According to a report prepared by Princeton Research Associates, readership and revenue for print news outlets in this country are in decline, continuing trends that have been in place for at least a decade. I'd like to ask the same question the report posed: Are things in the print news business as bad as the report would seem to indicate? And if so, which of these trends is the most troubling from your perspective as a former newsman?

HC: There are two things that ought to be seen as troubling, because they actually have some correspondence. One is the dramatic decline in reading by the American public, which almost directly correlates, when graphed, with the decline in voting, which is the basic responsibility of a citizen in a democratic republic. Of course, both acts require proactive effort, as opposed to passive reception, and both involve, by definition, participation in something larger than your own living room. I guess, as a journalist who has spent a good deal of his life working in print and a significant part of his life in television, that the report's findings merely confirmed what I already knew — that a significant portion of the American public has withdrawn from real engagement with a daily news product that covers a wide range of subjects. And that's disturbing.

FC: What can or should be done to reverse those trends?

HC: You begin with the public school system, which has systematically withdrawn, or been withdrawn, from adequate teaching of civics and history. You go on to the audiences that exist, since nothing will recreate the audiences of the 1950s. And, of course, basic reforms in the way our political system is financed might encourage more Americans to believe that their votes have some connection to what government subsequently does.

FC: I think there's a feeling among the American people that the profession of journalism, over the last decade or so, has lost some of its credibility. Do you share that view? And if you do, to what do you attribute that loss of credibility?

HC: Well, I agree with the general proposition, although I think I can say with some confidence that this is neither the first nor the last time that the standing of the press with the American people has been, or will be, in decline. Now, among the multiple reasons for that, there is, paradoxically, the fact that we have a much better educated population than we've ever had, which means the number of people able to question in an informed way what they read in the paper and see on television has never been greater. At the same time, because there are so many sources and varieties of information available today, there is the problem that you can have different, seemingly credible versions of the same story, and this multiplicity of views feeds a cynicism among the public that is quite new, at least in recent times.

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Fewer hands on the levers means there is more of a chance for manipulation and less chance that the free marketplace of ideas we rely on . . . will prevail.

I also think the accelerating trend of conglomeration in the news business, which has had the effect, in many cases, of removing management control from communities where the news is being made, has contributed to the sense that the people who run news outlets are not responsive to, nor do they care about, the communities on the other end of the twenty-four-seven news avalanche. That has a lot to do with the decline in people's faith in journalists.

Still another development we've seen over the last forty years is the rise of the star journalist, of newspaper reporters as celebrities. And that development has been accompanied by a devaluing of the importance of absolute accuracy and the elevation of a rather dangerous subtext, which is that "truth" is what counts, and "truth" can be revealed by good writing or slick verbal phrasing, even if some of your facts are wrong. But people long ago decided that nothing is to be trusted in an article if the reporter doesn't know how to spell your name or has gotten a basic fact wrong. So there's a level of sophisticated sloppiness out there — the "I'm too bright to be troubled with mere facts" syndrome — which definitely affects how the public feels about the profession.

Finally, there was a time, not so many years ago, when the press was, for all intents and purposes, just a scrappy little participant on the economic margins of most communities. Today, in contrast, news is a very big business — though often only as an appendage to even larger conglomerates and businesses — and that fact itself leads a lot of people to say, "These people can't possibly be representing my interests. These guys represent the interests of the conglomerates that pay their salaries."

FC: That seems like a legitimate concern. Do you worry about the concentration of print and broadcast media ownership in fewer and fewer corporate hands?

HC: As with all other aspects of life, the concentration of power in the hands of a few, without any form of democratic recourse and recall, is a bad thing. And it's not enough to say that the market will winnow out the bad apples. The truth of the matter is, the market doesn't always make choices based on quality; the appeal of a product is often just as important, in the sense that putting out an extremely good piece of confection can be appealing, though, ultimately, it's not good for your general dietary health. And I'd have to say that the power of these conglomerates to market and package their news products, often at the expense of substance in those products, is a bad thing. The fact that there are fewer hands on the levers also means there is more of a chance for manipulation and less chance that the free marketplace of ideas we rely on in a democratic society will prevail.

Finally, I think there is always and eternally the prospect that new technologies will generate new competitors for the entrenched powers, and that this will keep the system from ossifying. The problem with that theory, however, is that time and time again these new forces have been absorbed into or been bought by the existing powers in the communications world. So that while the number of communications channels is growing all the time, the number of entities owning them is not. And in the end, that leaves you in a situation in which "Trust me" is the motto of the news business. Well, "Trust me" is a very

bad way to do business. As Ronald Reagan said in a different context, “Trust, but verify.” And in the marketplace of ideas, verification is only possible with a multiplicity of views.

FC: A final question: In a keynote speech you gave earlier this year, you cited an old saying to the effect that the trick to the news business is to be first, second. You then suggested that the foundation world has much in common with journalism in this regard. What, in your view, should foundations be doing, or doing more of, that they’re not doing?

HC: Well, I could mention any number of specifics that happen to be my peculiar hobbyhorses, but that wouldn’t be very interesting. So let me simply say that if foundations are, as they like to pretend, the venture capitalists of the social sphere — that is, the people who truly understand that it takes ten significant investments to score one big hit — then we are clearly failing in terms of our own self-definition. In other words, regardless of the subject, we tend to be stronger on rhetorical commitment to major change than we are on investing in it. That’s not an ideological statement. I mean, conservative, liberal, centrist, up, down, around, whatever — too much of our money is spent in conventional ways on conventional causes. Which is fine. But let’s call it what it is, conventional charity, and be done with it. Let’s not pretend that it’s philanthropy. Charity is a great and good thing, and if that’s what we’re about, fine. But if we’re about something else, if we’re about what philanthropy ought to be about, which is taking great leaps and risk and experimentation, then we’ve got our work cut out for us.

When Andrew Carnegie established all those thousands of libraries, what, a hundred or more years ago, it seemed, at least in hindsight, like a rather simple thing. But, in fact, for Carnegie to do that required a leap of faith and a belief that if you made knowledge available to the people, they would use it to improve themselves. That was a radical idea at the time. It certainly wasn’t the conviction of most of his fellow tycoons and members of his economic class. And, today, we’re not seeing many of those leaps of faith. I wish we were, and I wish I had the genius to be able to tell you what the next big leap should be. But I can’t. All I can tell you is that we need to do more to identify them and then we need to turn them into reality. That’s what all of us who work in this field ought to be aiming for all the time.

FC: Well, thank you, Hodding, for taking the time to speak with us this afternoon.

HC: Thank you. It was a pleasure being with you.

Mitch Nauffts, *Philanthropy News Digest’s* editorial director, interviewed Hodding Carter in September 2002.

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Media, Charity, and Philanthropy in the Aftermath of September 11

Like December 7, 1941, and November 22, 1963, September 11, 2001, will be remembered as a watershed date in history — a day marked by truly shocking events that fundamentally altered the patterns of American life and politics.

The response to those events — by the public, private and philanthropic sectors, the media, and the general public — was as unprecedented as the events themselves. The federal government halted commercial flight operations across the country for the first time in the nation's history, passed the \$15 billion Air Transportation Safety and Stabilization Act, and launched a military campaign in Afghanistan to unseat the Taliban and disrupt the Qaeda terrorist network; foundations, corporations, and the American people donated more than \$2.1 billion to 9/11 relief and recovery efforts in New York and Washington, D.C.; and the media devoted enormous resources to reporting every aspect of the attacks and their fallout.

PAULA DiPERNA
AUTHOR

*MEDIA, CHARITY, AND PHILANTHROPY IN THE
AFTERMATH OF SEPTEMBER 11, 2001*



In May, *Philanthropy News Digest* spoke with Paula DiPerna, author of *Media, Charity, and Philanthropy in the Aftermath of September 11, 2001*, about media coverage of the philanthropic response to 9/11, the public relations troubles of the Red Cross, public perceptions of philanthropy post-9/11, and the role of the nonprofit sector in a new era of homeland security.

DiPerna is a member of the Century Foundation's Project on Homeland Security and the Working Group on the Public Right to Know. She has served as president of the Chicago-based Joyce Foundation, which focuses on public policy issues in the Great Lakes region, and was a writer, co-producer, and vice-president for international affairs at the Cousteau Society, where she was responsible for national and global environmental policy. She is also the author of seven nonfiction books, a novel, numerous magazine and newspaper articles, and a number of documentary films, and has taught journalism and writing at the Ohio State University School of Journalism and other institutions.

A lifelong New Yorker, DiPerna graduated from New York University with B.A. and M.A. degrees and was a candidate for the U.S. Congress in 1992.

Foundation Center: Tell us about *Media, Charity, and Philanthropy in the Aftermath of September 11*, the report you authored for the Century Foundation's Homeland Security Project. How did you come to be involved in its writing, and what were your objectives in writing it?

Paula DiPerna: Well, as you said, the report was sponsored by the Century Foundation, with funding from the [John S. and James L.] Knight Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation, and a few others. And I must say, I think it was very farsighted of Century Foundation president Richard Leone to bring together a diverse group of thinkers and leaders whom he felt had something to add to the public debate at this critical moment in our nation's history.

As you probably know, the project was divided into three working groups: the first, co-chaired by former Ohio governor Dick Celeste and former New Jersey governor Tom Kean, focused on the relationship between the states and the federal government in the post-9/11 era; the second, co-chaired by former White House chiefs of staff Kenneth Duberstein and John Podesta, analyzed a slew of issues related to the creation of a cabinet-level Department of Homeland Security; and a third group, which I was invited to join based on my experience with foundations and communications, explored issues related to the media coverage of 9/11 and its aftermath.

As a member of the group, I really had two objectives: one was personal and the other was more intellectual and professional. In the case of the former, I felt that September 11 had been a transformational event for the country. I wasn't in New York City, my lifelong home, on September 11, but instead was in Chicago, where the Joyce Foundation is headquartered. After the staff and I watched the terrible events of that morning unfold on television, I decided to close the office so that staff could get home and take care of

whatever personal things might have come up, be with their family or loved ones, and so forth. In those early hours, none of us knew what might happen next.

Anyway, I was the last to leave the office and as I headed home, I found myself walking on Michigan Avenue, one of Chicago's busiest streets. All around me people were leaving the Loop area in droves, and there I was, surrounded by people walking quickly, many getting news of what was happening via their cellphones and making calls to others. And yet I felt almost entirely alone. In fact, I've never felt so alone. And in that solitude, I realized that my life had been transformed, and that the life of our country and probably the lives of many future generations of Americans had been transformed, and that I felt alone because I had lost much that had been familiar to me all my life — most noticeably an absence of fear. I also realized that what mattered in the world would now be different, and that the issues in which I had been involved my whole life would be changed in their meaning and relevance. I don't mean to exaggerate, but I still feel that way, almost two years later.

So I became involved in the project in part because I wanted to explore the depth and nature of the transformation set in motion by 9/11. But on a professional level, I feel, too, that there's nothing more important to democracy than an informed and thoughtful public; it's what makes a democracy work. Having said that, I know from experience that the public response to traumatic national events is often fueled by emotion. And in the aftermath of 9/11, in that very emotional time, I felt it was extremely important to get to the bottom of what the public knew, and had been told.

You know, the wonderful thing about philanthropy is that it gives those of us who are privileged to work in the field an opportunity to put ideas and money together at a moment of opportunity when they might actually produce something of special value. In the case of 9/11, philanthropy and charity had an opportunity to be especially helpful, which, again, was a privileged position, as well as an incredible responsibility. Because the events of that day were so shocking, the general public had a hard time absorbing, in real time, all that was thrown at them. People retreated into themselves and created a buffer around themselves as a way of dealing with the shock and trauma and grief, so I thought it would be interesting and important to go back after a certain period of time and find out what the public actually had been able to absorb as well as examine what was conveyed to them.

FC: To what extent was the outpouring of dollars from the public in response to the attacks driven by early projections in the media of the number of people feared missing or dead?

PD: I can't say for sure, but as I'm sure you remember, at first it was feared that six or seven thousand people had been killed or were missing. Still, I don't think the exact number was what mattered; I think the public was just responding to the sense that there were a lot of people — many, many hundreds, if not thousands — who had been killed or were missing. In the fog of fear, anger, and emotion that lingered for weeks after 9/11, people didn't care whether it was six or three thousand; they just wanted to help.

FC: In the report, you argue that early media coverage of the philanthropic response was negatively influenced by four factors. What were they?

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The public didn't understand that a philanthropic response is about maximizing philanthropic dollars and not the same as an emergency response.

PD: The first was the confusion in the public mind about the difference between a charitable response, an emergency response, a philanthropic response, and what we would call regranting, which was a special intermediary role played by certain institutions like the September 11th Fund and the New York Times Company Foundation. The public and the media didn't really understand that a variety of responses was under way, beyond the emergency response involving disaster relief agencies like the Red Cross. The public didn't understand that a philanthropic response is about maximizing philanthropic dollars and not the same as an emergency response, however quickly dollars may be granted. And somewhere in between is what is known as charity, which tries to alleviate the suffering of people in need. Unfortunately, in the weeks after 9/11 I think the media blurred those distinctions completely, and as a consequence various organizations were unable to clearly communicate to the public what it was they were trying to accomplish.

The second factor was the sheer number of dollars involved. It was an irresistible target for the media, especially in the post-Enron era. I mean it was almost a Pavlovian response. As a reporter, if you begin to hear about large sums of money, of course you're going to respond by sniffing around issues of accountability. It was inevitable.

The third factor was and is the whole question of whether philanthropy per se can be news. Most of us who have been in the field understand that it isn't — or wasn't before September 11. Philanthropy itself is not “man bites dog”; it's very much “dog bites man.” And the only way to turn that into news is to focus on some unusual aspect of it. What was unusual about the philanthropic response to 9/11? The amount of money involved. And that's what triggered the media coverage initially.

