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Gil Goodrich
December 28, 2001

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START OF TAPE

- Mark Schoepfle: This is an interview with Gil Goodrich on 28 December 2001 on the World Trade Center disaster. The first question I'd like to ask, and is a very general open-ended one, from the moment you became aware of what had happened, what happened? What were the events that unfolded immediately after you became aware of what was going on? Where were you? What were you doing? What happened?
- Gil Goodrich: Well, on the morning of September 11th, I was on duty here at the park. Early that morning — I can't give you a specific time, but probably around 8:30 or 9:00 o'clock, somewhere in that vicinity — I was sitting at my desk working on the computer when I got a phone call — I actually got a page from my wife. It gave me a little bit of a cause for concern because she was on a detail. She had left the day before to go on a detail for a month in the regional office in Lakewood — not in the regional office. And so, it was unusual, knowing that she would be paging me that early in the morning with the time difference. It was just — very out of the ordinary for her.
- Gil Goodrich: So, I called her back, and she informed me that there had just been a plane crash at the World Trade Center; she was watching the news, and I immediately turned the radio on, and of course that was all that was on every channel, and at that point they were simply talking about it on the news, and it was just — the plane had crashed into the World Trade Center. And I was listening to that, and while I was doing that one of the radio frequencies that we scan while we're on duty — is the Park Police Communications Center in DC, and as I was listening to the radio — the news broadcast, as well as doing work on the computer — and listening to the various radio frequencies that we listen to, I heard a park police officer call the Communications Center and report a low-flying plane that had just appeared to be out of the ordinary, flying very low over the Arlington Cemetery in the area of the Pentagon.
- Gil Goodrich: And as I continued to listen, the next thing I heard was that there appeared to have been some sort of explosion or crash with a lot of smoke coming from the Pentagon. This, again, coming from an officer who was witnessing this, and I heard the supervisor — park police supervisor — come on the radio, and inform all the officers not to leave the jurisdiction, to remain within their jurisdiction. About that time one of my coworkers, who's also a Law Enforcement Ranger, who lives in this house right across from the Ranger Station, came over — he was off duty; actually, I believe he was on his off day — came over and asked me if I was aware of what was going on.

Gil Goodrich: And I said, well, I'm aware that there has been a plane that's crashed into the World Trade Center, and I just heard something about potentially a plane crash into the Pentagon. And he said, "yes, I'm watching it on TV. Why don't you come over?" So, I did. And we were watching the video tapes of what was going on, trying to comprehend what was going on, and then as we were watching that, they broke in and said that there had been another plane crash at the Pentagon.

Gil Goodrich: Again, I can't give you the timeframe, but very quickly — within probably 15 to 30 minutes or so, my Chief Ranger contacted me and informed me that they were sending Rangers downtown to DC in response to the Pentagon attack for security purposes, and that I was to go — prepare to go downtown — so I began doing that. Subsequently, I, along with the Ranger who was off duty, we both responded together to the headquarters, George Washington Memorial Parkway, Turkey Run, which had been designated a staging area for what was being called two squads of Law Enforcement Rangers from outlying parks. There we met with a number of Rangers. One group, or one squad, had already been deployed. We were told they were assisting with evacuating kids from the day care center at the Pentagon, and transporting them to a safe area, and remaining with them until the parents could pick them up.

Gil Goodrich: Our group was deployed to the National Mall, and I was designated as the squad leader for this group of Rangers. We met downtown with the park police captain, who was overseeing the operations down there on the Mall; met with him at the mobile command post, right by the Smithsonian, and we were given our assignments, which was basically to patrol the National Mall Corridor, and as well as we deployed, I believe, two Rangers from our squad to the Jefferson Memorial to work with park police officers over there. I pretty much, because of some radio communications problems that we were having, spent the majority of my time at the command post with the park police, and basically served as the liaison between the park police and my squad, and intermittently, went out and checked on folks that I was working with, and informed them of what was going on, and then we kind of rotated folks from different posts around the Mall. And that is pretty much it. We were down there from — until probably 10:00 o'clock that night, when we were demobed [demobilized], and we were prepared to stay longer, or to come back the following day, and that request for our assistance was not made the following day, so that was the extent of my involvement, and the squad's involvement in working downtown. My understanding was that the first squad that had been working with the day care folks ended up being demobed sometime late that afternoon; certainly, a number of hours before we were demobed. And that was pretty much it.

Gil Goodrich: It was rather uneventful, to be quite honest with you in terms of any enforcement contacts, or any enforcement actions that I, or anyone on our squad could.

