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Sergeant Kenneth S. Burchell
December 17, 2001

Interview conducted by Janet McDonnell
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INTERVIEW WITH
SERGEANT KENNETH S. BURCHELL
UNITED STATES PARK POLICE, AVIATION UNIT

CONDUCTED BY
DR. JANET MCDONNELL
DECEMBER 17, 2001

START OF TAPE

Janet McDonnell: Maybe just to start if you'd identify yourself on the tape and tell me a little bit about what your role here with the Aviation Unit is and go from there.

Kenneth Burchell: My name is Ken Burchell, Kenneth S. Burchell. I'm a pilot sergeant with the U.S. Park Police Special Forces Branch assigned to the Aviation Section here in Washington, D.C. I've been on the job about sixteen and a half years, and I served in patrol in District 2, the Special Weapons and Tactics Team, and here.

Janet McDonnell: Well, maybe to just start with September 11th and where you were, what you were doing, how you first learned about the attacks on the World Trade Towers.

Kenneth Burchell: Well, on the morning of the 11th, we were gearing up actually for the second round of demonstrations, World Bank, IMF demonstrations that were scheduled for I guess a week or so after that. And we had a detail of officers training, doing riot training in the field next to the hangar. I was actually assigned to that. I wasn't assigned to the flight crew that day. And my job was I was training officers how to extinguish themselves if they were hit with a burning Molotov cocktail. And we were pretty concerned about the threat of the rioters coming to Washington. So, there was already sort of a little element of tension to begin with.

Kenneth Burchell: The way we first found out was that my wife called and told John Marsh, one of the rescue techs, to turn on the television. And she'd been watching the "Today Show" and saw the first aircraft hit the World Trade Center. And one of the guys ran out into the field and told us what was happening. And a bunch of us came in and we gathered around the television. And as we were on our way in, they said a plane has crashed into the World Trade Center. And you know, I guess like I think probably most pilots thought, oh well, didn't a plane fly into the Empire State Building during World War II? And it was a bomber, and the weather was bad, and they just flew it in, inadvertently flew it into the building. But as I recall the crew perished, but there wasn't a great deal of lost life.

Kenneth Burchell: And as soon as I came into the TV room and I saw the scene of New York and the absolutely crystal-clear blue sky, I said, it's obviously not an accident. No pilot would ever fly his plane deliberately into an occupied structure. He would have put it in the harbor. So, we were all overwhelmed, but had our work to do.

Kenneth Burchell: I walked back out into the field. A couple of minutes later another guy came running out saying, "Hey, a second plane has crashed in." Came in, saw that, thought my god, this is war. We're under attack. Still in shock

and starting to think, well, I wonder if it's just going to be New York. Is it going to be, obviously, I guess waiting for the other shoe to fall would be a good description. So I remember going back out to the field and I was working with these mannequins that I was dousing with gasoline for the guys to train how to put them out and I walked back, I remember saying to one of the officials, the second plane has crashed in and they didn't believe it. They said, "I'll believe it when I see it."

Kenneth Burchell: And a couple of more minutes go by and I hear this thud. And it really wasn't an explosion. It was like a thud, like a mortar round. Just a low—and I turned around and I looked towards Virginia and I could see a little arc of a fireball and then smoke gently flowing up, but like a straight column.

Janet McDonnell: So, you could actually hear it all of the way over here.

Kenneth Burchell: Oh, yes. And I don't know how much impact that had on the sound, whether it would have been more like an explosion, but it was definitely a low thud. And I started running back towards the aircraft. And as I was running through door, I'm yelling for the crew. I'm not sure my exact words, but the effect was let's go. The alarm went off, which was the crash phone from National.

Janet McDonnell: Is it literally a phone that you pick up?