The fourth factor — and, frankly, I think it's the most important — was shaped by certain expectations and the need for pure public-service information. By that I mean, when you have a disaster of this magnitude, the public expects a public-service response. It wants to know where to go for help, or how to offer help; it wants to know how many funds have been created, and what their goals and guidelines are. But the media doesn't see itself playing a public-information role per se. They report news; they don't provide information straight up unless it's paid for, as in advertising, or unless somebody at the editorial level decides to make an exception and publish straight public information. That was not done in any major way in the wake of 9/11. I think if the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post* had devoted some space, maybe once every three weeks or so, to reminding the public that a concerted effort was under way to help the victims of the attacks, where donations could be sent, guidelines, et cetera, there would have been a lot less confusion and hard feelings.

FC: You chose three case studies — the Red Cross, the September 11th Fund, and Disaster Relief Medicaid — to illustrate some of the issues raised by media coverage of the philanthropic response to 9/11. Why those three?

PD: Well, I chose the September 11th Fund because it was a creature of the moment. It was created in response to the events of September 11 and, as such, was an original.

I chose the Red Cross for two reasons: one, because it was the opposite of the September 11th Fund, in that it was a venerable, well-known institution that was very much associated

with disaster response; and two, because, frankly, I was fascinated by the amount of negative coverage the organization received and curious about how it managed to get into all that trouble.

And lastly, I chose Disaster Relief Medicaid, even though it has been reported on a little bit by now, because it still stands as one of the great untold stories of the immediate post-9/11 period. In fact, I believe that had it been reported on in more depth in the months after September 11, it would have gone a long way toward clarifying what philanthropy was doing in the wake of the attacks, what philanthropy actually is, and how the intersection of advocacy, public dollars, and philanthropic programs works to the benefit of many, many more people than meets the eye. I just think it's a phenomenal success story that most people are unaware of or don't understand.

FC: How would better coverage of the Disaster Relief Medicaid story illustrate those aspects of philanthropy?

PD: DRM demonstrated brilliantly how nonprofit organizations often are ahead of the policy curve, how they constantly contribute to social innovation, and how, when there is an emergency, they often bring a fresh point of view to bear. DRM also showed how, sometimes, the so-called bureaucracy can be heroic, as those on the inside and those on the outside work together to solve a problem. But above all, DRM demonstrated how important it is to have a diverse and vibrant group of organizations involved in any given problem over time, and how important it can be to support advocacy groups over the long haul, so that when a crisis does occur they are strong, well-informed, and ready to jump into the breach.

FC: Why didn't the media — especially the press — cover the story in more depth? Was it a case of good news not qualifying as news?

PD: I think the media simply missed the story. And perhaps the nonprofit community did not actively seek broad coverage of the story out of fear that the streamlining of the system and the elimination of certain barriers that were the hallmarks of the success of DRM might have been misinterpreted. In fact, some nonprofits have said exactly that. To an extent, a fear of media coverage did settle over the sector in the wake of 9/11. And that's a long-term concern, of course, in that communication with the public about the work of the sector is vitally important.

FC: Let's talk about the other two case studies. What, in your view, were the major missteps made by Red Cross officials in the weeks after the attacks?

PD: Their major missteps were, one, being defensive and technocratic and, two, hiding behind jargon to solve their problem. Look, [Red Cross president] Bernadine Healy had an insight, which was that 9/11 was not your run-of-the-mill disaster, and unusual events — unprecedented events — require an unprecedented response. That should have been the first thing they made clear to the public. But instead, they fell back on this very blurred, neutral, weak language — “We are raising money for this and other disasters.” Then, when they were attacked for using 9/11 funds for non-9/11 purposes, they tried to

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lay their whole defense on those few words — “this and other disasters” — as if they were lawyers negotiating a contract. Their mistake was not being more forthright and clear in their description of what they were doing; instead, they just kept repeating what they weren’t doing.

Beyond that, the Red Cross board ended up vilifying their CEO in public, which was a tremendous mistake, even though everyone I’ve talked to said she had her shortcomings as a leader. Still, she had a tremendously insightful approach to what was happening, and the way her resignation was handled was unfortunate, to say the least.

Finally, I think that rather than being positive in their response to criticism, Red Cross leaders were far too defensive and willing to offer unnecessary *mea culpas* throughout the immediate post-9/11 period. For example, the public flip-flop over using a portion of the Liberty Fund for other purposes, which ended up sounding like, “We’ve heard you, you’ve slapped our wrist and we understand that our wrist has been slapped, so we’re going to put all this money into 9/11 victims and 9/11 victims alone,” was not a particularly distinguished approach. And that’s too bad, because I think it was a teachable moment.

Of course, the crowning blow was to put [former Senate majority leader] George Mitchell, whose integrity is above question, in the role of “overseer,” which has such negative connotations, as opposed to giving him another title like senior advisor or chief for 9/11 programs — something, in other words, that would have kept the focus on what the Red Cross was actually doing with the money.

FC: Do you think public outrage over the Red Cross plan to divert a portion of its 9/11 contributions to other purposes was largely driven by the media?

PD: Yes, I do. The diversion story was greatly exaggerated by the media in general, in my view, and the board of the Red Cross overreacted in kind. First of all, the amount of money that would’ve been “diverted” was relatively small. Second, the word “diversion” itself is the wrong word, because the Red Cross had tried to head off that concern in its very first ad after the attacks by saying that money raised after 9/11 would help it respond to additional terrorist attacks, which most of us thought were on the way. To an extent, it’s the public’s fault that it didn’t get that subtlety. On the other hand, how could the public pick up such a nuanced message when it was buried in such a weak throwaway sentence? It should have been the first sentence, not the last. And finally, it took the Red Cross far too long to produce the actual “proof” that it had addressed the diversion issue in its early ads, that it was standard practice for the organization to roll over funds from one disaster to the next, and that it had been explaining that fact in all its ads from the beginning. The Red Cross didn’t really put the text of all its ads forward until the congressional hearing, and by then it was too late.

FC: Bernadine Healy’s resignation as president on October 26 was linked by the media to the diversion-of-funds story and also to her perceived unwillingness to cooperate with the effort, spearheaded initially by New York State attorney general Eliot Spitzer, to create a single database of 9/11 victims. Was that the whole story?

PD: Well, I wasn't privy to the conversations leading up to her resignation, so I'm as much of a victim of what I've read and heard as anybody. But from what I've been able to piece together, her resignation had a lot more to do with her relationship with her board and a number of strategic institutional blunders she made — namely, creating the Liberty Fund without clearing it with the board, even though she had the authority to do so. According to some accounts, she did touch base with a few board members, and they agreed that it was a good idea. But they backed away from that position under pressure from the media — and did so publicly, which was unfair to Healy.

It's also clear from accounts that have been published since then that there were lots of structural problems at the Red Cross. I've never spoken to Bernadine Healy, but I suspect one reason she decided to create a separate fund for 9/11 contributions was because she was afraid the money would be shared with local chapters, which had been standard operating procedure for the organization in previous disasters. And I'm pretty sure she had other ideas for how those chapter needs could be met and how the 9/11 funds should be spent. Look, not everyone who's responsible for running an organization tells the staff every single thing he or she has in mind at every single moment. Healy probably had a plan for how she was going to deal with the needs of the chapters over the long haul and how that related to the 9/11 contributions. I think if she'd been able to communicate that plan more effectively to her board and the public, it would have strengthened the organization in the long run and the Red Cross would be viewed as a hero today instead of having to run around with its tail tucked between its legs. The sad thing is, it was a hero; the public just doesn't know it.

FC: Why were other leaders in the sector reluctant to defend Healy and her organization?

PD: I don't know if they were ever asked to, so I can't speak to whether they were reluctant. But it did strike me as peculiar that there wasn't much of a defense or response on behalf of the Red Cross. I suppose these things have a kind of self-fulfilling aspect to them, in that if you re-read the early press coverage it's apparent that the Red Cross had a big communication problem on its hands. People who weren't party to the decisions being made at the organization were understandably reluctant to defend it without first-hand knowledge of how decisions were reached. To his credit, Josh Gotbaum, the president and CEO of the September 11th Fund, tried to defend the Red Cross in several television interviews. Unfortunately, the people who interviewed him weren't interested in hearing his defense of the Red Cross.

FC: Could the Red Cross have minimized the damage it suffered at the hands of the media if it had mounted a more proactive communications campaign?

PD: Yes. I think the Red Cross would be exponentially ahead of where it is today in terms of its reputation, its fundraising, and its image as a forward-looking organization equipped to handle the new kinds of disasters we're likely to face in the post-9/11 era if it had been more proactive and accessible on the communications front.

The sad thing is, the Red Cross was a hero; the public just doesn't know it.

The Red Cross would be exponentially ahead of where it is today in terms of its reputation, its fundraising, and its image if it had been more proactive and accessible on the communications front.

FC: Let's turn to the September 11th Fund. You argue in your report that the Fund was a victim of its trailblazing nature and ambition. In what way?

PD: Lorie Slutsky [president of the New York Community Trust] and Ralph Dickerson [then-president of the United Way of New York City] recognized right off the bat that they might have to play a sort of charitable relief role and spend some money on very short-term needs. But they also knew as experienced philanthropists that there would be long-term needs. They were trailblazers in that they created an organization that could be both an immediate responder to an unprecedented event as well as a long-term backstop for other needs that wouldn't become apparent for months — and certainly weren't apparent on September 12, the day the Fund was officially announced.

I think their ambition was extraordinary, because they knew immediately that, by virtue of the Fund's name and the sort of dual mission they had created for it, it would be a highly visible entity — the go-to fund, if you will. Now, perhaps they didn't fully appreciate the extent to which that would be the case and, in that sense, misjudged just how much the public expected from them. But when you're involved in fast-moving events, it's hard to think about everything.

FC: How did the name of the September 11th Fund complicate its task?

PD: Well, it seems so simple-minded, but if you think about selling yogurt or some trivial thing, you wouldn't want to have three or four different kinds of products with the same name. But because the Fund named itself after the day on which the attacks occurred, which made perfect sense, it was immediately confused with every single relief fund that was subsequently created, including the federal government's effort, which eventually was called the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund. As a result, the Fund became a victim of journalistic shorthand, in that every time you opened a paper and saw "September 11th Fund" in the headline, it was natural to think it was the September 11th Fund created by the New York Community Trust and the United Way, when, in fact, it often wasn't.

FC: Why was the telethon sponsored by the Fund in late September such a public relations nightmare?

PD: In that instance, you suddenly had two funds — the September 11th Fund and the September 11th Telethon Fund, on top of all the other funds with 9/11 in their name. At the same time, the Red Cross story was beginning to break and people were starting to think a lot of money was being raised but not much was being spent. All of which contributed to making the telethon effort a sitting duck. It was a timing issue more than anything. Yes, the telethon raised a significant amount of money, but it also raised the whole issue of who is and who isn't a victim. And when it comes to communications, the more you have to define your terms, the more likely it is that your communications effort is in trouble. I mean, you shouldn't have to constantly refer people to your Web site for an explanation of what it is you're doing.

Again, that was an instance where a little common sense might have gone a long way. I'm not saying the public is unable to handle complexity, but in an emergency situation simple is always better.

FC: A number of other negatives attached themselves to the Fund in the weeks after 9/11. Do you have a theory about why that happened?

PD: I think it was a chicken-and-egg situation. The media was already running with the Red Cross diversion story and was starting to develop the coordination story — you know, the fact that some families were having problems getting emergency assistance because the Red Cross and other agencies were unwilling, according to the media, to share client information with each other. But what was missing in much of the reporting was a sense of scale and proportion. I mean, here we were looking at between three and six thousand dead or missing, none of whom could be identified from their remains because there were no remains, and you had all this money floating around and all these needs to be met, and yes, it was inevitable that a few people, maybe even more than a few people, would slip through the cracks.

But again, if there had been a reminder to the public every few weeks or so that this is how much money has been raised and this is how much has been spent, the general public might have been much more understanding and patient. Because after the initial confusion, the operations at Pier 94, where the main disaster assistance center was located, did get better, and the overall system did become more responsive. And in the end, many of the people who had gone on television to say they had been missed were in fact helped — and in a significant way. In that respect, the media played a constructive role in helping people who had fallen through the cracks get the assistance they were entitled to. But there's no question in my mind that a handful of scandal-mongering television programs created the impression that there were a lot of people whose needs were going unmet or who were being given the runaround — and, to a large extent, that simply wasn't true.

FC: Executives of the September 11th Fund have argued that they *were* proactive in communicating with the media and public. But it doesn't seem to have been enough. What else might they have done to deflect the media criticism directed their way?

PD: Well, Lorie Slutsky herself told me that they issued a press release every single day for the first month or so after the attacks. But the traditional model of issuing a press release and having the press write it up just didn't work in that kind of fast-moving news environment. So I think we need another model. The press had so much to cover and write about that after the Fund issued its first press release, subsequent releases probably didn't seem to add much breaking news to the story. If I had been a reporter, I'd have been hard-pressed to figure out what to write about the Fund in those first few weeks, because the "news" coming out of it was about the creation of a new initiative, or another grant, or the naming of a new board member — the kinds of things you would expect to be going on. That's fine, but they probably could have done more to be truly visible earlier on.

For starters, they could have had a table, a physical presence down at Pier 94, where the victims' families were; I think that would have saved them a lot of headaches. The public and the media would have seen them every day on the job. I can understand that this might have seemed self-serving to some, as if the folks at the Fund were saying, "Look at us, look at what good work we're doing." But I would respectfully disagree. The fact that the September 11th Fund made these large grants, based on a handshake or telephone call, to organizations like

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Safe Horizon with the express purpose of moving money quickly *was* news. I mean, the press was criticizing the sector for having these ridiculously long application forms and making people jump through all sorts of hoops, and there was Lorie Slutsky on the phone with David Campbell from Safe Horizon saying, “Whatever you need, we’ll back it.” That extraordinary flexibility and decisiveness did not get reported. Of course, if it had been, the Fund probably would have been criticized for not establishing appropriate guidelines and accountability measures. Maybe they just couldn’t win in that situation.