Gil Goodrich: In terms of personal observations, I can tell you that it was a very — for lack of better definition — very surreal atmosphere or environment to be downtown on the National Mall on what was a very nice day; very nice weather — warm. We would have expected DC and the Mall to be absolutely crowded with tourists and visitors, and to be down on the Mall, and see virtually no civilians, or very few — only a handful, and virtually no civilian vehicles, and it was almost unnervingly quiet. The only movement that you saw and folks that you saw were law enforcement officers, emergency service workers, and occasionally you would see a fire engine, or an EMS vehicle go by, but basically, the entire downtown area, and certainly the Mall area had been — all you saw were law enforcement vehicles and law enforcement officers; absolutely quiet. We contacted a few visitors that were just kind of wandering around, and a few local residents — you know, employees from downtown that were wandering around, but probably not even a couple of dozen over the course of the time that we were down there. A very odd sensation, again, to be in that environment, not knowing what to expect, you know, and we asked — the folks that were under my supervision were asking me — what can we expect, and there was no answer. We didn't know.

Gil Goodrich: And we were told that we were operating under a state of emergency, that all air space had been — control of air space over DC had been — assumed by the military. And we didn't know what to expect, and I think many of us were sitting there wondering what to do if we saw a 757 headed towards the White House or the Capitol Building. We felt very defenseless, so it was somewhat — again, of a very odd situation to be down there in that environment, and seeing military aircraft flying overhead, and I don't know what else I can add to that, other than it was — I think, one of the most emotional moments for me was later that evening after I was demobed, and was driving home, and I live in North Arlington, and I drove — my path of travel took me near the Pentagon, and still seeing the flames and quite a bit of smoke, and all the light from the emergency workers there was a very sobering experience, to say the least.

- Gil Goodrich: And that was, I think, the fact that I was actually seeing that in real time, and in real life, as opposed to hearing about it on the television or the radio, really put it in perspective for me, and I got home that evening, and of course, my wife, as I mentioned was out of town, and I got home and I really didn't know what to do with myself, because there had been this adrenalin — you know, that we'd been working all day, and then you're sent home, and you go home, and you're watching this — the first — the natural course of action is to turn the television on, and see what's going on, and it was just — you felt very helpless, particularly, because I live probably as the crow flies less than a mile and a half from the Pentagon.
- Mark Schoepfle: Wow.
- Gil Goodrich: And knowing that that activity was taking place so close, and you're just sitting there, and you want to do something, and it made me feel somewhat helpless.
- Mark Schoepfle: Again.
- Gil Goodrich: So, that — and that pretty much sums up what I did, and what my involvement was.
- Mark Schoepfle: Can we back up a little bit?
- Gil Goodrich: Sure.
- Mark Schoepfle: You were mentioning that you had been deployed — you and your squad had been deployed downtown to DC, and on to the Capitol Mall. And you said that your primary position there was to be a liaison between the squads that were in the field, and the central park police command, which you have mentioned was located at —
- Gil Goodrich: Well, they had a mobile command post set up down on the National Mall, and I can't tell you exactly where it was, but — because I'm not that familiar with the streets down there, but the mobile command post was set up right on the Mall, and because — we were having a bit of a communication problem, because even the Rangers — all the Rangers that were assigned down there, they were all from different parks, and we didn't have the capability of — at least I didn't have the capability — of communicating with the other members of my squad by radio. So, I made the decision — and this was agreed upon with Captain Walters, who was overseeing the operations, right there on site, that I would remain at or near the command post, so that as they needed to relay an assignment to us, or should information come across that we needed to be aware of, that I would then get that information to my squad. So, I tried to stay as close as I could to the command post, and any close communications with him — with the park police.

Mark Schoepfle: I'm curious. You said you didn't have radio contact. How did you get the information out to the squad?

Gil Goodrich: Basically, I just went out and contacted them personally.

Mark Schoepfle: Just walked out there — or drove or walked out there and got to them?

Gil Goodrich: Exactly. Yes. But it was a small — I mean, we were patrolling a small enough area that that really wasn't a problem, with the exception of — over at the Jefferson Memorial a guy had to make a short drive, but you know, to be very truthful, our assignments didn't change within the entire timeframe that we were down there, so there was really not much of a need, openly to communicate to each other, other than I did go out and contact folks on somewhat of a regular basis, just to make sure that everybody was doing okay, and see if anybody needed anything in terms of food, water, breaks, or whatever. So. But for the most part, we were — I think we had four vehicles down there, and I want to say there were eight Rangers, so everybody pretty much had access to a vehicle, and we were all fairly mobile, with the exception of the guys that were over at the Jefferson; everybody else were doing mobile patrols around the National Mall area. So, if I went out and stood in one spot for more than 10 minutes, eventually, I would have contacted all the folks in the squad that were on the Mall, because they would eventually drive past me.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm. All right. Well, you were mentioning also that you were providing communication; what kinds of questions did you get from the people from the squad, and what kinds of information were you relaying to them, if we can get into that detail?