Kenneth Burchell: Yes, and I'll show you. We'll ring it, but a horn goes off at the same time and it's a direct line, a hot line. And it goes off every morning at 9:00 for a test and periodically for in flight emergencies. So, I heard the horn go off, but at that point we were already moving towards it. I was going to tell the crew, point to the smoke and everybody, I was yelling at everybody, Hey, let's go. There's something going on." Galey apparently took that call. I don't know what was said on that end, but the duty crew which was Galey, Marsh, and Dillon came running out. I yelled something to them about I'll get the second aircraft, because I thought about jumping on the first aircraft. So, I'd get the second aircraft. They ran out to start.

Kenneth Burchell: I saw Keith Bohn, one of the other pilots, coming out of the back and I said, Keith, let's go. We'll take the second aircraft. So now we had two pilots, but no medics. And in the training, in the field, and I think I might have mentioned it before, but we have this program with the military medics, the DOD medics. It's been in place for over a decade. We're very proud of this. This was like a real, we were integrally involved in forming this whole military medical support and wrote a class around it, teach the class around the country, something we're very proud of. Well, two of these medics were over in the field. I told Keith, I said, "Fire it up and I'm

going to go and get the medics,” something to that effect. So, I ran over and grabbed the two medics and ran back.

Kenneth Burchell: At this point, we'd been running around a bit and everybody was pretty focused. Nobody was out of control, or screaming, or anything, as you'd expect. This is what we do for a living, but it still seems like, I mean there was a tremendous amount going on all at once. We're launching an aircraft, trying to get the second aircraft out.

Kenneth Burchell: Get the medics, we bring them back. I tell them to go throw on a couple of flight suits, because they were wearing non fire-retardant clothes. And they ran in to do that. We started putting in the mass casualty kit. And Tom Greer, the maintenance supervisor, is trying to put it in. And of anybody that you - want doing anything mechanical, he's the guy. There's no question. But unfortunately for him, we were all trying to help him which you know, I'm sure prolonged the process tremendously. But Keith started the aircraft. Tom's getting the mass casualty kit installed. We've got the other guys changing up. All of this takes two minutes, maybe.

Kenneth Burchell: We launch. We take the unit commander and the XO [executive officer] onboard. They're not trained as crew members particularly, but the thought at the time was who knows what we're going into and even partially trained people might, they're certainly police officers so—

Janet McDonnell: And the unit commander is Lieutenant?

Kenneth Burchell: Cholak.

Janet McDonnell: And the XO is?

Kenneth Burchell: Sergeant Bernie Stasulli. So, we loaded up so now we have like the family wagon packed full of people. We launch. As we launch, Eagle One now given authority on the scene and circling. We launch. Almost as soon as we launch, they tell us there's another aircraft inbound. I don't remember how we got that information, but we knew right off the bat that there was another aircraft coming. The Eagle One crew—

Janet McDonnell: An unauthorized aircraft. So, you have that concern.

Kenneth Burchell: Right. Immediately. And we didn't really need to be told that after watching the World Trade, but nonetheless somebody confirmed there was something actually coming. Eagle One directed us to land to do the MEDEVACS. So, we pretty much launched. As we get closer, I mean the smoke is just roaring out of there. And at some point—

Janet McDonnell: Did that make flying difficult, the smoke?

Kenneth Burchell: We weren't actually in the fire. It was such a clear day it was very easy to keep our distance from it. But if we were approaching it from the south, we would clearly have had to avoid it. As we got closer, we were glancing around to see what else was burning, and frankly kind of anticipating more stuff going on. As we got close, we pretty much launched, went straight over and landed immediately without a whole lot of fanfare. We landed on the west side of the highway there. Got out, kind of developed a rough plan. You know, the plus from doing this routinely is the fact we're going on a MEDEVAC wasn't a big drama to us.

Janet McDonnell: And I think you mentioned to me last week that you had exercised for mass casualty response.