FC: Are you suggesting that the news business is hooked on bad news and scandal?

PD: In my mind, the issue is not whether it’s good or bad news; it’s the shrinking news hole. I wouldn’t want to speculate on the number of profiles, features, or interesting angles that could have been written about the Red Cross and September 11th Fund. But if you look at the bigger media picture, the news hole is shrinking, and that’s why bad news wins out over good news. At the end of the day, people like to be shocked and titillated. News consumers are not innocent in this situation.

FC: In terms of the press, your report makes it clear that the coverage of the philanthropic response to 9/11 was driven to a large extent by the *New York Times*. Would the coverage of 9/11 have been different if New York had not been one of the cities attacked?

PD: The first thing I would say is that much of the *Times*’ coverage was truly excellent, and that it should not be lumped in with “the media,” and certainly not with the cable news outlets. On the other hand, I think if New York had not been attacked, overall there would have been far less coverage and follow up. Local or regionally focused papers might have been a bit more feature-oriented. You might have gotten a little more of the on-the-ground perspective — assuming, of course, that there were a couple of vibrant media outlets in whatever city happened to be attacked.

But it was no coincidence that 9/11 happened where it did, and it was kind of remarkable the degree to which the *Times* shaped the coverage in other papers.

FC: In today’s hyper-competitive media environment, is it possible for an individual, an organization, or an entire field, for that matter, to get a fair hearing once the media smells blood?

PD: That’s a good question. I think your earlier question about Bernadine Healy and the shared database, which I really didn’t answer, is relevant in this regard. Again, I wasn’t in the room, but when you read some accounts of what Healy actually told Eliot Spitzer after he approached her with the idea, you understand that she wasn’t opposed to the database per se, which is how the press reported it. She was concerned about the privacy rights of the victims’ families, which is a sacred principle at the Red Cross. But the press either chose not to report that angle or deliberately ignored it, or perhaps Healy herself told different things to different reporters. In any case, Spitzer’s interpretation — “The Red Cross isn’t interested in sharing client information with other relief agencies” — became the driving spin on the story. But surely somebody at the Red Cross could have gotten to a

reporter or editor and said, “Why aren’t you talking to us about this? Why is only Eliot Spitzer quoted in this story?”

However, once the press smells blood, as you put it, it’s very hard to get them off that aspect of a story. It’s just a bad position to be in. On the other hand, if you find yourself in that position, the first rule of communications is to be honest, be clear, and don’t hide behind jargon. You’re already in trouble if you’re in the apology mode, and you don’t want to make the situation worse by being coy or unclear.

FC: What, if anything, can public officials, private-sector leaders, and the general public do to hold the media accountable for erroneous and/or biased reporting?

PD: I’m not sure. I mean, should we really expect the public to know when a piece of reporting is biased? It’s not the public’s job, is it? But once a piece of reporting has been revealed to be biased or erroneous, the first thing people should do is write a letter to the editor. I’m a firm believer in letters to the editor, because they actually do get published and they are read — not least, by newspaper editors and owners.

On the other hand, complaining to reporters is a waste of time, because when you actually talk to reporters about the good news-bad news conflict, they tend to agree with almost everything we’ve said. They agree that the news hole is too small and shrinking, and at smaller papers they often say, “We don’t have enough time to do our work, we don’t have backup or departmental secretaries, it’s just us and our cellphones, et cetera.” It’s a whole lack of supporting infrastructure — in all our institutions, not just the field of journalism — and it results in too many people wearing too many hats, all the time, and that’s bad.

I think you could also argue that the growing conglomeration we see in the media business makes it harder to hold people and institutions accountable. I don’t think it’s a coincidence that all these recent scandals have happened on the heels of a wave of mergers within the media business. How can we really stay abreast of all the activities that occur under the umbrella of these giant media companies? They’re just too big. And that not only makes it very difficult for the media to police and critique itself, it also makes it difficult for the public to do so.

FC: Tom Seessel, who authored a report on the philanthropic response to 9/11 for the Ford Foundation, argued that media coverage of 9/11 often gave the erroneous impression that philanthropy should operate as a “frictionless conveyor belt moving money from donors to recipients.” If philanthropy in the wake of September 11 was not meant to be a conveyor belt between donor and recipient, what was it meant to be?

PD: Well, it’s not just the media that has that impression. Most people, if you sit and talk with them, think philanthropy is a conveyor belt, or should be — that it exists to write checks for good causes and everything else is superfluous. Having run a foundation, I know that if you really get grantees to talk to you, that’s what they think, too. They’d rather have the funds and not deal with the other stuff. I’m exaggerating slightly, but many grantees feel that the important intermediary role claimed by foundations is overstated and

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doesn't add value to their work. Quite frankly, I feel the same way at times. When I was president of the Joyce Foundation, I tried to think of us as a "yes" machine — exercising thoughtful review, of course — but I know that, from the other side of the table, foundations more often look like "no" machines.

Putting all that aside for the moment, however, I think it's fair to say that philanthropy was never meant to be a conveyor belt between private wealth and good causes. In my view, philanthropy is meant to maximize the public good — and not just while the individual donor or philanthropist is alive. That's a role that philanthropy continues to play, which is a good thing, because philanthropy is one of the few non-commercial, relatively neutral sectors left in our society. All of us in the field have to remember that and have to remember not to be defensive about the fact that philanthropy holds wealth, because that wealth is used to add value to society beyond specific dollar amounts, even if the public doesn't always appreciate our role. Now, I don't know what the field can do to get the public to be more appreciative of the role we play, other than to be more transparent and focused on our grantees. But at the end of the day, it's only the grantees — how strong they are, how effective they can be, et cetera — that matters.

FC: In the aftermath of 9/11, how effective was philanthropy in maximizing public dollars — that is, dollars contributed by the public? And did it do a better job, in that regard, than the public sector did with taxpayer dollars?

PD: As I wrote in my report, the innovation that the September 11th Fund introduced in the area of health care — basically, they took the usual, narrow, jobs-linked approach to health insurance and tossed it out the window — was revolutionary. And some of the grants I evaluated for the New York Times Company Foundation were superbly innovative. The creation of a top-notch mental health counseling service for uniformed personnel, no questions asked, or the idea of having the Legal Aid Society and Legal Services Corporation work together to provide pro bono legal services for anybody who thought they had a 9/11 claim — again, no questions asked — was terrific.

But I also think the public sector did a fantastic job with the public dollars that were available to it. Sure, some things went wrong, but if you look at the attacks and their aftermath in proper perspective, you'd have to say the public-sector response was comprehensive and great. I think it's important to recognize and acknowledge that. The response was far more than mere money could ever buy.

FC: You suggest in your report that one casualty of 9/11 was public confidence in charities and the philanthropic sector. Susan Berresford, president of the Ford Foundation, has argued that in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 public confidence in charities and the philanthropic sector soared and that the recent declines in the level of confidence are just a reversion to the norm. Is she on to something?

PD: Yes, perhaps, but I think it's important not to confuse public confidence with the public's need to believe. If the level of public confidence in our sector at the moment is

the norm, I don't think we should be happy or satisfied. I mean, maybe it's the norm for all institutions in our society at this particular juncture, but if it is, that should make us even less happy.

FC: What can those of us in the sector do to raise the level of confidence in our field?

PD: Well, for starters, there can never be enough stories put out about grantees and what they've done and have learned from 9/11. Lessons are coming out every day about how to deliver services more effectively, how to streamline and eliminate things that seemed necessary but aren't — there's a lot of operational adaptation going on that came directly out of 9/11.

I know there's a school of thought out there that believes we should put 9/11 behind us, people are tired of it, let's dissolve the 9/11 work groups and move on. But I think that would be a mistake. Instead, I think we need an ongoing post-9/11 task force that would come together every couple of months under the umbrella of the Council of Foundations, perhaps, to talk about recent developments and continue to try to tell the story of what happened in the aftermath of 9/11. That's why this Foundation Center effort is so important — the public may simply never know the extent to which its donations to 9/11 charities were well used and good purposes were served by the tax-exempt status of foundations.

FC: Do you think 9/11 created an expectation among the public that philanthropy can and should be more responsive in times of emergency?

PD: Well, I think this goes back to your very first question. I don't think the public knows anything about the difference between charity, philanthropy, and emergency assistance. And maybe they shouldn't. But I think we've missed an opportunity to explain to the public how philanthropy differs from charity and emergency assistance — that while foundations are there to backstop the emergency responders and fill in gaps in the provision of services, you can't expect foundations to play the role of emergency responder. It's not what they do; they're not fast-moving entities. Which maybe leads to the next question: Well, why aren't they?

And that's where we're stuck. Why isn't philanthropy a conveyor belt? And why do we need philanthropy if it's not going to function as one? I hate to say it, but those are the kinds of questions you hear all the time from the public. I even quoted someone from the September 11th Fund who said she felt that reporters, in their questioning of her, were sort of reflecting this latent antipathy that the public has for philanthropy. In fact, I'll go out on a limb and say most people in the field know ten people who are just as happy to complain about philanthropy as they are to praise it.

But here's where I think we could do a better job of working with reporters. We need to find better ways of linking grantmakers with their grants in the mind of the media. Maybe it's just a matter of more education with reporters one-on-one. And maybe

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The nonprofit sector should be taking the lead in redefining homeland security. . . .

there's a way to encourage editors and publishers to do an occasional feature about a foundation or the people who work in foundations — we don't see enough of that, either. You know, there are lots of fascinating people in philanthropy who don't get profiled — in part, I think, because foundations don't encourage their personnel to get out front; they want to keep the focus on their grantees. As a result, it becomes a sort of self-fulfilling prophecy — philanthropy prefers to stay in the background, but when there's an emergency the general public doesn't truly understand what philanthropy does. Perhaps we should try to bring more attention to program officers, who often have a very vivid perspective on individual grants and grantees and how they come to recommend grants to foundation leaders and boards.

FC: As we sit here this morning in a conference room in New York City, the Department of Homeland security has raised the terror alert to code orange, there are police officers on subway platforms and National Guardsmen at bridges and public monuments. You argue in your report that in this new era of homeland security, it behooves us to reconsider the relationship between various sectors of society, including the media. What is the role of the nonprofit sector in terms of homeland security?

PD: Well, I would go further and say that the nonprofit sector should be taking the lead in redefining homeland security. Homeland security has two very distinct aspects. One has to do with civil defense and military preparedness. The second aspect involves the broader security of society and individuals. What we saw after 9/11 was that the nonprofit sector has a vital role to play on both fronts. While the nonprofit sector surely should not be expected to become a civil defense force, many nonprofit organizations were able to retool themselves overnight to provide a first-line response. And as time went on, it was strikingly obvious that nonprofit organizations, supported by emergency 9/11 grants and funds, were the critical players in terms of trying to deal with the ripple effects caused by the attacks.

So I think we need to rethink the very definition of security in the post-9/11 era. Security can mean a lot of things, including economic security, health security, and so on. The nonprofit sector, along with government, is a key provider of that kind of security. If nothing else, 9/11 showed us how quickly any of us can become victims and suddenly be faced with a whole new set of circumstances. Therefore, it's up to the nonprofit sector to really articulate how these ongoing needs relate to future emergency preparedness and to ensure that the social safety net remains in good repair.

FC: You've alluded to it throughout our conversation, but I wonder if you could say a few words about why it's important for us to examine the nexus of charity, philanthropy, and the media in the aftermath of 9/11?

PD: Well, I go back to an earlier point, which is that the only thing that makes a democracy work is an informed public, and the philanthropic sector is one of the few remaining non-commercialized venues for information left in this country. If the media

continues to treat philanthropy in a way that ignores or diminishes its unique role in our society and the public loses faith in the sector, then we will have a hard time holding onto our credibility and our democracy will suffer as a consequence.

FC: Well, thank you, Paula, for taking the time to speak with us this morning.

PD: Thank you.

Mitch Nauffts, *Philanthropy News Digest's* editorial director, interviewed Paula DiPerna in May 2003.

Coordinating Service Delivery to Victims of the World Trade Center Attack

In the wake of the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center, efforts to coordinate the charitable response in New York quickly became embroiled in controversy, as New York State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer and Mayor Rudolph Giuliani clashed over who would control the database at the heart of the effort and the Red Cross, the largest and most important of the emergency-relief responders, hesitated about whether it should even participate.

Almost as quickly as it blew up, however, the controversy was put to rest, as both Spitzer and Giuliani backed away from their demands and the Red Cross, having been assured that confidential client information would not be compromised, agreed to be part of the effort then taking shape under the umbrella of a new entity, the 9/11 United Services Group.

STEPHEN SOLENDER
CEO
9/11 UNITED SERVICES GROUP



In April, *Philanthropy News Digest* spoke with Stephen Solender, president of USG, about the organization's efforts to coordinate services to direct and indirect victims of the Trade Center attack, lessons learned by the nonprofit sector in the wake of 9/11, and what he and his colleagues are doing to improve the coordination of second-response systems — in New York and around the country — in the event of future terrorist attacks.

Prior to his appointment as CEO of USG, Solender had a prestigious career in social services in New York City and nationwide. Currently president emeritus of United Jewish Communities, he served from 1986–1999 as executive vice president of the United Jewish Appeal-Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York and also held executive positions at the Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore for eleven years.

Mr. Solender sits on the boards of numerous nonprofit organizations and schools, including the Nonprofit Chief Executive Forum, and is currently chairman of the President's Advisory Council of North General Hospital in Harlem. From 1987 to 1990, he was founding chairman of the Human Services Council of New York, an umbrella organization of the city's human service delivery agencies.

He received his B.A. degree from Columbia University and an M.S. from the Columbia University School of Social Work.

Foundation Center: USG was created in December 2001 to enhance the coordination of services to direct victims of the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center. Who were the major players responsible for its creation?

Stephen Solender: The main players were the September 11th Fund, the New York Community Trust, the United Way of New York, the New York chapter of the Red Cross, Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York, Safe Horizon, and the Salvation Army.

FC: Did the New York State attorney general's office play a role in its creation?