Gil Goodrich: Well, I was briefed by Captain Walters, who's the Commander for the Central District of the park police. We have a very good — and I'll say a close working relationship, because coincidentally, he and I used — prior to his being reassigned to DC here in the last year — he and I had worked for about three years together out in Seattle — at that time he was the law enforcement specialist for the Seattle office, and I was the Chief Ranger at Lake Roosevelt National Recreation Area, so we worked very closely together for about three years. During that time, we established a very close social — I want to say a working and personal relationship. So, Dan and I know each other quite well, so we were very comfortable working together.

Gil Goodrich: When we first got there with the squad, he was in the process of briefing — having a role call with all the park police officers that were under his command, because they were in the middle of their briefing and the roll call, we waited until they finished, and then Captain Walters met with me, and basically, passed on to me that — as I mentioned previously — that basically we are operating under a state of emergency; air space has been assumed by the military; don't know a whole lot more than that. Our role was to provide some fixed post security, which we did over at the Jefferson, as well as mobile or roving security around the Mall area, and that was pretty much it. That's all we could work on at that time, and for that reason, met — it was one of the reasons that I remain close to the command post, should anything change — that I would be there, and be able to pass that information on, immediately.

Gil Goodrich: And I relayed that to the members of the squad, and with a few exceptions most of these folks — you know, the Law Enforcement Rangers typically — I think we've all been involved in special operations enough, through what we call the unified command system, or incident command system; be it on a fire, or especially then, or whatever — that you realize that you basically operate for the most part on a need-to-know basis, and you know that — you trust that your supervisor or flyer, your crew boss, whatever the title may be, is passing on as much information to you about the incident, as they have, and that may be very limited, and sometimes that's somewhat frustrating, but — and in this case the information is fairly limited. You know, we knew that two planes had crashed into the World Trade Center; that one had crashed into the Pentagon; another had crashed somewhere in Pennsylvania, and the rumor was that that plane may have been headed to the White House, or to the Capitol. And beyond that, we didn't really have any other information.

Gil Goodrich: And so, our role was to provide the security on the Mall, and at the Jefferson Memorial, and that's pretty straightforward, and that's what we did. And that assignment never changed, and we never — there was no other information, really forthcoming, or from my perspective, really more necessary.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm. When you're mentioning this sort of need to know, and I know others — some of the other superintendents had mentioned that they were getting calls in that — you know, once that the air space had become military that the people on patrol were just sort of at a heightened kind of alert, and were looking for a lot more things, than they ordinarily would have. It that the case with some of what was going on here? How did it work?

Gil Goodrich: Here in this park, or with —

Mark Schoepfle: Yes. And with the people with whom you were working.

Gil Goodrich: Yes. Well, of course, see I was removed from the park, from my assignment downtown. I can tell you that the response here was the superintendent closed the park, and as I was mobilizing to deploy downtown, I was not directly involved in that, but I was hearing radio traffic, and I actually was asked by my chief to call all of the off-duty Law Enforcement Ranger staff, and have them come in to work, which I made — I did make those calls. So, our immediate response in the part here, was to get everybody possible on duty, and to close the park, and for us that means this is a very difficult park to close, because there's not a primary entrance station, or access area where folks come in — you know, enter and exit. We have numerous — I mean, there is no way that you can keep folks out of this park. You can barricade the parking lots. Some of the parking lots do have gates, so they swing the gates. Of course, the first problem you have is getting the folks that are already in the park out, and then swing the gates.

Gil Goodrich: We have numerous riding operations — you know, equestrian operations around the park. Those folks — they enter the park at a variety of access points on the equestrian trails. We have folks that enter the park on hiking trails. So, it's not just a vehicular issue, and again, the best you can hope for is going out to parking lots, putting up barricades, swinging the gates, keeping the vehicles out of the park. But again, that doesn't ensure that you actually have folks out of the park. So, that was our immediate response here in the park. I was not, again, directly involved in that, because I was headed downtown.

Gil Goodrich: Downtown was kind of — well, once we got downtown, I mean, I felt like having driven from Turkey Run along the parkway, which was closed, all the way to downtown, and of course, all the access routes — you know, ingress routes to DC were basically closed, and only open for folks to leave. And you're going through all these barricades, and so by the time you actually get to the heart of DC — the National Mall — you've gone through half a dozen law enforcement barricades, and once you got down there, you felt like you were in a fairly secure environment — you know, because of the security that was the perimeter security. And I thought it's kind of interesting that despite this high-profile law enforcement presence and security down there, that there were still civilians kind of wandering around down there, and some folks would stop and chat with us, and I think everybody was aware of what was going on, but they would ask a question about, hey, I heard there was a fire over here in DC. No. There's not.