Kenneth Burchell: No, we exercise, we respond on them. I mean we do the real deal. You know, when the school bus turns over in PG County, we're one of the helicopters that goes. So, we are not only trained to do it, but we actually do it. And there's a huge gap in between people who are trained to do something and people who actually do it. So, there wasn't a sense of great crises, just that the ballgame was on and everybody needed to be at the top of their form.

Janet McDonnell: So, tell me about some of that initial planning when you landed there. How the discussion about what needed to be done?

Kenneth Burchell: Well, we had, clearly, we wanted to keep Keith with the aircraft and running, because we wanted to be able to get out of there. And again, we're still thinking you know, anybody we can get away from here before that second airplane crashes stands a chance of living. So like half of this is rescue. It isn't just a MEDEVAC. We're not just picking up wounded and taking them to the hospital. We need to rescue him from here. We need to get him away from ground zero.

Kenneth Burchell: So, we said that—Keith said he wanted to keep Bernie—Sergeant Stasulli—to maintain the perimeter around the aircraft. Lieutenant Cholack is an EMT, I am an EMT and the two medics would then go up to see, basically find out what's going on. We could be—and I think at this point we were thinking there'd be 800-900 injured. We'll just be ferrying people all day. So, let's go and establish a procedure. In my mind I'm thinking what we'll do is we'll probably set up a permanent LZ [landing zone]. We'll leave two of these guys here. All they'll do is coordinate the landing zone and we'll just start ferrying people back and forth to the hospitals. This will be an all afternoon deal. We'll be going to Baltimore. We'll be going to Richmond with burns and such, but we'll establish. We're the first aircraft in. We're going to set up how this is going to work.

Janet McDonnell: The process.

Kenneth Burchell: We go, we cross the roadway. People were very, I'm still—I always say how impressed I was with the people from the Pentagon. They were not panicked. They were alert to what was going on, but they were in the game. They were moving with a sense of purpose. They had stuff to do. Many of them didn't, they wanted to help. They weren't sure what to do, but they knew not to get in the way. They just stood there ready to go.

Janet McDonnell: So, as I understood there was sort of movement away from the building, people who were evacuating, and also some movement towards the building, people who wanted to assist. Is that?

Kenneth Burchell: Right, but I think they were at different times. I think at first people were evacuating the building. When we first got there, there were actually people, one person who came out on fire. I mean too far away from us to help, but at a distance, when we were landing somebody was coming out on fire. So, at that point, I think people were mostly getting away from the building. But in the amount of time we were there, they were also reforming up and going in to try to help the others.

Kenneth Burchell: We crossed the roadway and walked into the debris field and actually stepped over small pieces of metal that were probably from the aircraft. There was a light pole that was knocked down that later I read it landed on a cab. The plane hit it, knocked it down, and it crashed into a cab.

Kenneth Burchell: The cabbie lived, and they interviewed him. We stepped over that, walked up to the triage officer, which is the fire department officer who's responsible for sorting the wounded. And he recognized me and called me by my first name, and I said, "How many patients do you have to fly?" in other words to be MEDEVACKED. And he said eleven. I was very surprised, but I really thought when he said eleven that was the first wave.

Janet McDonnell: It surprised you because you expected more.

Kenneth Burchell: Right. I anticipated him either saying hundreds. But I still took his eleven even though he was obviously very—appeared very squared away—but I still took the eleven to mean on the first load. I called on the portable up to Eagle One and said, "John, we have, the fire department is reporting eleven patients to go. You better get hold of Maryland State for more aircraft." And he said, "Okay." I said, "We'll set up to take the first group." Now remember we had the ability to carry four patients because we bolted in the thing that Tom bolted in before we left.

Kenneth Burchell: Then at some point in this we split up. One of the military medics was actually a physician's assistant. He and Lieutenant Cholak went to the triage area to start sorting things out.

Janet McDonnell: To help out.