SS: Yes. The attorney general was well aware that a large sum of money had been raised — roughly \$750 million at that point — for the victims of 9/11 and was worried about oversight. USG was formed, to a great extent, to make the point that the nonprofit sector had the capacity to manage those funds in a fiduciarily responsible fashion, and it's my opinion that we have discharged that responsibility admirably. As a matter of fact, we've kept Attorney General Spitzer apprised as we've been going along, and he's absolutely thrilled that it has worked out as well as it has. It's a real example, in my opinion, of the public sector saying to the private sector, "You have a major responsibility to the public," and the private sector coming together in a very responsible fashion and meeting that challenge.

FC: What were the primary activities of the organization in the first few months of its existence?

SS: There were a number. One was to make data about families of the direct victims available to our member agencies in a client-sensitive way. The more fundamental responsibility, however, was to coordinate services to the victims' families in a professionally responsible fashion. I think the whole concept of service coordinators is extraordinary. They were made available to families to help them understand what kind of help they needed and how to access the agencies in the system, so that they got help as quickly and efficiently as possible.

FC: What kind of services are we talking about?

SS: Oh, everything from financial assistance, to psychiatric counseling, to assistance in finding jobs. The coordinators were also there to be supportive, in a general sense. We forget now, but people needed to talk; they needed someone who was sympathetic to listen to their stories and help them think through their next steps.

FC: Did the organization encounter any obstacles in those first few months?

SS: I've been involved in the human service system for forty-three years — most of those in New York — and I've never experienced a higher degree of cooperation. Even now, the degree of cooperation that developed among our member agencies is amazing to me. I was the founding chair of the Human Service Council in New York — that's a coordinating body for all the nonprofit human service agencies in the city — so I've been watching the nonprofit system here for many, many years. But during the years I was associated with the Council, even the Council never achieved this degree of collaboration, and I think that that's one of our major accomplishments. Yes, it took some time for us to begin to work together, and it also took some time for the staff here to get to know their responsibilities. But what I find so interesting is how little time it took everybody to get going. I think that was because the magnitude of the tragedy was so great that people were really motivated to move quickly and organizational barriers came down much more rapidly than they would have under other circumstances.

FC: When did USG start coordinating services for victims' families?

SS: We were up and running by early December of '01 and were coordinating services soon after that.

FC: When did the database become fully operational?

SS: Within a couple months. One of the interesting things about the USG DataMart is that it was a partnership involving not only all the nonprofit human service systems in New York but also corporate America. By that I mean we couldn't have gotten it up and running as quickly as we did without pro bono assistance from IBM — it was amazing the way they moved in here and got things running — and McKinsey & Company, which lent us some of their management consultants, as well as Morgan Stanley and Goldman Sachs, both of which made several full-time people available to us on a pro bono basis. That only skims the surface of the pro bono and discounted services USG has received from various corporate partners. It really has been a remarkable partnership.

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There was never resistance at a fundamental level to the idea of sharing data; the question was how to do it responsibly, and we continue to work on that.

FC: Was your work in those early months hampered by the initial reluctance of the Red Cross to share client information with other relief agencies?

SS: Not at all. In fact, the Red Cross of New York was the major driver in the formation of USG. They saw the need for coordination, and if it hadn't been for their leadership, USG would not have been successful. The fact that they're the major first-response agency in the metropolitan area and that Bob Bender, their president, took such an interest in USG are the main reasons why our efforts were so successful, so quickly.

What often gets lost in discussions about the Red Cross is that while all these organizational issues were being dealt with, they were there on the front lines, from day one, providing incredibly important services to the victims and their families. Sure, they had to make adjustments, and one of those was how to coordinate the data they were obtaining from victims' families with the data that other agencies were obtaining while respecting the confidentiality of their clients' information. Everyone wanted to respect the confidentiality of their clients' information; that was a very important issue. So some of the concerns in the aftermath of the tragedy were not so much around whether we should coordinate, but how to do so in a way that would protect sensitive personal client information so that it wasn't made public in an inappropriate fashion. There was never resistance at a fundamental level to the idea of sharing data; the question was how to do it responsibly, and we continue to work on that. The last thing anyone wants is not to be sensitive to a client's privacy — there are legal reasons, obviously, but also professional reasons. What the Red Cross was saying to us from the beginning was, "Look, we want to cooperate, but how do we do it in a way that will meet privacy standards?"

FC: When did you join USG?

SS: I came aboard in November of 2002 and was blessed to have inherited an organization that had had remarkable leadership under Bob Hurst. What impressed me most was how much had been accomplished that first year.

FC: When did the organization begin to broaden its focus beyond database and confidentiality issues to include the longer-term needs of indirect victims?

SS: Let me correct an assumption in your question: We were not just involved in data collection issues early on; we were also involved in coordinating service. In fact, USG has five functions, and I think it might be useful for me to review them. One is the whole area of service coordination. The second is communications. Under the leadership of our information portal team, we regularly send out a newsletter to eighty thousand households around the United States that have been affected by 9/11. We also provide various online tools, including our public Web site and our recently launched September 11th Assistance Guide, that enable individuals to access the latest program information relating to their specific needs. Third, we're involved in advocacy. Yesterday, for example, we had our monthly meeting of our Advisory Council — fourteen people who represent a range of communities affected by the WTC attacks, including some of the victims' families. Those meetings are designed to help us better understand what individuals' evolving needs are so

that we can advocate on their behalf. Fourth, we're involved in developmental technology. And, last but not least, we focus on developing a framework to deal with future disasters.

So we have five functions, and the first four I mentioned were going full speed from virtually our first day of operation. But as the first year came to a close, we began to see that we had a responsibility to take our experience and do two things with it. One was to set up a mechanism that could be adapted quickly and put into play if and when New York is faced with another disaster of this magnitude. And two, we wanted to explore how we could work with FEMA [the Federal Emergency Management Agency] and the Department of Homeland Security as they develop a national approach to disaster response in the event of future terrorist attacks.

FC: Let's talk about that mechanism. At this point, what does it look like?

SS: Let me talk about New York first. One of the things we're committed to is making sure that USG does not become a permanent organization. One of the important messages we want to send to the public is that we know when to start and we know when to stop. So we plan to sunset the organization by the end of 2004 — assuming that there are no further attacks. By that point we will have helped our member agencies to absorb the various functions we're now engaged in, and it's even possible that staff who have developed expertise in those areas might go with the function to a member agency so that the agency has the benefit of their expertise.

We also plan to create what we're calling a shell — a framework that would keep USG intact organizationally, but without a staff or a budget. It would be something that could be activated very quickly in the wake of a disaster, and the executive committee or officers would meet periodically to touch base. What's complicated about this is that we don't know what the next disaster is going to look like. It could be similar to what happened at the World Trade Center; it could be a biological attack that affects tens of thousands, rather than thousands, of people; or it could be a variation on a theme we haven't even imagined. So we're trying to create a mechanism that brings the right leadership together to evaluate the crisis, whatever it might be, and make important decisions. Question number one would be, Is this organization — meaning USG — necessary? Maybe the established first- and second-response agencies could handle it without a USG-type operation, in which case the organization wouldn't be activated. On the other hand, if there were indications that an organization like USG was needed, the question then would be, What form should it take?

We're also developing a memorandum of understanding with the Office of Emergency Management in New York City so that we can be coordinated with the city's services right from the beginning. As a matter of fact, part of that memorandum will guarantee that we have a desk in the Office of Emergency Management, ensuring that the partnership between the public and private sectors will be as effective as possible from day one.

Nationally, we're trying to do a couple of things. First, we think there are three important disaster-response models that have evolved over the last ten years. One is the Oklahoma

We plan to create a framework that would keep USG intact organizationally, without a staff or budget . . . something that could be activated very quickly.

In addition to a first-response system . . . there also needs to be a highly developed second-response system that deals with human service needs.

City model, the second is the New York-USG model, and the third is the Washington, D.C., model. What we're recommending is that the appropriate national organization — maybe it's the Department of Homeland Security, or NVOAD [National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster], or the Red Cross, or the Salvation Army, or some combination of these groups — convene regional seminars around the country to which public and private officials from various municipalities would be invited and asked to review the three models, with an eye to adapting one of them to their own local circumstances. One of the important messages we're trying to convey nationally is that in addition to a first-response system — the Red Cross and Salvation Army and Homeland Security and FEMA — there also needs to be a highly developed second-response system that deals with human service needs. We want to encourage Homeland Security to see it as a very important part of their program, and we'd also like to encourage other municipalities to develop them.

FC: Can you outline the differences between the three models? How did the human services response differ in the case of Oklahoma City, New York, and Washington, D.C.?

SS: In the first place, the scope of the disaster was much greater in New York than in Oklahoma City or Washington. Nobody else had that many victims; nobody else had to deal with three thousand deaths. In addition, nobody had to face the complex jurisdictional issues that New York did — I mean, you're talking about Long Island, Westchester, New Jersey, southern Connecticut, and the five boroughs. You're also talking about forty, fifty countries being involved. So the model here had to be sensitive to the scope of the disaster and the complexity of the environment in which it happened. In D.C., where many of the victims were Department of Defense employees, the government played a much greater role. It was a very different kind of a situation, and what the volunteer system had to do there was to respond to the families of the victims who were not Department of Defense employees — a smaller, more defined universe. I'm not that familiar with Oklahoma City, so I can't really comment on that model.

FC: Since 9/11, there have been calls from many quarters for the creation of a sort of unified communications bureau that would speak for the nonprofit sector in New York in the event of a future crisis. Do you agree that the nonprofit/philanthropic community needs something like that? And is it a role USG could play between now and the end of 2004?

SS: Well, you might have seen the recent ad that USG and several other organizations ran in the *New York Times*. One of the interesting things about it was the fact that our Web site was the site that everyone involved with the ad agreed should be mentioned. Obviously I'm a little biased, but I think it's evident that we've developed considerable expertise in communicating vital information through numerous online and offline channels in an accessible way, and I would hope that in the event of a future disaster our communication tools could continue to provide that kind of information in a timely fashion.

Having said that, I would have to say that, given the incredible diversity and complexity of New York, I really can't envision a future disaster scenario in which the city wouldn't have its own communications mechanism to brief people. And there probably would need to be

distinctions between first- and second-response mechanisms — the Red Cross has some very important communication mechanisms, for example, as do the Salvation Army and Safe Horizon. So I think what we're talking about is a series of different mechanisms, some focused on the first-response, some focused on the second-response human service needs, and the human service needs being subdivided into different areas. In other words, I think you could expect to have several different voices.

FC: The USG Web site emphasizes the organization's efforts to meet the needs of 9/11 victims "compassionately and efficiently." I thought that was an interesting phrase. What does it mean to you?

SS: Well, that's really our vision; it expresses the value system behind everything we do here. We want to be as client-sensitive as possible. These are people who have experienced terrible, terrible trauma, and they deserve to be treated in a way that is responsive and caring. That's why everything we do here, from our Web site to the newsletter to the training of our service coordinators and case managers, is designed to help people in a way that takes into consideration the trauma they've experienced.

FC: How many people are you currently helping?

SS: We have about a hundred and ninety service coordinators, and there are roughly seven thousand people involved with those coordinators. Those are the people who need sustained help. But there are many, many other people who are getting sporadic help on an as-need basis.

FC: Can you give us a few examples of the kind of assistance you provide?

SS: Some of it is psychiatric. Some of it is focused on helping people find employment. Some of it is focused on their children, who are especially vulnerable. And some of it is focused on specific problems they may be having. We help many people who have been stable for a long period of time and then are suddenly destabilized by a particular event, whether it's a death in the family, or the trauma of a terrorist attack in another country, or some other event. For example, some family members who had managed quite well in the first six or eight months were very negatively affected when they went to the first anniversary celebration at ground zero on September 11, 2002 — the trauma, the grief, it all came back to them. So there are different triggers for different people, and we do our best to help them through the agency systems if and when they need it.

FC: Was the war in Iraq a trigger for some of your clients?

SS: Absolutely. As is the threat of another terrorist attack. Every time the terror alert is raised, we see an increase in the demand for our services.

FC: Do you expect the number of people using your services to increase, decrease, or remain the same over the next twelve to eighteen months?

SS: That's a good question. As you probably know, the folks in Oklahoma City carried a very significant caseload for six years after the bombing of the Murrah Building. So I think

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Because our society is facing so many different challenges . . . there's a tendency for the public to say, "Okay, that's over; let's move on. . . ."

we can expect there to be a significant caseload in New York as well. Whether it goes up or down over the next year and a half depends to a large degree on external circumstances. However, I think we all need to remember that the fallout from 9/11 didn't end after a year. As a matter of fact, I think it's a major issue for the country. Unfortunately, because our society is facing so many different challenges at the moment, there's a tendency for the public to say, "Okay, that's over; let's move on to the next emergency." But for many family members, year two is proving to be even harder than year one. In year one, the families of the victims were mobilized, neighbors were mobilized, business associates were mobilized, society was mobilized. In year two, in contrast, family members are still experiencing trauma but for everyone else it's business as usual. As a result, we're seeing a certain amount of pathology that's worse than what we saw in year one. For example, school systems are reporting that, in many cases, children of the victims are expressing more hostility in year two. So one of the important responsibilities we have is to alert the public to the fact that, for many people, the pain continues. In fact, we've been talking with several newspapers about how to commemorate the second anniversary in a way that will remind the public of that fact.

FC: Tell us a bit about the DataMart.

SS: The DataMart has information on approximately eighty-three thousand victims of 9/11 who have received services of one kind or another. Essentially it's a reference tool for our service coordinators that enables them to know with a fair degree of precision, even if it's the first time they've sat down with a client, what type of help a client has received, what their experience has been, and what sort of help they might still need. It really enhances the manner in which our service coordinators work with clients because, among other things, they don't have to ask clients the same questions over and over again — a process that can re-traumatize them. It also will probably serve as a sort of historical record going forward, allowing people in a very tangible way to look back and actually see what was done to help the victims of 9/11.