Gil Goodrich: So, there was a lot of rumor, innuendo going on, and we would try to clarify that for folks, it was either folks that were visitors to the DC area — tourists, if you will, and they were there to see downtown DC, and they were going to see it, one way or the other.

Gil Goodrich: And the other group that I'll categorize was folks that work — probably worked in the DC area, and when the evacuation took place they remained, or from the outlying area that came in, because they wanted to see what was going on. And that was kind of the other group of folks . . .

END OF TAPE 1

START OF TAPE 2

Mark Schoepfle: Okay, you were mentioning that you'd seen only several dozen people, and very few civilians, and of those that were there were three major kinds of people: The tourists who were there to see downtown, no matter what; commuters, I guess, who had remained there — they would have been like me; and then, residents from the outlying area, who came in to see what the heck was going on.

Gil Goodrich: Exactly, yes.

Mark Schoepfle: Okay. And you had mentioned that no civilian vehicles, no nothing. It sort of had a very surreal quality to it.

Gil Goodrich: Absolutely. I mean, it was almost like — well, I've referred to it as almost like a ghost town, which is really inaccurate, because obviously there were folks down there. I've never seen so many law enforcement vehicles, and law enforcement personnel being so concentrated in one area. It was just incredible. One thing that I might mention is — because not a whole lot went on in terms of — again, any enforcement contacts that we made while we were down there, but at one point we heard a helicopter, which — of course, everybody is kind of scanning the sky, and looking around at each other, like what the hell is that? And I happened to be right with Captain Walters, and he got on the radio and called someone, and confirmed that it was the President returning to the White House for his address to the nation, and that was, I guess, another emotional event for me. I just — it was — you just felt very proud to be a citizen of the United States, and despite the fact there's this — by then we knew that these were all terrorist related events, and as a federal employee, and a federal law enforcement officer, I was making a contribution to the response effort, and to be down there on the Mall, looking in one direction right at sunset on a beautiful, warm fall afternoon — evening, just

Gil Goodrich: — and I looked in one direction and see the Capitol Building, and the other direction I see the Washington Monument, and then to have the President's helicopter, which was being escorted by — as I understood it — and typically you see two helicopters when you see Boeing One, the President's helicopter; they usually get somebody to decoy, but in this case, there was a third I recall a third helicopter, which I understood was a military gunship, but to see those three come in, and know that that's the President of the United States who's coming in to make a speech to the citizens of the United States, that was — to me — it was somewhat emotional in terms of feeling very patriotic.

Mark Schoepfle: Sure.

Gil Goodrich: And it put some things in perspective in terms of knowing that that's the President of the United States just a few hundred meters away, and the White House, and the seat of the United States government there at the Capitol, and you're just wondering what — again, if somebody's going to try to make a political statement, then that's most likely where the next volley would be — they would be firing against it. Now, you have this incredible responsibility to defend and to protect that. So, I think I can tell you that it was with reluctance that when we were demobed, you know. You felt like you didn't want to leave; you wanted to be down there, and making some contribution in some small way, and again, having been down there on site, and then within 30 minutes, I was home sitting in my living room. I felt very helpless, and it felt like I wanted to do something, but I didn't know what to do, and knowing that just over the hill was the Pentagon, and all that was going on over there. But I know enough about emergency operations that, sometimes just having folks show up is not necessarily a good thing, and so I restrained myself from going over to see if there was anything that I could do.

Mark Schoepfle: Yes. I'm afraid that was a sentiment that was shared by a number of us.

Gil Goodrich: Absolutely, yes. Absolutely. You hear stories about folks that just — you know, from all over the country — that jumped in a vehicle or whatever, and just drove to DC or went to New York and showed up. Here I am. And there has to be some order, and it's a very helpless feeling, because you want to do something, but there may not be an opportunity for you to do that.

Mark Schoepfle: Right. Well, this was sort of the first day that this was going on, that the park had been shut down, and you were all on patrol. Then you got demobed. I mean, is that like — just to make sure — that's like “demobilized,” or is that the term?