Kenneth Burchell: I went back to get, to move the aircraft, to get Keith to move the aircraft up closer to us, because we're in that clover leaf still which was fairly far away. Called Keith on the radio and asked him to move it up onto the highway. And I'm not sure what went on at the triage station, but we ended up leaving - that physician's assistant, I think, became the triage officer, at least the medical triage officer at the scene. And we have a picture I guess of us directing the aircraft back in. Keith moved it up, positioned it as close as we could get. There actually was a discussion with the fire marshal who was concerned about us destroying the crime scene by moving the aircraft. And through quick discussion he realized obviously there was still living that needed to be worried about ahead of the crime scene. But at a time like that it's understandable for people to be focused on what they're part of the mission was.

Kenneth Burchell: So, we repositioned the aircraft to bring out the first injured person to the aircraft. We attempted to load, took the loader on the aircraft. And the whole thing with aircraft is balance of weight. Weight is very critical, weight in terms of the amount of strength the aircraft has to take off, balance. If you get too much weight on one side, it's a very dangerous situation. And we were concerned about, we started to load her on one side. We were concerned about the weight, so we ended up moving her to the other side to load her up, horribly burned. Horribly, horribly burned. She was on her stomach because her back was so badly burned, she couldn't tolerate being on her back. And she was conscious and speaking. And I tried to give her a rough idea what was going on, very quickly. But it really was a case of needing to get her out of there as much as getting her to a hospital. We needed to get her away from that scene. We got her loaded up. There was an Arlington County paramedic that was helping on the inside to treat her.

Kenneth Burchell: They brought the second patient out. We loaded him up. We were ready to take more, but they didn't have any patients ready for us.

END OF SIDE A

START OF SIDE B

Janet McDonnell: When they're not ready, it just means that they're not physically set up?

- Kenneth Burchell: Not physically or they hadn't triaged the patient yet. They weren't sure what the injuries were, but they weren't ready to go then. And we really felt we needed to get going. The second patient was a guy who was horribly burned, including his eye. Tremendously burned. His eye was burned in the open position. Very difficult patient. We had the USUHS medic on board.
- Janet McDonnell: You told me what the acronym stands for.
- Kenneth Burchell: Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences. He was a Department of Defense civilian medic. And we loaded up both of those patients, took off for the shock trauma unit, and we were probably there within two minutes. It's a two- or three-minute flight. Landed, off loaded the patients. Went in and the shock trauma unit was absolutely full of people, absolutely full. They'd apparently gotten the word that this was going on and they brought in all of their extra staff from the floors. And there were a lot of people in a little space. So, we brought the patients in, quickly gave the report on what the medical conditions were.
- Kenneth Burchell: I turned around and I said, "Who's in charge?" And there was, of course, no answer. And being a veteran of similar events, I said, being a veteran of similar deals, I said, "Well, who wants to say they're in charge? That's close enough." And so, a young woman stepped to the plate and said, "Well, I am." And I said, "Well, how many patients can you take?" And she said, "Well, we can take as many as you send us," which, of course, is a check no one can possibly cash. But I did take that to mean that they could handle at least the first twenty.
- Kenneth Burchell: So, we ran out, got back in the aircraft, started to respond back. And I broadcast to Eagle One that information they could take, and I quoted her precisely, because usually these things in the after-action report, you need to be able to defend why you said it.
- Janet McDonnell: That's right.
- Kenneth Burchell: And if they say—
- [tape off]
- Kenneth Burchell: Launched again. I told the other aircraft what the hospital had told us. Responding back and we're about in the area of Memorial Bridge and they said that there's another unidentified aircraft inbound and they gave an actual time, ten minutes or whatever. And they had actually given it twice. Obviously, with the time decreasing with each call. And somebody made the decision, I guess the command and control helicopter that, try to spread out the aircraft. Get them away from the Pentagon, the logic being

if the second aircraft was headed for the Pentagon, you didn't want to wipe out all of the aircraft. We all understood the flaw in that being what if the second target isn't the Pentagon, but it's wherever we put the aircraft? So, everybody picked a different spot to try to go to. And we landed on the—

Janet McDonnell: How many roughly—do you have a sense of how many other aircraft there were on site by that time?