Of course, the client has to consent to the sharing of the information. Again, that theme — respect for the client — runs through everything we do. We want to respect them from the standpoint of being sensitive to their needs as well as appreciating the fact that they've given us confidential information. The last thing in the world we want is to have clients feel that their personal information is being made public in an inappropriate way.

FC: Will you hand it off to another organization as you prepare to close your doors in '04?

SS: Yes. We'll be talking with various agencies in our system and fully expect that one of them will assume the responsibility for maintaining it.

FC: Do you have other initiatives under way that we haven't touched on?

SS: Well, we're working very hard with the national offices of the Red Cross, the Salvation Army, and the United Way to come up with a list of the kinds of data they would need to have included on a common intake form. If we can achieve that objective, it would mean that in future disasters families would be able to fill out a single form that would give them

access to the entire private-sector emergency-relief system. In my dreams — I still dream a little bit, although it gets harder and harder as the years go by — we might even get to the point where the form is accepted by public-sector agencies. So we're working on the first step, agreeing on the common data, and we hope that will eventually lead to acceptance of a single intake form by the entire private nonprofit sector.

That same group is working on developing the technology to move client information to the appropriate agencies based on a client's request. And we have a third team working on the legal aspects of all this so that we don't violate any of the confidentiality agreements we're all subject to. It's a very important initiative.

We're also very interested in learning how to communicate better with the public in anticipation of future disasters. In fact, I've spent a good deal of time recently talking about the subject with various consultants, and although it's really still in the discussion phase there might be some kind of seminar in the not-too-distant future involving various service agency heads, reporters, editors, and publishers to talk about lessons learned from 9/11 and Oklahoma City. The next time, I think it's critical that we do a better job of communicating with the public.

FC: Care to give us a preview of some those lessons?

SS: Well, I think we probably need to spend money on public information ads from the beginning — ads that explain how to access our services, the guidelines people need to follow, how contributions are being used, and so on. We need to make ourselves much more consumer-friendly from the start. Obviously, there was confusion after 9/11 with regard to the Red Cross situation. As a lifelong fundraiser, I can say with some authority that the best thing to do in a situation like that is to fully disclose up front so that everyone, donors included, knows how their dollars are going to be used.

The other thing is more complicated. There are very few reporters who specialize in the nonprofit human service area, and it's a very complicated area. So what happens when a 9/11 hits is that they get parachuted in, they're on deadline, and they don't really understand the sector, all of which makes it's natural for them to grab hold of the issue of the day and to write about it without fully understanding the context. To combat that, we're trying to develop relationships with reporters and editors who might be covering these kinds of stories in the future as a way of getting to know each other better, to establish mutual trust, and to ensure that there will be journalists who understand our sector and can provide some of that context.

FC: Speaking of next time, is the nonprofit sector in New York better prepared to respond to a future terrorist attack than it was on September 10, 2001?

SS: Yes. We are blessed with an amazing network of human services agencies in New York. And while it's important to remember that what USG did after 9/11 was to help that network adjust to the crisis and focus on the specific needs that the events of that day required, we also need to recognize that if we hadn't had such a strong system already in place, we would have been in real trouble. I mean, there's no way we could have created

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The key word is adaptation. . . . Everybody's going to do their own thing; that's just the way it is.

that system on September 12. It's a tribute, really, to the hundreds of thousands of donors over the years who have supported the systems, and the thousands of volunteer leaders who have worked with professionals to develop the systems, and the countless volunteers who have worked in the systems.

FC: Is there a cautionary note in that for communities that might not have been as farsighted and generous as New York in creating their own human services networks?

SS: Well, I wouldn't recommend to anybody that they take our system and adopt it as is. The key word here is adaptation. I do a lot of consulting around the country and I am acutely aware of local differences. Everybody's going to do their own thing; that's just the way it is. Obviously, large municipalities such as Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Atlanta, Boston, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh already have very sophisticated human services networks in place, which may not be the case when you go into smaller communities. But the important point to remember is that even though everybody does it differently, it helps to have a couple of different models to look at and some benchmarks to work from.

FC: It's relatively early in the game, but do you think the Department of Homeland Security will be a good partner in the efforts you've described?

SS: I hope so. We want to reach out to the department and develop as strong and effective a partnership with it as possible. I appreciate the fact that the department is only a few months old, and that they've had to reorganize while remaining focused on potential crises of enormous magnitude — I'm very respectful of that. But I do hope that over the next three to four months we can begin to work with them on developing a human services-focused second-response system that will be ready to go should there be a next time.

FC: Looking ahead, what is your ambition for USG?

SS: There are a couple of things. First, I want us to continue to provide the kind of sensitive, high-quality services to our clients as we have been. Second, I want us to develop a responsible plan for the transfer of those services to the right agencies at the right time. Third, I want to be certain that we leave behind a mechanism that can be activated quickly and efficiently in the event of a future disaster or attack. Fourth, I want to communicate to the public the message that they should feel very proud of what's been created here and can be assured that their philanthropic dollars were used in a responsible fashion. And fifth, I want to pay tribute to the people who have worked at USG. It's a remarkable group of professionals who have provided an invaluable service.

FC: Well, Stephen, thank you for you speaking with us this morning.

SS: Thank you. It was my pleasure.

Mitch Nauffts, *Philanthropy News Digest's* editorial director, interviewed Stephen Solender in April 2003.

Meeting the Long-Term Needs of Individuals, Families, and Communities

The story is familiar to most everyone by now: New York Community Trust president Lorie Slutsky and Ralph Dickerson, president of the United Way of New York City, agree on the afternoon of September 11, 2001, to create a fund in response to the morning's devastating attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. The September 11th Fund, as it's called, will leverage their organizations' respective strengths — the Trust's experience with fund management and connections with the New York philanthropic community; the United Way's fundraising infrastructure and deep knowledge of local social-service agencies — to meet the needs, direct and indirect, of individuals, families, and communities affected by 9/11.

The Fund receives its first \$1 million donation — from the Williams Companies, a Tulsa-based gas exploration company — the following day and okays its first grant, to Safe Horizon, a provider of victim assistance and violence prevention services, within the week. By the end of October it has received nearly

CAROL KELLERMANN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CEO
THE SEPTEMBER 11TH FUND



About seventy percent to seventy-five percent [of the total contributed to the Fund] came from foundations and corporations and the rest was from individuals.

\$340 million in pledges and donations, on its way to raising more than \$500 million, and, under the leadership of Joshua Gotbaum, has made dozens of emergency grants to disaster relief agencies, while taking the first steps to coordinate assistance to address longer-term needs — an effort that leads to the announcement, in July 2002, of the Fund’s Ongoing Recovery Program.

In April, *Philanthropy News Digest* spoke with Carol Kellermann, Gotbaum’s successor as CEO of the Fund, about its continuing efforts to address long-term needs created by 9/11, the mechanisms the Fund has created to monitor the effectiveness of its programs, coordination among relief agencies and service providers in the wake of attacks, and the lingering effects of 9/11 on New York and New Yorkers.

Kellermann was appointed executive director and CEO of the September 11th Fund on October 7, 2002. In that position, she is responsible for managing the organization and its staff, as well as monitoring and creating grant programs with the roughly \$100 million remaining in the Fund to meet the ongoing needs of individuals, families, and communities affected by 9/11.

Ms. Kellermann has served in leadership positions in government and the nonprofit sector since the early 1980s. Immediately prior to joining the Fund, she was president of Learning Leaders, Inc., the oldest school volunteer program in the country, and before that was a principal at Podesta Associates, a leading government and public affairs consultancy. In addition, she acted as chief of staff for Congressman (now Senator) Charles E. Schumer; was executive director of the Leonard N. Stern Foundation; and served in various positions for the City of New York in the areas of finance, the homeless, child welfare, and housing.

A graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Law School, she serves on the boards of Homes for the Homeless and the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute and is a member of Planned Parenthood of New York City’s Council of Advocates.

Foundation Center: Carol, you joined the September 11th Fund on October 7, 2002, succeeding Josh Gotbaum. Were you working in the nonprofit sector at the time of your appointment?

Carol Kellermann: Yes, I was. At the time I was executive director of Learning Leaders, a citywide school volunteer program here in New York, and had been in that position for four and a half years. I’ve spent most of my career — all of my career, actually — in various kinds of nonprofit, public service, and government activities.

FC: The September 11th Fund received approximately \$425 million in contributions in the four months between September 12, 2001, and January 16, 2002, the day it was closed to contributions, and another \$80 million or so by the first anniversary of the attacks. What percentage of that amount came from foundations and corporations and what percentage was contributed by individuals?

CK: About seventy percent to seventy-five percent came from foundations and corporations and the rest was from individuals. Lots of individuals. We received over two million donations from individuals.

FC: How much of the roughly \$510 million raised by the Fund came from the Tribute to Heroes telethon held on September 21, 2001?

CK: About \$125 million. That was the source of most of the individual donations.

FC: And how much of the \$510 million ultimately raised had been awarded by the time you came aboard in October of '02?

CK: About \$350 million. It's up to about \$410 million now.

FC: Which areas of need received the largest percentage of those funds?

CK: The largest percentage went to cash assistance. We gave a bit more than \$250 million in cash assistance. The rest was and continues to be spent in the other areas of need.

FC: And they are?

CK: The needs were — and continue to be — related to mental health, employment assistance, health insurance, legal and financial advice, and assistance for youth, small business, and nonprofit organizations.

FC: Were you given specific directions by the Fund's board regarding the disbursement of the remaining funds?

CK: The areas of need had already been established or outlined by the board by the time I arrived. But, of course, part of what the board wanted me to do was to make my own assessment of what they had done and how things had changed. So I did, and it turns out they had done a pretty spectacular job in identifying a comprehensive list of needs and activities that were designed to address the medium- and longer-term effects of the disaster. At the time, I thought it was an excellent list, and we continue to fund in all the areas the board laid out because there's still need in all those areas.

FC: The Fund launched its Ongoing Recovery Program in September 2002. Did you change the way you operate as you moved into the Ongoing Recovery phase?

CK: We did. The first year, we operated in much more of an emergency mode. By that, I mean there was a lot of effort devoted to rescue and recovery, to reimbursing organizations for losses they had suffered, to paying for the cost of meals provided to recovery workers, and to just dealing with emergency needs as they were presented to us. Since we've launched the Ongoing Recovery Program, however, we've been much more involved in the management of these programs and in working with our grantees to ensure that people's needs are met. We're also much more involved in monitoring and evaluating grants. Because the initial periods for many of the grants we made in the first year have expired or are about to expire, we're looking at reports that grantees have submitted, visiting grantees to see how things are going, and making decisions about which programs should be

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extended and which ones could be wrapped up. So, again, we're in much more of a monitoring and assessment phase than the reactive mode we were in, of necessity, for much of the first year.

FC: Service coordination is a large component of the Ongoing Recovery Program. How does that work?

CK: The September 11th Fund is funding over two hundred full- and part-time service coordinators through different social service agencies around the city. The coordinators work with the families of people who were killed or injured in the World Trade Center disaster; they work with people whose livelihood was adversely affected because they worked south of Canal Street and either lost their jobs or a significant portion of the income they were earning before September 11; they work with small business owners and nonprofit organizations in the area. In addition, there are an array of social-service agencies in the city that have large complements of caseworkers on staff, which means that other people who may have been affected by September 11 in a less direct way are being helped. But we're funding service coordinators to work directly with the Ongoing Recovery-eligible people. You know, lots of people are having problems related to housing, or are having difficulty learning about and signing up for programs, or need counseling, and service coordinators are a way for them to stay up-to-date with the programs that are available to them as well as changes in those programs. The coordinators help people figure out what their options are, they help them navigate the often-confusing array of agencies and acronyms, they deal with paperwork.

FC: How many people have asked for a service coordinator?

CK: About ten thousand so far.

FC: Is the effort separate from the service-coordination effort of the 9/11 United Services Group?

CK: No. USG was created as the result of a discussion between Eliot Spitzer, the attorney general of New York, and Josh Gotbaum, my predecessor, and we're the biggest funder of their effort. We also fund organizations that provide services directly. But in those cases, one of the conditions of their funding is that they become a member of USG. USG, in turn, has certain standards in terms of case management that they hold their members to. The most important requirement is that all case managers use the common database created by USG, so that everybody involved in the recovery effort can coordinate their services and make sure people are getting the things they need.

FC: Tell us about the Fund's health-care assistance program? Is it an open-ended benefit?

CK: It's an insurance program, and an unusual one at that. The program provides one year of free health insurance to people who worked in the World Trade Center area and lost their jobs and health insurance — or the wherewithal to purchase insurance — as a result of 9/11. We have relationships with a range of organizations that provide different types of services, including some neighborhood-based clinics, an HMO, and an organization that

will subsidize your COBRA payments if you're able to continue with insurance provided through your employer. So it provides a degree of choice for people, and we pay the premiums for up to a year.

FC: Is there an application cutoff date for the program?

CK: No, not yet. There are twelve thousand people in the program at the moment, and as with all of our programs, we're continually monitoring how much money we're spending and trying to project when we'll need to close the program. I think it's important to note that this is the first time many of these things have been done and there's really no model to follow in terms of enrollment patterns. [Editor's note: Since this interview was conducted, the Fund has announced that January 31, 2004, will be the cutoff date for enrollment in its Employment Assistance and Health Care programs.]

FC: The Fund supported a good many after-school programs during the 2001–2002 school year. Why was it important to do so?

CK: We felt they were an important part of the recovery process for kids, that kids needed places where they could relax and be themselves under the supervision of caring adults. We thought it was especially important for kids who went to school in the Trade Center area and were forced to evacuate their school buildings on the morning of the eleventh. In many cases, those kids suffered terribly because of things they saw or heard. So having good programs for kids after school really was a form of therapy, not to mention a way to contribute to the overall health of the community.

FC: The Fund also is supporting a sizeable mental health benefit for people affected by 9/11. How is that benefit being offered?