- Gil Goodrich: Yes. Yes. Basically, our assignment was — we were told that — for some reason I want to say it was 10:00 o'clock at night. You know, it was determined, basically, that our services were no longer needed. And so, we were released — is another term. I want to say, again, it was either 10:00 or 10:30, something like that. And that's basically it, and so as the squad leader, I contacted everyone under my supervision, and informed them that we were released, and that they could return to their home parks, and that was pretty much it. And then I met with — went back to the command post, and basically just spoke with some of the folks there, and Captain Walters — there were a couple other captains, and oh, I think Major Pallenger was there — and just thanked them for allowing us the opportunity to come down and work with them, and provide services, and told them that if they needed further assistance, we'd be happy to bring the squads back the following day, or whatever, and they said they would let us know. They never did that.
- Mark Schoepfle: Well, what happened in the days after all this occurred? I mean, I gather you're back at the park?
- Gil Goodrich: Yes. I was back.
- Mark Schoepfle: What was going on?
- Gil Goodrich: We were back — I was back on duty the next day, here in the park. My recollection is that the park was open to visitors but also, we were on, I guess I could define it as a heightened state of awareness, in terms of anything that looked or seemed out of the ordinary. And I'll give you an example because I was on patrol. I typically work the morning shift, usually 6:00 in the morning to 2:30. As I was on patrol, I actually have to leave the park to get to another section of the park, and as I was driving along an industrial area, or through an industrial area, I saw a — like one of these — I call them a box — it's like a box van. It's like a small moving van.
- Mark Schoepfle: A truck?
- Gil Goodrich: Right. Off the roadway, probably 50 yards. It was like driven right up next to this large — I don't know what it is, if it's a — like a utility station or a water transfer station, or something. It's up next to — AOL just finished building a big facility right over here, and it was pulled up right next to that.
- Mark Schoepfle: Whoa.

Gil Goodrich: And I thought, you know, that just doesn't look right. I mean, I recall even — you know, it was an Interstate — one of those kind of weird, pale green moving vans, and I was just about to call the dispatch, and see if — because that was on my first patrol in the morning, so that would have been very early, and so I was just getting ready to call dispatch, and let them know what I was seeing, even if that's out of our jurisdiction, when I heard another officer — this would be a county officer calling dispatch. I'm sorry — someone had called the dispatch center to report seeing it. I assume somebody that was driving to work, or working over there, and I heard another officer come on and say that that truck had been there — been reported earlier — last night, and they had already checked on it, and it was okay. So. And normally, probably any other day, I would have driven by that and said, well that's odd. What's that moving van doing parked up there? I probably wouldn't have gone to the extent of — I mean, the first thing that went through my mind, obviously, is — you know, some sort of terrorist act.

Mark Schoepfle: Kind of like a truck bomb, or something?

Gil Goodrich: Exactly. I mean, it just seemed odd that at 6:30-7 o'clock in the morning, this thing is sitting right next to you, whatever it was — a utility station, or whatever at the American Online. My thought was, hey, that makes sense. You crash AOL's system, and you get a lot of folks out of communication with each other — that sort of thing. And then also knowing, you know, the next couple of days it came to our attention that there was — I don't recall exactly the particulars of this, but there was someone — well, knowing that planes — some of the planes that were used in the hijacking emanated from Dulles, which is not too far from here, and that eventually over the next few days, it was determined that these guys, some of them had — some of the terrorists were traveling on fake IDs that had been obtained in this area from DMV, and that, in fact, a Manassas park police officer had stopped someone, and I want to say was on the FBI list — you know, the watch list, or something. I don't recall the particulars of that, but I do recall that someone that was on the FBI watch list had — was stopped by a — or documents found or whatever it was, was found by a — or the vehicle or whatever — had been found by a Manassas park police officer, and again, that's just a couple of miles away; so, yes, you're thinking — you want to think what could happen in Manassas National Park that could have any correlation or relation to terrorist activities. But as I often remind — I used to teach patrol tactics in a National Park Service, in Washington State Parks Ranger Training Academy, and one of the things that I used to stress to folks is not to overlook even the smallest details.

Gil Goodrich: And I used to remind folks in classroom that Timothy McVeigh was arrested just a few minutes after the Oklahoma City bombing, simply because a police officer stopped him — if I recall, it was for improper — I think improper registration, or the tag was screwed up on his car, or his tail light out, or it was something like that. It was a minor traffic violation and was stopped. And that's how he was arrested. So yes, all that kind of goes through your mind, and then you start wondering if someone who — you know, a lot of the battle fields a year or so ago — Civil War battle fields — had a number of their monuments vandalized with folks putting some sort of oil, this —

Mark Schoepfle: Salad oil or something on there?