Kenneth Burchell: I think by this point there were probably one, two, three, five or six aircraft.

Janet McDonnell: Did that include some military aircraft now or is this still too soon?

Kenneth Burchell: At this point, yes. I don't think we had a military response at that point. I think we had Fairfax. We had Medstar, the private ambulance helicopter, Fairfax Hospital's helicopter, Fairfax County Police helicopter, and the D.C. Police helicopter. So, we landed at the western end of Memorial Bridge in the circle there, and we kind of hovered over next to the trees a bit so that we could hopefully use that for little bit of protection. And we were there waiting it out. I told the dispatcher we were going to land. The aircraft were spreading out and we were going to land at the western end. And he called us back and said they had another MEDEVAC for us back at the Pentagon, so we had to take off and go back to the Pentagon.

Kenneth Burchell: Landed at the Pentagon, got out, went, we landed in the clover leaf again. And there's an overpass there. And what they'd done is, they'd taken all of the wounded and people, as many people as they could find, and gone underneath that overpass to use it as a bunker. And we went in there and apparently our patient either hadn't lived or was decided that there was no need to fly him, so they canceled us, and we took off again. And at this point, they told us there were no more patients to be flown. So Medstar flew one patient, so there was a total of three patients that were air evacuated from the scene.

Kenneth Burchell: As we were taking off, they said they wanted us to return to pick up a Secret Service agent to patrol the White House, the air space around the White House. We were at about 390 feet climbing out of the Pentagon, and in the opposite direction there's an, I guess an F-16 coming in the opposite direction. It was so close I could see the brand of sunglasses he was wearing. And at 390 feet it's not very high. And he was coming down to take a look at us to make sure what team we were on and fortunately I guess he recognized the shoulder patches. And Keith said, I said to Keith, he came—passed us so quickly that I don't think Keith even saw him. I said, “Keith, don't come left.” And he said, “Oh, why not?” He said, “Okay, roger, why?” And I was like, “I'll tell you later.”

Janet McDonnell: By now he was gone.

Kenneth Burchell: He was history by then.

Janet McDonnell: So, was there more than one? Did you encounter more than one?

Kenneth Burchell: We saw more than one fighter, but not that close. He was definitely coming down to decide whether we were a threat or not. Then we came back. And I think, really, when we passed that fighter, and I remember looking over my left shoulder and I could see the White House, the Pentagon blazing away, and remember 390 feet is low when you're talking about aircraft, and a jet fighter in that one picture. And I remember thinking at that moment was like the first time it really occurred to me like, wow, this is it. This is the big one.

Janet McDonnell: Under attack.

Kenneth Burchell: We're under attack. And I remember just thinking, literally, this is the big one.

Janet McDonnell: So, you did like this security patrol around the White House?

Kenneth Burchell: White House and the Vice President's residence. We also ended up flying out to Dulles to take an FBI team out. Very eerie to land at Dulles, a huge, huge airport, and not anything was happening. Nothing was stirring. And everybody was on edge. And I remember we got out of the aircraft and I was—I got out of the aircraft. I opened the door for the two passengers, the FBI people, and there was a guy walking on the flight line towards us. And it was a ghost town. There wasn't anybody. And when this guy walked out - and he had credentials hanging around his neck. I'm sure he was a representative of something, but at that point you just didn't know who was who. And I remembered drawing my weapon and motioning towards him to stop and stay back. And he complied and didn't seem all of that ruffled for having just been challenged by somebody with a gun. But everybody sort of knew what was going on.

Kenneth Burchell: I remember when we were back at the Pentagon in terms of the peoples' responses, I think I might have told you that at one point when we first moved the aircraft up, all of these majors, colonels, and lieutenant colonels started spreading out around the aircraft and Lieutenant Cholak confronted them. And we're used to, you know, in a crowd situation quite often crowds are not compliant either for a whole multitude of reasons. But generally, a police officer to move a crowd back it takes a great deal of effort, and some loud noises, and some threatening gestures usually to get compliance. But at the Pentagon, if there was a crowd of people and you said everybody step back, everybody did. It was almost unnatural.