CK: Through the Mental Health Association of New York City. It's very much like our health insurance program, in that you can go to the mental health provider of your choice — whether it's a social worker or a licensed therapist — and the program will reimburse your expenses up to \$3,000. It also covers medication and certain in-patient treatment expenses not covered by most insurance policies. The person receiving the benefit can submit a reimbursement form, or ask their health provider to bill us directly.

We also have a large program to train mental health professionals and other folks — early childhood providers, pediatricians, clergy members, and so on — who are most likely to encounter people suffering post-traumatic stress. Our goal is to train six thousand people in the helping professions over the next year or so.

FC: Is the demand for mental health services in affected communities rising or falling?

CK: Actually, it's been pretty stable. A lot of people talked about the experience of the folks in Oklahoma City, where there was a big spike in demand for mental health-related services at eighteen months. We haven't seen that. What we have seen is that certain events — the raising of the terror threat advisory to orange, the war in Iraq — are contributing to people's anxieties and nervousness about their personal security, particularly here in New

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We're trying to help people quickly, and we expect to spend the rest of the money quickly.

York. Those kinds of things compound the problem for many people, particularly those who had a terrible experience on the morning of the eleventh — either they were evacuated, or wound up covered from head to toe with dust, or watched from a distance as the towers that they worked in simply vanished. There were also a lot of calls around the first-year anniversary. In fact, the more media coverage of 9/11-related events there is, the more it reminds people of what happened. But at this point demand is fairly steady, and our goal is to keep the program going for another two and a half years.

FC: Has the Fund made grants to communities and populations in the Washington, D.C., area?

CK: That was a much talked-about issue, and last spring — before I replaced Josh — our board made the decision to open the Ongoing Recovery Program and extend all case-management services to people who lost their jobs at Reagan International, which was completely closed for three weeks and re-opened in a very gradual fashion. We have a small office in D.C. that helps coordinate the activities of a number of social-service agencies in the area, and we're just getting ready to open the health insurance programs to those people.

FC: Tell us about the mechanisms you've established to determine the effectiveness of your programs? What are they and what are they telling you?

CK: Well, this is not going to be a ten- or twenty-year effort where you have the leisure to study and evaluate. We're trying to help people quickly, and we expect to spend the rest of the money quickly. So to us the main measure of effectiveness is numbers — how many people are enrolling in these programs, how many people are still calling the mental health hotline, and so forth. Those kinds of things are the primary measure of the effectiveness of our programs as far as we're concerned.

We also have Safe Horizon calling people — they have a large phone bank that in many ways is kind of an ongoing monitoring and assessment tool for us. For example, they'll call everyone who has been to an information session and ask whether they've enrolled in the health insurance program. If they haven't, they ask them why and whether they intend to. So we're constantly getting feedback from people in the programs, as well as from people who are eligible for the programs, about the kind of experience they're having, and we feed that input back to the agencies and ask them to follow up on complaints.

In addition, we're doing some quality-assurance things through the 9/11 United Services Group, which is employing an outside research firm to survey recipients of case-management services, asking them about their experience, whether they were happy with the service, what things could be improved, and so on. Then they compile the information and report it back to the case managers. The people who run our employment program have just done a similar sort of survey, and they'll be presenting the findings to us at the end of the month.

FC: Will that feedback inform what you hope to do over the next two or three years?

CK: Yes. We have about \$100 million left, and I think we need, over the next few months, to monitor the programs we have and really determine how they're doing and the rates of participation, and so on in order to decide whether we're going to have enough funding to do anything new or different going forward. At this point, I don't think the information suggests that what we're doing is not what needs to be done. As I mentioned, there are twelve thousand people in the health insurance program; there are almost five thousand people in the employment program, and they continue to sign up at the rate of about two hundred and fifty people a week; we have more than five thousand people in the mental health program, and those numbers continue to increase. So we wouldn't want to do anything that would impede our ability to keep all of those programs going as long as they are needed.

FC: From the beginning, the Fund's programs were designed to complement the efforts of other funders and agencies. Are you doing anything in conjunction with the government's Victim Compensation Fund?

CK: We're the largest funder of programs devoted to providing people with free assistance in filing claims with the government's fund. We're the primary funder of Trial Lawyers Care, which provides free attorneys and expert witnesses to anyone who wants to file a claim, and we also fund the National Center for Victims of Crime, which provides free seminars and information to families on how to decide whether to file or not. And that's because we think that filing a claim with the government's fund is the most foolproof way for families of the victims to assure their financial well-being over the long term.

Of course, our other programs are all open to victims' families, regardless of whether they've filed a claim with the government or not. For example, we run the program for mental health in conjunction with the Red Cross and have many family members of victims participating in it. The Red Cross also recently announced that they'll be joining with us to fund health insurance payments for victims' families for up to a year. Similarly, the employment assistance program is open to victims' families, and we try to make it as easy as possible for them to participate.

FC: Have you been satisfied with the level of cooperation and coordination among various funders, service providers, and relief agencies?

CK: Basically, yes. You know, there seem to be certain misconceptions floating around about the September 11th Fund — and about the response of the nonprofit, philanthropic, and social service communities in general. For starters, people seem to think there was no coordination. I disagree. In fact, it's amazing to me how much coordination there has been. I've been involved in nonprofit social service work in New York City for many years — I ran a homeless organization, I worked in child welfare — and I've never seen anything like this before. We've worked closely with the Red Cross and, as I've mentioned, are jointly running several programs with them. We work very closely with the New York Times Foundation. We've tried to fill gaps and do things that others haven't or couldn't, and in order to do that you have to talk to others and find out what people are doing. Then there's

At this point, I don't think the information suggests that what we're doing is not what needs to be done.

Should we have responded directly to [media] criticism? I don't think so; it would have been a distraction from our real work. . . .

the United Services Group, which is an amazing creation that should be a model for how social-service delivery is provided in general. So I haven't found coordination to be a problem; on the contrary, I've found there to be a great deal of coordination and cooperation. Nothing's perfect, and yes, it took a little time for people to get their acts together — mostly because 9/11 caught everyone by surprise. But I think it's remarkable how much has been achieved.

FC: It has been suggested that the perception of a poorly coordinated response by the philanthropic sector was largely a function of mistakes made by the Red Cross and by the tendency of the media to focus on bad news and scandal. What are your thoughts about the way the September 11th Fund was treated by the media? And, in retrospect, what might the Fund have done differently to deflect some of that criticism?

CK: Well, as a person who observed it from outside and then came in and heard the history and read transcripts of *O'Reilly*, et cetera, I think your explanation of what happened is correct. Reporters do look for scandal and gotcha stories, and in this case I think they tended to exaggerate what they found. Sure, mistakes were made, but the September 11th Fund was extraordinary in that, from the very beginning, it had a broad mandate and was very open and clear about what it was doing. That doesn't mean that the message always registered, but there was a proactive approach to communications here. Should we have responded directly to the criticism? I don't think so; it would have been a distraction from our real work, which was helping as many people as possible who had been affected by 9/11.

As for what could have been done differently, well, maybe the philanthropic and nonprofit communities could have spent more time and money on educating the public and press about the process of delivering emergency assistance and aid, both in relation to a disaster and every day. But you'd have to be a little naïve to think that you could take on the additional burden of educating the public and press *after* a crisis hits and still be effective at delivering your message.

FC: What do you think of the idea of having the philanthropic community in New York designate a single spokesperson or entity to handle media relations the next time we face a disaster of the magnitude of 9/11?

CK: Well, it sounds good in principle, and maybe it wouldn't hurt to try. But it assumes a lot of things. For starters, what exactly will the role of philanthropy be in the next disaster, assuming there is one? Just because everybody tends to think the next disaster will be more or less like the one we just experienced doesn't mean it will be. We could be talking about something completely different, and that makes it very hard to prepare for.

Now, when you start talking about a coordinated sector-wide communications effort in response to such a disaster, I think it will be very difficult to get most parties to agree to it — and I say that having been involved in plenty of situations in which different agencies or organizations touch base on a weekly basis to discuss what's going on and what they want to communicate. So maybe you don't need to have a single spokesperson so much as you

need everyone to know that *they* need a spokesperson, and that it should be someone who's trained to do the job. It's standard procedure in most other fields of endeavor, and it should be standard procedure in our field as well.

FC: Are you seeing any movement in that direction here in New York?

CK: Honestly? Not really. I hear a lot of generalized talk about lessons learned and a lot of introspection about the criticism we received as a sector and what we should have done. Quite frankly, I would prefer to see people looking ahead, rather than back at something that already happened. My role as CEO of the September 11th Fund is to do what donors to the Fund intended in terms of meeting the needs of victims of 9/11. But I think that for the philanthropic community in general, this is an appropriate time for all of us to start talking about how we will address another large-scale disaster.

FC: September 11 delivered a serious blow to the economy of New York City. How close is the city to having recovered from that blow?

CK: Well, I'm not an economist, but things don't look so hot to me. If you look at the data, it's clear that we continue to lose a sizeable number of jobs every month, especially downtown and in Chinatown. And I think our grantees would agree. I just read the final reports from the Legal Aid Society and Legal Services for New York, two of our grantees, and they're both seeing an increase in the number of evictions. In the months after September 11, people were getting by with the help of charities and their families, but that money is running out and people are starting to get eviction notices, they're lining up at food pantries, they're getting desperate. Everything seems to be balanced on a knife-edge, and I think the cuts in the city's social-service budget are going to make matters worse.

FC: As steward of the second-largest pot of 9/11 contributions left, is it important for you to draw a distinction between the long-term needs created by 9/11 and the economic fallout of the post-bubble crash?

CK: A very good question. It's extremely important — and one of the most difficult challenges we face. As the steward of these funds, we have to be faithful to the donors' intent, and the donors' intent was to give to people who were affected by 9/11, not by the recession. It's very difficult to separate those two things. So what it means, basically, is that we end up turning away a lot of very compelling proposals from organizations that are meeting important needs not directly related to September 11. It seems harsh to some service providers, but we have to do it — that's why our board established specific geographic guidelines. So whenever we're presented with a new proposal, my first response is always, "What would the donor say? Is this something we can show is related to September 11?" If we can't, we won't do it, no matter how worthwhile.

FC: Do you think the \$2.6 billion raised for post-9/11 recovery will be enough to address the long-term needs created by the attacks?

CK: I think \$2.6 billion is a lot of money, and I think a tremendous amount has already been accomplished. But I'd also say that we don't yet know what those long-term needs

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are. We just don't know. It may be that we learn something seven years down the road that no one had known before. But yes, the American public was unbelievably generous, and we have enough to meet the needs we have identified and are working to meet.

Let me just say, however, that there are a lot of assumptions floating around, and your question touches on one of them — namely, that philanthropy will be responsible for meeting the needs of victims in the event of future terrorist attacks. But will it? I don't think that's something that anyone has really addressed. What is government's role in the event of future attacks? What's the role of the private sector? Are the people that terrorist acts happen to different than the victims of other tragedies? In the case of 9/11, which was an incredible shock to New York and Washington and the country, you had this amazing outpouring of support. But I don't think we can assume that people will always respond in that fashion if there are more attacks — and that's something that isn't being talked about, either. It's just assumed that the philanthropic community will step up to meet the needs of people victimized by terrorism. But I don't think that's realistic. It's a responsibility that can't be met, and that's the real reason the two sponsoring organizations of the September 11th Fund — the New York Community Trust and the United Way of New York City — asked people to stop giving to the Fund. The senior executives of those two organizations understood that there were other needs in the community that were in danger of being overlooked, and so they asked people to direct their generosity to those needs. Those are the kinds of issues our community needs to start talking about.

At the end of the day, there are distinct roles that should be played by government agencies and by charities. Government usually has the lion's share of funds available for recovery efforts. Charities have the experience and capability to meet a vast range of needs and serve diverse populations. The best outcome for whatever we might face in the future will come when we understand, value, and capitalize on those differences.

FC: I'm afraid we'll have to end it there. Thanks so much for your time this morning, Carol.

CK: You're very welcome.

Mitch Nauffts, *Philanthropy News Digest's* editorial director, interviewed Carol Kellermann in April 2003.

The Oral History of 9/11

The terrorist attacks of September 11 sparked an immediate debate over the ultimate historical significance of the events. The media played a leading role in shaping that debate, imposing a narrative of the events that often was mistaken for evidence of a national consensus.

By contrast, the field of oral history seeks to broaden our understanding of history by gathering, preserving, and interpreting individual narratives. Interviews recorded by oral historians provide an opportunity for future generations to examine personal thoughts, relationships, and interactions in the context of daily life after a major event like 9/11.

As the oldest organized university-based oral history office in the world, the Oral History Research Office of Columbia University was uniquely positioned to undertake the oral history of 9/11. Under the leadership of its director, Mary Marshall Clark, the office mobilized within days of the attacks to create

MARY MARSHALL CLARK
DIRECTOR
ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH OFFICE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY



the September 11, 2001, Oral History Narrative and Memory Project, the purpose of which is to discover to what extent the events of that day marked a turning point in the lives of people who, directly or indirectly, were affected by them.

To that end, the project's team interviewed about five hundred people in the first year; from that pool, sample groups are being interviewed in the project's second year and will be interviewed once more in its third and final year. The interviewers cast a broad net, taking the oral histories of people in a range of groups and communities throughout the New York City region. In addition to eyewitnesses, survivors, rescue workers, volunteers, and others living or working around ground zero, the project sought out Muslims, Sikhs, Latinos, Afghan Americans, artists, and members of other groups with widely disparate experiences.

In two conversations in May and June, *Philanthropy News Digest* sat down with Mary Marshall Clark to learn more about the project. Clark, who joined the Oral History Research Office in 1990 and became its director in June 2001, co-founded the September 11 Oral History Project and founded the September 11 Telling Lives Project, which seeks to use oral history to strengthen families, communities, schools, and immigrant neighborhoods affected by 9/11.

Among her accomplishments, Clark is past president of the Oral History Association and a distinguished lecturer for the Organization of American Historians. She also has worked as a filmmaker and as an oral historian at the *New York Times*.