Gil Goodrich: Yes. And so, you know, we're very vigilant, particularly around certain anniversary events of the battles, or Veterans Day and Memorial Day, and so forth. We are, I think, a little — pay a little more attention to the monuments and check them a little more closely for that type of activity. Now, personally, I began to pay more attention to the monuments, because you never know; I mean, your first thought is: I can see what somebody is going to do — what sort of statement could be made at Manassas National Battlefield Park. Now, I worked for eight — almost nine years at Lake Roosevelt National Recreation Area. I would be somewhat nervous were I still working there, because you've got the Grand Coulee Dam, which could certainly be considered a terrorist target; in fact, we have had Rangers on security detail there, as with a number of the other interior dams for the last couple of months. So, I'd be certainly nervous if I'd been working back at Lake Roosevelt, but here, you know, you kind of wonder, well, what statement could be made? But you never know, and as we all know, parks are great places to conduct criminal activity, because — for that very reason — because typically they're a good place to dump bodies, and stolen cars and evidence, and that kind of stuff, because that's the last place you would expect that kind of activity to occur. So I think we were quite vigilant in terms of more — really taking a hard look at any sort of suspicious activity, and maybe being a little more vigilant to the monuments and so forth, but other than that it was just more a sense of kind of disbelief that, you know, I think you become somewhat acclimatized, I guess, to see acts of terrorism, and civil disobedience, and so forth on television, and it's always in some third world country, or the Middle East, and that kind of activity just doesn't take place in the United States, and then all of a sudden it has, and you're just — you're kind of numb beyond articulation as to — you can't believe that this has happened, and that thousands of people have been killed, or that a mile and a half from my house a plane crashed into a federal building, and killed close to 200 people, and it's just — it's very hard to comprehend.

Gil Goodrich: You saw it on TV, and I would drive — I live right at Spout Run, and I would drive down the highway a half mile, and see police barricades at the entrance to Spout Run, half a mile from my house, and it just — I saw that every day, and that just really put things in perspective for me that this is just not something that happens in the United States, and our whole way of life has been changed as of September 11th.

Mark Schoepfle: Sure.

Gil Goodrich: And I still believe that. I mean, my wife and I were — we had a trip to Europe — and this is digressing here, but we had a trip to Europe planned, to leave I think the third week of October, and folks were amazed that we were not going to cancel our trip. We were going to Italy with a quick stop in Paris. And a lot of folks were just amazed that we were intent on continuing our trip, and I got a little nervous when the Italian Prime Minister started railing against the Islamic folks, but once that kind of died down a little bit, we took our trip, and we had no — we decided that we were not going to advertise — you know, if anyone asked, we were from Canada. (Laughter.) But, yes, had a very pleasant trip, and the only thing that kind of marred it for us was, as we were returning, our flight had been rescheduled, and we flew out of Rome. We ended up having to fly to London, and when we got — just as we were about to board the flight — I mean, literally, they had just called us to begin boarding — they informed us that a plane has crashed in New York —

Mark Schoepfle: Oh, yes.

Gil Goodrich: — a few minutes ago, and they had no further information as to the nature of the cause, but that all airspace in New York City was closed. And for folks that didn't want to board the plane, they asked everyone to form a line on the right, and for everyone that was going to board the plane, form a line on the left; they had already performed one security check on the plane, and they were doing another one, and the plane was going to take off. And immediately, everybody that had a cell phone got on the — their cell phone, and everybody that didn't ran to a pay phone, trying to find out what was going on. And my wife is looking at me, you know, like what do we do? And I ran — because I couldn't get on a pay phone; I ran down probably half a mile to another terminal to try to use a pay phone, only to realize when I got there — because I have an international calling card, but it was one of those phones that you have to put some change in just to get a dial tone, and I didn't have any pence, and it only took pence, and so I had to run back to my wife; she had some change, because we had just had some lunch. I said give me some change so I can get the phone.

Gil Goodrich: Well, at that point they were — I mean, they had been boarding, and so it was, basically, you either get on the plane now, or you don't, and what ran through my mind was, okay, maybe somebody's pissed off at Tony Blair for supporting the Alliance, and wants to crash into the Parliament Building, but my thought was — you know, once we cleared British airspace, we're probably in pretty good shape, because nobody is going to sit on a plane — having said this, you know, we had the incident that just occurred a couple of days ago, but my thought was nobody is going to sit on a plane for seven hours until it runs out of fuel, and then try to crash it in DC.

Gil Goodrich: So, I said let's go ahead and get on the plane, and it was unnerving, because we're all — you know, it's just dead quiet. I mean, all the passengers are just sitting there looking at each other, and nobody is really saying anything. And we're sitting there on the plane, and you're kind of waiting to hear that door close, and set things in motion, and there was just this delay, and this delay, and we couldn't figure out what's going on, and then the pilot came on the intercom, and asked the following passengers to please report to the front door and meet with an airline representative, and he started calling out all these Middle Eastern names. And you know, at that point, I came pretty close to just getting up and getting off the plane. We didn't and we had an uneventful flight, but —

Mark Schoepfle: Yes.