Janet McDonnell: Why did they surround the aircraft?

Kenneth Burchell: They surrounded the aircraft and when Lieutenant confronted them, "What are you doing? Get away." They said, "We're securing the landing zone for you." And they did a great job. But they were all colonels, and majors, and people that would command dozens and dozens of aircraft, but they had to help. They knew they had to help, they wanted to help, and this was the time. And really, you know, you saw that over and over. You saw, I remember seeing what appeared to be a clerk. I know that's probably not the politically correct description, but what I would describe as a standard government-issue clerk.

Janet McDonnell: Support staff.

Kenneth Burchell: Grabbing a backboard and heading in street clothes back towards the burning building and that impressed me tremendously. Like the building is on fire. Obviously, there's another plane coming. If you want to protect yourself, run away. Now is the time to run away. And this guy just got his backboard and was headed back. He was going to go rescue somebody. And frankly, I was pretty impressed. I thought it was wonderful. But really, their calmness.

Janet McDonnell: So, they were more organized than some of the other responses you participated in?

Kenneth Burchell: Oh, absolutely. And it wasn't, there was still the chaos you have in any emergency. But policemen, emergency services people are used to working in chaos. Our job is you respond to chaos and we're supposed to start making order out of it. And that's why we yell, and scream, and get in line.

Janet McDonnell: I think you mentioned to me last week that these are people to some extent, not the employees of the Pentagon, but like Arlington Fire Department people that you had ongoing relationships with.

Kenneth Burchell: Right. These are people we work with on a routine daily basis. The difference was the size of the event that was going on, and to some extent the fact that all of us could be in the next explosion.

Janet McDonnell: Sure.

Kenneth Burchell: And everybody faces various levels of danger in their work, but this was we're all in this. We're all going to get wiped out when the next plane comes in. But really.

- Janet McDonnell: So, at what point did you start to have the sense that the site was “safe”? I mean did you get, after the plane hit in Pennsylvania did you get word and then sort of feel like, okay, at least we don't have to worry about another attack?
- Kenneth Burchell: No, I think for the next week, certainly for the rest of that day we anticipated more aircraft, more attacks, whether it was a ground attack. In my mind, the entire time we were there I was anticipating other aircraft coming in. I certainly felt better when that F-16 passed me, because I knew at least we'd be shooting back this time.
- Janet McDonnell: Sure.
- Kenneth Burchell: But the whole time we were there and the rest of that day I was anticipating getting hit again. And really for the two weeks following that it certainly was a high level of suspicion, but that day for sure.
- Janet McDonnell: Were you in communication with the Park Police command post during all of this?
- Kenneth Burchell: And we were going, everything we do goes through the Park Police dispatcher. We tell them when we're responding. We tell them when we're on the scene. We tell them when we're transporting.
- Janet McDonnell: Is that dispatcher next door here?
- Kenneth Burchell: Well, at Haines Point.
- Janet McDonnell: Oh, okay.
- Kenneth Burchell: And actually, that would be a great interview, too, because not only do they handle all of this, but their window looks out across the river. And the chaos they were handling. I remember when I first heard the explosion, I remember hearing a footman calling into his radio that it looked like it was near NCR [National Capital Region], the NCR building. And probably from the angle, I don't know where his foot beat was, but from his angle, that's where it looked like the smoke was coming up from. So those dispatchers were getting all of this input, all of these people calling in, in addition to us because we're all on the same frequency.
- Janet McDonnell: So that's where you were getting your directions from? It sounds like some of that was decisions you were making on the scene on your own, but the decision say to go back after evacuating those two patients, to go back to the Pentagon, was that coming to you through that command post?