Foundation Center: Tell us about Columbia University's Oral History Research Office and the work it's done over the years.

Mary Marshall Clark: We were founded in 1948 by the Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Allan Nevins, who was fascinated by the potential of the interview as a way to understand history in a more in-depth, complex way. He quickly realized, however, that in order to sustain an oral history office he would have to seek enough funding to keep up with his ambitions. So he wrote a letter to the provost in the early 1950s requesting an operational budget, and he received a letter the next day saying, "You'll never receive any operational money from Columbia." While Columbia eventually funded the salaries of the staff, that was true of the operational budget, with some small exceptions, until a few weeks after September 11, when James Neal, our newly appointed librarian, walked across campus after meeting with me and came back with funding to stabilize our efforts to undertake our September 11, 2001, Oral History Narrative and Memory Project. That funding came from the very same office of the provost, and so the story came full circle, but with a very good ending.

The focus of collection development under Nevins was always the political elite, because he was interested in those who made history as well as lived it. He was also interested in American business, politics, publishing, and philanthropy, and the breadth of his vision has been maintained over the years. For instance, we conducted a large project on the Carnegie

Corporation in the 1960s that we updated in the 1990s — we have more than seven hundred hours of recorded conversations on that project alone. Our entire collection runs to about eight thousand interviews, many of them quite lengthy, and about fifteen thousand hours of recorded conversation.

Nevins was obsessed with creating source material for history. He was very worried about the impact of the telephone on written records, correspondence, and diaries. He was captivated by the belief that we learn about history through autobiography and biography — and he saw oral history as the creative collision of those two forms.

Interestingly, oral history in England has very much the opposite origin — it's focused on the history of the masses. A pioneer in oral history in England, Paul Thompson, wrote the classic book on the subject, *The Voice of the Past*. In it, he argued for oral history and history itself as an activist force in the world. In other words, he believed that by giving the microphone to people who would never be heard ordinarily, we could learn about the thoughts, beliefs, and visions of those who were normally excluded from the record but had much to say about it. The history of oral history is also an international story, with vast archives in Brazil and now South Africa and deep theoretical roots in post-fascist societies such as Italy and Argentina where the individual voice, or the dissenting group, has been censored and exiled. There is now a very strong international oral history movement in almost all parts of the world, and we have an international association, which meets every two years.

FC: Has the way you conduct interviews changed over the years?

MMC: Yes. Since Allan Nevins retired — I'm only the fourth director of this office — there has been a shift in thinking about the interview not only as a tool for conducting historical research but as an interactive forum for exploring the meaning of history, culture, and society through personal reflection and analysis. As a result, we've had to become more thoughtful about the ways in which we ask questions according to subjective as well as objective historical realities. A good example is a project on the history of physicians and AIDS conducted by Ronald Bayer and Gerald Oppenheimer during the 1990s, which resulted in the book *AIDS Doctors: Voices from the Epidemic*. While research, demography, and epidemiology were all subjects of discussion, the human demands of facing the epidemic became the focus of that very successful book.

We've also learned that even when we're doing shorter, more focused histories, it's productive to start with the person's own construction and interpretation of the events and epochs they've lived through. In other words, to paraphrase Sartre, we're interested in knowing not only what happened to people, but what people did with what happened to them. In the end, we have come around to appreciating the value of the search for meaning itself, which has certainly informed the way in which we've interviewed people about September 11.

FC: What's your background?

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The desire to document the world around you comes out of your childhood . . . a desire to explore the contradictions that lie beneath the surface.

MMC: I come from a mixture of backgrounds, which is true of most oral historians. I bought my own tape recorder when I was twelve years old, growing up in the South, in North Carolina, where culture was passed down through conversation and the success of the tall tale was equivalent to the art of the spoken word. I was always obsessed with finding out the facts. But the other reason I think I became an oral historian was that I was using my tape recorder to try and understand the schizophrenia of enduring racism. I watched people being consistently silenced and suffer needless violence, and I was deeply confused and confounded by that. My parents were civil rights activists in a town where there was no such thing as a liberal left. One summer, when the tension between my family and my community became unbearable, I made the rounds to the church ladies who lived on the white side of town and asked them to explain to me how they could be Christians and not want black people to come to their churches.

FC: What did they say in response?

MMC: Many of them were stunned and asked me to leave. But one of them — the only one who was kind to me — said, “You remind me just exactly of your grandmother.” I later found out my grandmother, Margaret Cromartie Clark, was a social reformer who set up schools and orphanages for children and would take her Bible around to people’s houses and explain why racism was evil. I think for many of us who are passionate about oral history, the desire to document the world around you comes out of your childhood; it comes out of a desire to explore the contradictions that lie beneath the surface, and it comes out of a conviction that you can learn about history through talking to people.

I didn’t know there was a discipline called oral history when I was in college, at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and I applied my fieldwork interests to a double major in religious studies and psychology. Later I took two degrees at Union Theological Seminary in New York, where I studied liberation theology.

I really happened on oral history by accident here in New York. While I was still in graduate school I took a job with the *New York Times* one summer, and they had an opening on their oral history project, which involved building an archive of interviews with their journalists and editorial writers. It was a fascinating experience, not least because journalists are tough to interview — they enjoy being on the other side of the microphone and are always hoping to answer a question with a one-liner.

But it was the best professional training I could have had. And while I was at the *Times*, I took a course in oral history at Columbia and then never thought about the Oral History Research Office again until I got a call from Ron Grele, the previous director, in the summer of 1989. Ron asked me if I would like to apply for the job of assistant director. Eventually, I became associate director, and after Ron retired in 2000, I was named director in June 2001.

FC: Which brings us to September 11. How did the September 11th Oral History Project come about?

MMC: I think many different people had the idea for the project. I was scheduled to teach class on the morning of September 11 and already knew what had happened at the World Trade Center before the class started. We all have our September 11 stories, but mine isn't very dramatic. I simply felt a sense of real purpose going into that class, a feeling of trying to engage with what was happening in the world. Only two people came to the class, and shortly after it was scheduled to begin, we received word that classes had been officially canceled. I waited around for about forty-five minutes and then put a note on the door and went back to my office. Later, I got a call from one of my students, a fabulously gifted writer named Daniel Wolfe, a Revson fellow at Columbia, who asked, "Where were you? I walked all the way from Greenwich Village to class because I felt that oral history was the most important thing we could do at a time like this." I felt terrible, despite the fact that he was very understanding. I think it was at that moment that I decided to create an oral history project documenting the catastrophe.

The next day, I remember noticing what a deep silence had fallen over New York — this city that was always filled with voices, that was never quiet. It was so unnerving, I immediately wanted to fill it back up with voices. I also began to worry that the media would distort the meaning of 9/11 — that the government, through the mass media, would impress the collective memory of 9/11 on people in a way that might not be true to individual memory or even to the diverse and collective memory that would grow from the ground up.

That day or the next, I was sitting here at my desk, and Ken Jackson, who is a professor of American history at Columbia, called me and said, "Why don't we start an oral history project on September 11?" He asked me to come to his class on the history of New York City two hours later with five hundred handouts on how to do oral history, to ask for volunteers, and I did. It was the fastest class I have ever taught on oral history.

But the Oral History Research Office didn't have the money to start such a project. We had four working tape recorders, only a few contract interviewers, and two full-time staff members — one of whom was about to take a job elsewhere. So somebody sent me an e-mail saying that the National Science Foundation had issued a request for proposals. I called Jonathan Cole, the university's provost, to ask what he thought about using graduate student volunteers and mentioned that I had seen the NSF request. He said, "It's perfectly fine for you to use student volunteers; I think it would be a great project." Then he said, "Why don't you work with a sociologist on the application?" He recommended Peter Bearman, the head of ISERP — the Institute for Social and Economic Research and Policy at Columbia — who was also the chair of the sociology department.

Peter was a terrific choice. Our visions were quite similar, actually. We were both thinking a lot about the power of the mass media to shape the story of 9/11. And we were eager to get into the field quickly and interview people while they were still feeling and reacting and hadn't constructed a view of the events yet — something that the Oral History Research Office had never done before. We never go into the street and ask people about what happened yesterday. We usually ask about what happened thirty years ago. So that was the

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Despite their struggles to define the lasting meaning of 9/11, the stories were incredibly powerful and literate — it often felt as if we were reading from great novels.

other reason I needed a colleague in another discipline, because although oral historians have become much more interested in documenting contemporary events, we really don't have the tools to analyze the present.

Peter was wonderful. He sat down and wrote up a template for a proposal to the National Science Foundation in less than two hours, identifying many of the major components of our research — the impact of the media in shaping the story, the impact of 9/11 on various social networks, the impact of 9/11 on the diverse communities within the city. We were also really concerned with the impact of 9/11 on the rest of the country, but we never found the funding to do a study.

Well, our proposal was accepted, and a few weeks later I happened to be at the Rockefeller Foundation, and Lynn Szwaja there, a deeply thoughtful person, invited me to apply for additional funding to support our work in certain communities we were very interested in — the Latino community, the Afghan American community, the arts community, and Muslims in immigrant and refugee communities. That gave us the money to hire interviewers who had the language skills we needed, and those grants were supplemented by the funding that Columbia gave us to underwrite the first two years of the project. Later, in the summer of 2002, the New York Times Foundation's 9/11 Neediest Fund awarded us two important grants to document professional responses to the crises generated by 9/11, the first being our September 11, 2001, Response and Recovery Project, in which we interviewed people in the fields of philanthropy, law, job rescue, education, and trauma. They also gave us the funds to develop our Telling Lives oral history programs, in which we use oral history to strengthen communities already facing obstacles that were exacerbated by 9/11.

All along, our goal was to understand how people were constructing meaning out of what had happened in their lives. At the same time, we knew it would be impossible for people to understand it right then and there, so the project would have to be longitudinal. Still, it was amazing how even in the first year of the project — and maybe especially in the first year of the project — people were so actively using the oral history interview, in which we interviewed people about their lives as well as the events of 9/11, as a way of constructing meaning. I mean, in any one interview you might find two or three different points of view living in one person. There was just tremendous ambiguity in people's minds about what 9/11 meant, and a creative reluctance to draw immediate conclusions. A person might describe the horror of their experience and then go on to describe some aspect of the day of 9/11 that was very ordinary. People had trouble integrating the experience, which tells us something about the impact of the trauma. And that's still true. Despite, or perhaps because of, their struggles to define the lasting meaning of 9/11, the stories were incredibly powerful and literate — it often felt as if we were reading from great novels.

FC: How did you select the people you interviewed?

MMC: We tried to make it as diverse and far-reaching as possible. We collected about two hundred interviews in the first eight weeks, and nearly three hundred more over the next eight months. Many of those in the first category were collected within a week or two of

September 11. We went down to Union Square, we interviewed doormen on the Upper West Side, we went out to the boroughs, we went to temples, we went to mosques. We didn't go to the piers, though, because we felt that would be an invasion of deeply private mourning.

But we always knew that we wanted to collect a wide range of voices across classes, national origins, ethnicities, genders, generations — for all kinds of reasons, sociological as well as historical. At first, the interviewers would just go up to people and ask if they would like to talk about their experiences for deposit in an oral history archive. We gave the interviewees the option of remaining anonymous, though only one individual we interviewed selected that option. They didn't have to make a decision immediately about how the interview would be used; we don't ask for a final agreement of deposit until after the interviewee has had a chance to read and correct the transcript. But as we got deeper into the field, it became clearer where the stories were, and it also became clearer that we had managed to achieve diversity of experience just by fanning out the way we did — no surprise in a city like this.

But it was hard to keep the big picture in focus at the time, because despite the daily news reports there was very little information about who had actually been impacted and how they had been impacted. Remember how long it took to find out how many people had actually been killed? Or from what communities? Months and months. It was not like you could flip through a file and say, "Let's go there, and then there, and then there."

Finally one night I had one of those "Aha!" experiences as I was sitting here with my head in my hands trying to figure out what the big picture was. It occurred to me that maybe I could sneak into one of the bullpen meetings at the *New York Times* and get them to tell me what the big picture was. And then it hit me that they probably didn't know either! In fact, I recently read an interview with one of the *Times* reporters who more or less said exactly that. But we ended up interviewing a number of journalists and others who were trying to understand the contours of the story as it was unfolding, and those interviews helped us understand what the stories were. We also hired a few really outstanding journalists as interviewers, and they were very helpful to the group of about thirty interviewers we eventually deployed.

For example, I'd say we have about a hundred and fifty interviews with people who were within a five-block radius of the World Trade Center on the morning of September 11 and maybe fifty or sixty interviews with people who were in one of the towers. We also have a lot of interviews with people who were not in the immediate vicinity of the Trade Center but nevertheless suffered terribly in the aftermath of September 11. We interviewed a Pakistani father and his son who worked in the towers — one in the north tower and one in the south tower — and, because they were Muslims and immigrants, were terrified for weeks after 9/11. The son, who believed as he was trying to escape that his father — who was disabled and had to walk down seventy flights — had died in the collapse, claims that he was more traumatized in the aftermath of 9/11 than he was by the events of that day. His father survived, but he suffers over the emotional impact of 9/11 on his son, whom he had brought to this country to experience freedom.

We wanted to collect a range of voices across classes, national origins, ethnicities, genders, generations — for all kinds of reasons, sociological as well as historical.

I certainly found in the interviews I did that I needed to ask very few questions. In the language of psychology, we would be called witnesses.

We interviewed a lot of people who were visited by the FBI — or knew people who were visited by the FBI — in the middle of the night because they lived in certain sections of New York. We felt some of the civil liberties issues would be an important historical story — maybe the most important story. We weren't able to interview the people who were detained, of course, so we interviewed lawyers instead. We have a large cluster of interviews with civil liberties lawyers and judges, as well as concerned citizens who articulated their fears that immigrants from the Middle East — or anyone who looked Muslim — would be targeted in the ways that Japanese Americans were during and following World War II.