Gil Goodrich: Yes. Just — it gives you some pause, and I've never had any concern, whatsoever; never about flying, and all of a sudden — and one of the passengers — this is interesting, because when we were — when they made the announcement at the gate, and they said, you know, we'll give you a few minutes to think about it, and anyone that doesn't want to fly to get on the right side, and the guy standing next to me just made a comment to no one in particular, but he made the comment that: "And now everybody starts looking at each other." And he's right. You can't help but not do that, and you know, you feel discomfort with yourself for doing that, but — so.

Mark Schoepfle: Sure. Well, did you have any sense of a return to normalcy, or a kind of new equilibrium or anything like that?

Gil Goodrich: Well, I think that as time passes, you know, immediately after — I was trying to put in perspective, how does this directly impact me, and I don't know that it really did in terms of I didn't have anyone that was injured or killed — you know, I mean, things just kind of percolated up. As an example, I race bicycles. I'm sponsored by a bicycle company; they sponsor a police race team, of which there are eight of us on the team.

Gil Goodrich: One of our members is a New York City police officer, who also has a brother who's a New York City police officer, and my first thought was is he okay? Are they okay? So, there was some communication, you know, to check that out. I got a lot of e-mails from folks all over the country — mostly, I race all over the world in international police and police-fire Olympics. And so, I got a lot of e-mails from a lot of police officers and fire fighters, wanting to know if my family — am I okay. Just kind of checking in.

Gil Goodrich: And I had a good friend who's a police officer, and is actually the manager of our race team, who's a police officer in Clifton, New Jersey, which is right across the river from Manhattan. You know, they ended up — guys on his department are going over there, and it's like, well okay, a lot of people went over there; they couldn't really — I mean, you think about — it's just — it must be horrible, but what really put it in perspective to me was about the third — about the middle of October, this particular guy sponsors a police, fire, and EMS bicycle race in Clifton, New Jersey, and there was a lot of talk about canceling that race — he does it every year, and ultimately the decision was made, no, we're going to have the race, and it would benefit the World Trade Center families. So, we drove up there, and of course, the first thing that kind of struck is the World Trade Center is gone as you're driving up there and see the skyline, and then the next day, we had the race, and a lot of guys from his department were there, and they had this little bus, kind of like the little shuttle buses that take you from the hotel to the airport?

Mark Schoepfle: Right.

Gil Goodrich: And they have one of those that they have donated to the department, and it's got Clifton Police Department. They use it predominantly for the bike patrol and community policing stuff, and we were talking about — say, hey, that's a neat little bus you've got there, and he said, yes, we used that on September 11th. He said we drove from hardware store to hardware store and just filled it up with shovels and picks. And I'm thinking, you know, that — when you think—

END OF TAPE 2

START OF TAPE 3

Gil Goodrich: —he was able to go in. And I just can't imagine searching for survivors, following the collapse of two buildings like that with just being first on the scene, and digging through steel beams weighing 50 tons, and all the debris that consists — formerly consisted of two scrappers, digging through that with your hands, and picks and shovels.

- Mark Schoepfle: And that's what they needed?
- Gil Goodrich: That's what they were doing. Yes. I mean, it's just — I thought about that a lot. That pretty much reduces it down — distills it down to its most basic outlines.
- Mark Schoepfle: Yes.
- Gil Goodrich: And I haven't seen Ground Zero; I have folks — friends of mine — that have, and they tell me that you can look at it on TV all you want, and it doesn't mean anything until you get there, and just go "holy shit!"
- Mark Schoepfle: Right, right.
- Gil Goodrich: And that to me is just — I mean, the thought of just this little bus with these guys driving around to hardware stores, picking up picks and shovels and rakes and stuff, and driving over to dig folks out, that's incredible.
- Mark Schoepfle: Yes.
- Gil Goodrich: So, you know, just things like that. Again, did it impact me, personally? Not really, but residually, yes, it did. Certainly. In my next — the guy that lives across the street from me is a photographer with "National Geo," one of his office mates was killed on the plane that crashed into the Pentagon; a guy that does some landscaping for us — you know, this is all just through casual conversation, like, in the weeks following — one of his — the guy that does landscaping for us was telling me that his wife had a close friend that was killed in the Pentagon, and you know, just that, and it just — it seems like for several weeks, it was kind of like every once in a while, something would just come up in conversation, or that kind of personalized it, again, and I guess most recently, I just last — two weeks ago, we had some close friends of ours come out from Washington state, and he is — Jim is a paramedic who attended the Olympia Fire Department, and he races bicycles, and they came out for a national championship race in Baltimore, and he and his wife flew separately on two different planes, because they have a two-year-old daughter, and they were that concerned about flying to the DC area, that they flew back and forth on different flights.
- Mark Schoepfle: Because of the way they saw particularly — the danger of the DC area, in particular?
- Gil Goodrich: Yes.
- Mark Schoepfle: They wouldn't have necessarily done that any other place?
- Gil Goodrich: I don't know that. I don't know that for a fact.
- Mark Schoepfle: I'm just curious.