- Kenneth Burchell: No, those were self-initiated. But we would keep the communication center and the command post apprised of what we were doing.
- Janet McDonnell: And is that how any coordination with NPS Rangers would be done, too, law enforcement rangers would be done?
- Kenneth Burchell: I don't know what they do. But our, you know in a, if we respond out to the parks, we'll dial up the Park Rangers' frequency and talk to them directly out across the river. And the chaos they were handling. I remember when I first heard the explosion, I remember hearing a footman calling into his radio that it looked like it was near NCR, the NCR building. And probably from the angle, I don't know where his foot beat was, but from his angle, that's where it looked like the smoke was coming up from. So those dispatchers were getting all of this input, all of these people calling in, in addition to us because we're all on the same frequency.
- Janet McDonnell: So that's where you were getting your directions from? It sounds like some of that was decisions you were making on the scene on your own, but the decision say to go back after evacuating those two patients, to go back to the Pentagon, was that coming to you through that command post?
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- Janet McDonnell: And is that how any coordination with NPS rangers would be done, too, law enforcement rangers would be done?
- Kenneth Burchell: I don't know what they do. But our, you know in a, if we respond out to the parks, we'll dial up the park rangers' frequency and talk to them directly.
- Janet McDonnell: Okay. But since this was in the city.
- Kenneth Burchell: Pretty much, their role would be almost non emergent sort of stuff, so they would be—I don't know how they—We can only talk to three, on three frequencies, police frequencies. In this case we were talking to the fire department on the scene, the Secret Service and Park Police. So, unless the rangers somehow got on our frequency, I don't know.
- [tape off]
- Janet McDonnell: I'd like to hear you talk for just a few minutes about what you're proudest of with the way the Aviation Unit responded. What went really well, whether it's the training paid off, or however you want to approach the question?

Kenneth Burchell: I think the thing that I'm proudest of—You know, none of us are pretending that what we did was like any great earth-shattering thing. We just did our part. But what we're proud of is that we did our part the best that we could. That the thing I've said for years is the United States has tremendous assets. We've tremendous aircraft resources, material, equipment. The Air Force has aircraft that are staggering, staggering.

Kenneth Burchell: But when you have an emergency in downtown Washington, D.C., you don't get Task Force 160. You don't get Air Force Special Operations. You get two Park Policemen in a blue and white helicopter. And we were there in three minutes and started doing what had to be done. We had that golden horseshoe and luck should—I'll take luck every time that we happen to have—that Keith and I were here, just happened to be physically here to get the second aircraft out. That somebody had the foresight—a whole series of people had the foresight—to sign off on this program with military medics. A lot of administrators and our officials took chances and signed off on this program and because of it we had the extra medics to take.

Kenneth Burchell: We responded; we did the whole range of missions. We did everything that a helicopter can do for you. We got there. Our guys did command and control. Took over the air space, Ronny took over the air space. You know, it's the Park Police. It isn't the 5th Air Force rolling in. In this case you've got a handful of Park Police. We got there. We did the MEDEVAC. We picked up the fire chief for command and control. We, throughout that whole process we down linked, we gave information. We gave the most accurate information to the people that needed to make those decisions. Every crew performed, and it doesn't even occur to us that rational people might not have into it. No one has ever even mentioned the possibility that we might like wait. And for all of the Park Police, you know, a very proud street sergeant said, "While everybody was trying to get out of the city none of my men left their beat." And that is something to be proud of.

Kenneth Burchell: We did everything we possibly could do. We had the right equipment. We had the right training. We had the right people. They did the right thing. And everybody was rowing in the same direction, with the exception and when poor Tom was trying to put in the mass casualty kit, and we were defeating him. But other than that, everybody was doing the right thing.

[tape off]

Janet McDonnell: Well, and we actually got to the end of the tape and I appreciate you taking the time to do this.

Kenneth Burchell: Thank you.

END OF TAPE