The other big story of the project was the interviewers. They were amazing and resourceful. I'm a researcher; I research everything before I go out and do an interview or direct an interview. This time I couldn't do that. But it didn't matter, because I had gifted, gifted interviewers who realized that the best thing they could do was to find people to talk to and then sit back and let them talk. I certainly found in the interviews I did that I needed to ask very few questions. In the language of psychology, we would be called witnesses.

FC: What sort of training did they receive?

MMC: Many of them had already been trained. We offer a course on oral history at Columbia, as well as advanced training in our annual summer institute. So I had a huge Rolodex of people who've always wanted to work with us. And we had able volunteers from Jackson's class, several of whom were journalists.

So what I tried to do for the first three months, before the transcripts started to come in, was to listen to at least one hour of an interview from each interviewer each week. Peter Bearman was working with me to direct the project, and between us we would listen to a good portion of each person's work. We also set up a weekly meeting for the interviewers, and although we thought nobody would want to come, they came every Friday and would stay for three or four hours. Peter and I would mostly listen, and the interviewers would tell us what was happening and come up with good ideas for additional questions. We all learned together, and through the fieldwork, which is the best way for teaching to occur.

And the interviewers — students, professional oral historians, journalists, and others — behaved so professionally. I never heard a complaint from any of the five hundred people who were interviewed. Never, not once. The interviewers were disciplined, loyal, and also very open about what they did and didn't agree with. Watching the group today, I can see that we've developed an amazing competency in collective problem-solving. In fact, one of the things we want to do, if we're ever able to find the time and money, is to write up what we've learned about the process of undertaking a project of this scope.

FC: What was it like for the interviewers to interview people who had been so deeply traumatized?

MMC: There were several levels to it. I've learned a lot about how people respond after a tragedy. You feel at a loss, like you're out of control. One strategy to combat that feeling is to try to master the situation in a creative way. I think the interviewers on the project all

devoted themselves to the process of documenting trauma, in all of its manifestations, partly to recapture something that had been lost and to recover what was left as well as to honor the experiences of those who died. Nonetheless, they were deeply impacted. There was one interviewer who interviewed a woman, an older woman, who fled the towers physically unharmed but who later collapsed from the stress. She just didn't get up or move for weeks. And after interviewing this woman, our interviewer found that she couldn't get up or move for a few days, until she recognized that she was identifying with the victim. Recognizing that our interviewees faced hazards from hearing the stories eventually led us to seek support for our interviewees as well as our interviewees, and we're fortunate to be working with Dr. Marylene Cloitre of New York University to provide that support.

Because of stories like that, and our recognition that our experience may be useful to others, we've come to realize that we're creating source material not just for historians and sociologists but for psychologists and trauma specialists as well. As it turns out, our 9/11 archive is one of the largest qualitative interviewing projects on massive trauma in the country. In fact, we've invited consultants in different fields to work with us to analyze the interviews, and they've encouraged us to look at the many different kinds of fields and scholars that can benefit from the stories we are collecting, not the least of which is the field of catastrophe studies, which bridges many disciplines.

FC: Why did you decide to interview subjects over three years?

MMC: Three years is arbitrary. The point is that we wanted the project to be longitudinal. The reason we went out right away for the first round of interviews is that we felt we had a unique opportunity to study the formation of memory itself, which is something oral history is very interested in. The media, and in particular the mass media, is very much a part of that process. In fact, there's a definitive relationship between the mass media, government, and public opinion. Brigitte Nacos has written about that triangular relationship in a book called *Mass-Mediated Terrorism*. I hadn't read it before we launched the project, but essentially we're interested in the same things: How did the media influence the immediate and subsequent interpretations of 9/11 and its aftermath?

So we were very interested in getting people while the media was still actively doing its part to form this collective memory and allowing them to speak to their own personal experiences or cultural experiences or ethnic experiences so that we would have more than one text to read from as we all tried to determine the meaning of the event. We didn't assume it would mean the same thing for everyone. We didn't assume that the broad national and patriotic narrative would resonate with all the communities affected by 9/11, here or outside of New York. We just wanted to follow these people over a period of time and try to show, based on their unique experiences, how they were specifically affected by both 9/11 and its aftermath.

FC: When will the second round of interviews be conducted?

MMC: They started in late October 2002 but took off in earnest in January of 2003. This year we are moving more slowly, working with individual interviewees one-on-one. So the

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We had a unique opportunity to study the formation of memory itself. . . . The media, and in particular the mass media, is very much a part of that process.

second round is really still a work in progress. It took much longer to listen to the interviews, transcribe them, and review the transcripts than we had anticipated. Because we have such a small office, it also took us longer to develop a direction for the project and do our other work. But I think it's good we waited as long as we did, because in a way the second round is about people beginning to see 9/11 as history. We want to capture that. It's not like writing a nonfiction book, where you have to maintain a single point of view. In the case of 9/11, there are many different points of view, and we think our archive, with all the different perspectives it represents, will be a really rich source for historians and other scholars writing about 9/11 fifty years from now.

FC: Did the questions change between the first and second round of interviews?

MMC: Not so much specific questions as the themes that drive the interviews. We asked people more specific questions in the first year than in the second. In the first year, for example, we asked them, "Did you watch it on television? Did you listen to it on the radio? Who called you? Who did you call?" It was interesting because some people who could see what was happening from a sidewalk or a rooftop went inside and watched the events on television. Why did they do that? We tried to elicit unexpected details about how the catastrophe was experienced, and managed, by asking how they processed the event. During the first year, we also asked people about the impact of 9/11 on their work habits, their families and their personal relationships, their sense of the politics, and so on — usually by probing for stories rather than asking concrete questions directly.

Certain details we just didn't know at first. For example, most of the American public didn't know until April of 2002, when the *Times* covered it in a front-page story, how many people had actually jumped from the towers. Peter and I knew about that by December 2001 — one day he said, "Are you getting all these stories about people jumping from the towers?" I was relieved to have him to talk to about it, as I was finding myself overwhelmed by what I was hearing. It was largely kept out of the papers and the mainstream media. But the Spanish-language media reported on it, which is one theory as to why the Latino communities in New York were so deeply traumatized by 9/11. So did the European media. After we began to realize the scope of the trauma we weren't reading about, we asked people to describe what hadn't been reported in the media. So it's been a learning process in terms of what questions to ask.

During the second year of the project, we have been exploring many of the same themes, and also the ways in which September 11 has been linked to the justification for the military acts of the U.S. government.

FC: Do you think a collective-memory version of the events has set in? And do you see it developing between the first and second round of interviews?

MMC: Well, those are two very different questions. Do I see a collective-memory version of 9/11 in our transcribed interviews? No. And that's a strikingly, resoundingly strong "no" for the first round of interviews. If anything, those interviews were marked by extreme ambiguity. People were still very open and used the interviews to explore the

many contradictory experiences, impressions, and interpretations they were processing. It was almost as if they wanted to hold on to that ambiguity in the face of a media that was trying to stamp the event with its own narrative. There was no consensus that the war against Afghanistan was a necessity, for example. In fact, most of those who were close to the site or to someone who was harmed were terribly anxious that retaliation would only lead to more retaliation — and were overcome by a horror that civilians might be killed or harmed.

In terms of the second round, although we've transcribed only fifty of the three hundred or so interviews that will be done, I would say that while they're not characterized by the same degree of ambiguity, 9/11 still means very different things to different communities. At the same time, there's a greater sense that 9/11 does mean something — certainly on a national level, whether you agree or not with the way in which the 9/11 memory has been used. So I would say there is less tension in the narratives, even though we haven't really read enough of them to offer a definitive answer to that question. Still, there is not a monolithic narrative, and the collective memory of 9/11 and its aftermath is still very much in formation.

FC: Can you give us an example of how specific communities have interpreted 9/11 differently?

MMC: Ultimately, you have to look at it from the perspective of the individual, because you may have ten different interpretations of the event in any given community. Still, there are lines of demarcation in a very general sense, and one of those is between first- and even second-generation immigrants and people whose families have lived in the U.S. for a longer period of time. You hear it in the accounts of individuals from Latino communities, whose ability to move back and forth between this country and their country of origin has been dramatically affected by 9/11.

But what is more interesting is not so much the literal interpretation of that particular day; it's the dialogue about the political meaning of 9/11. For example, in communities where there's some point of national origin other than the United States, there's much greater sensitivity to the implications of 9/11 as it relates to the perception of the U.S. in the rest of the world. That doesn't mean that in some of what you might call mainstream communities there isn't a discussion of political issues related to 9/11. But I would say that concern about the legacy of 9/11 in a global sense is much more pronounced in immigrant communities, and it is also much more prevalent throughout the population than has been reported by the media, which is a source of frustration and demoralization among almost all those we have interviewed.

FC: You mentioned earlier that a goal of the project is to create materials for historians, sociologists, trauma specialists, and others. Who else will have access to the interviews, and how do you see them being used, say, fifty years down the road?

MMC: That's a great question. And I'm glad you asked it, because through this project I hope we will create greater public awareness of and access to our archives.

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The archive has always been open to the public — anyone can come here and consult our interviews. Because Columbia is a private university, a lot of people don't realize that. But given the national and international significance of 9/11 and the unique body of interviews we have compiled, what we want to do now is to take more assertive steps to make it available to the public.

To that end, we received a small grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to bring in nine consultants from different fields — history, sociology, literature, education, museums — to spend two days with us and talk about all the different possible venues for this work. And we plan to seek more grants to enable us to complete the digitization of the materials in the archive and to conduct a certain number of interviews on video, because we know that those are likely to be of great interest to future generations.

We're also working with a number of different museums. For example, the Museum of the Chinese in the Americas has an exhibition featuring work by students at Middle School 131 for their Oral History Club, which we created as part of our Telling Lives project. And we're working with the New-York Historical Society on a forthcoming exhibit that will be based on our 9/11 interviews with ironworkers, who are celebrating their union's hundredth anniversary next year. Through the Telling Lives project, we'll be teaching them how to do oral history for that celebration. If we're successful in seeking additional funding for our Telling Lives project, we will also work with advocates for immigrants and refugees. Creating these public dialogues is a way for us to give something back to the communities that gave us their stories.

We're also working — thanks to a multi-partner grant from the Rockefeller Foundation — to create the Chinatown Documentation Project with New York University, the CUNY American Social History Project, and the Museum of the Chinese in the Americas to undertake thirty in-depth interviews with people in Chinatown who were affected by 9/11. There's been very poor coverage of the real impact of 9/11 on the Chinatown community. We're just beginning that project, and the materials will reside at the Museum of the Chinese in the Americas, where we hope they will be used to create public dialogues about the future of the Chinatown, which is facing a tremendous crisis.

FC: Can tell us more about how the Telling Lives project is working with kids?

MMC: The New York Times 9/11 Neediest Fund funded the Telling Lives project last summer [the summer of 2002] to help us begin to explore the impact of 9/11 on schools, teachers, and communities where there was a need to create dialogues about 9/11 in order to absorb its meaning. We organized our first after-school project at the International School in Brooklyn, where the principal and teachers wanted to explore the relationship between the school and the vast number of ethnic and immigrant communities in the neighborhood. The next project was undertaken in Chinatown, in collaboration with MS 131 and the Museum of the Chinese in the Americas, a community museum that focuses on collecting artifacts and stories. Each of these

projects, which were directed by two of our most talented interviewers and educators, Gerald Albarelli and Amy Starecheski, focused on something concrete that the youths themselves made. In Brooklyn, the youths created a literary journal of the stories they collected, and in Chinatown, an amazing exhibit was created with the help of curators at the museum.

While 9/11 was the background for the project, the youth were invited to think about 9/11 in terms of creating resources for the future — as well as to understand the complex legacy of 9/11 in different communities. The school in Brooklyn and the museum in Chinatown were instrumental in working with our interviewers and the youths involved to find individual stories that linked to social and historical stories.

For example, the Museum of the Chinese in the Americas located an elderly woman labor activist who helped found UNITE, a local union that's been a very powerful force in Chinatown. We had many conversations with people, in interviews conducted by the youths themselves, talking about their experiences with war and with exile. The museum also helped produce a timeline of the history of the Chinese immigration, and the kids have begun to place themselves in that timeline through the stories they've collected and the stories they've witnessed. The powerful part of this program, of course, is that they themselves have created and exhibited these important dialogues. From these projects, students and educators have used oral history to begin to make 9/11 part of a larger history.

FC: You mentioned at the beginning of the interview that Allan Nevins thought the discipline of oral history was threatened by the widespread adoption of the telephone. Do you think new technologies such as e-mail pose an even greater threat to oral history?

MMC: Not at all. There is no other forum historically, culturally, and maybe even politically that's ever been as satisfying as a good face-to-face conversation or public dialogue. I have a lot of faith in oral history. And it's experiencing a renaissance right now — in part, I think, because of its profound ability to elicit conversations that happen across generations, across cultures, across political divisions, but also because of technology. Just as the portable tape recorder was a friend to Allan Nevins, the invention of the minidisk and the DAT recorder is a friend to today's oral historian. Advances in computer technology allow us not only to create our stories but to interpret them and disseminate them as well. So I'm not afraid of technology at all.

Beyond that, I think the field has developed both an academic rigor and a sort of social consciousness that is contributing to its growing popularity around the world. There is no doubt that this renaissance is linked to technology. Just as the group WITNESS puts cameras in the hands of Africans and encourages them to document their own experiences and the lives of their communities, we're beginning to teach oral history and share technology in a way that allows people to use tape recorders for their own purposes. That's really our ultimate goal: to share the excitement and importance of oral history in order to help create democratic dialogues and subvert the silences that threaten to erase a diversity of voices in a society that was founded to embrace them.

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SEPTEMBER 11: PERSPECTIVES FROM THE FIELD OF PHILANTHROPY

FC: Well, Mary Marshall, thank you very much for taking the time to speak with us.

MMC: Thank you.

Natalie Coe, an editor at *Philanthropy News Digest*, interviewed Mary Marshall Clark in May and June 2003.