Gil Goodrich: And in fact, they flew in to BWI. But that was the decision that they made.

Mark Schoepfle: Interesting.

Gil Goodrich: You know? And I didn't — we didn't talk about that. I didn't — he just made the comment that because — he said we're just not taking any chances, and we're going take two different flights. So.

Mark Schoepfle: From what you're saying — just see if I'm tracking this right — first of all, one of the things that just sort of changed was that you had a — just around the park, you had a heightened awareness of what was going on? Okay. Personally, because of your job as a police officer, you're active in things such as the Olympic — police and firemen's Olympics, and as a result of that, you had a lot of contact with other police, particularly in the New York area, and a lot of that has really affected your — from what you're describing, just your overall perspective of the way — well, for lack of better expression for me, just your overall perspective. Am I tracking that correctly?

Gil Goodrich: Yes. I think — you know, again, I — not to be redundant, but I personally did not suffer a loss.

Mark Schoepfle: Right.

Gil Goodrich: But through my personal relationships; I guess that's what personalized it for me, was that this is just not something that I'm watching on TV, and gee, I really feel sorry for all those families in New York that lost someone. But now I'm talking to my neighbor across the street, who had a coworker that used to be in the same building or down the hall from him or whatever, who was killed on one of the flights; or I have a team member on my race team who is a New York City police officer, assigned to Manhattan, and we can't get hold of, which you know, is to be expected after something like that, and just — you know, communication systems are down or whatever, but not knowing if he's okay, and then you know — so you start, you know, the phone tree. You're calling folks and they're calling folks, and so on and so forth.

Gil Goodrich: And then, you know, do you get on the plane and fly to Europe or not? I mean, the security issues of flying — and I'll just — I'll tell you; you can strip me naked and run me through the X-ray machine before I get on a plane. I have no problem with that. And you can put all my luggage on a Greyhound bus; you know, no luggage goes in the plane. I have no problem with that. So, you know, when they're telling us, you've got to be there three hours early to get on your international flight, no problem.

- Gil Goodrich: That's a minor inconvenience, as far as I'm concerned. I guess my point was that although I was not directly impacted, I was indirectly, as I would hope that we all are at some point, even if it's just the indignation of this attack on our country. And I — you know, and truly, it's one of those events that — just like — a cliché or something like that, just you will always remember where you were and what you were doing on September 11th. I mean, I will remember —
- Mark Schoepfle: Exactly.
- Gil Goodrich: — that I was sitting in my office — at that time I was in the other room. I mean, I was sitting right there working on the computer when the phone rang, and my wife informed me. And probably the activities of that day will be in my mind for the rest of my life.
- Mark Schoepfle: Sure.
- Gil Goodrich: So, in fact, I think it would be less of an event if it wasn't.
- Mark Schoepfle: Sure.
- Gil Goodrich: Given the magnitude of what took place. I guess with living so close to it — I mean, every time you go down to DC, and see all the park police officers, in particular, running around the monuments, and I mean, it still kind of brings it home to me — and we just drove past the Pentagon last weekend; it's the first time that we've done that in a while, and with the damaged wall, and we were just like — it's hard to imagine that a plane crashed into that building. So, I suspect — I mean, I'm actually looking forward to my detail that starts Sunday in the sense that it's my contribution to the quote/unquote “anti-terrorism effort.” And my detail is — I'm being assigned to the Main Interior Building for two weeks.
- Mark Schoepfle: Oh!
- Gil Goodrich: Because we have had difficulty securing. I don't know when they started it, following September 11th, but we have had Rangers — Park Protective Rangers, as well as other officers from other interior agencies performing physical security down there for at least the last two, two and a half months.
- Mark Schoepfle: Oh, sure. Yes. Okay.
- Gil Goodrich: So, it's my turn, and —
- Mark Schoepfle: Congratulations.

- Gil Goodrich: I actually volunteered to do it, because personally — and this is off the record — but personally, I would rather — I have more of a connection to the Main Interior Building that houses all the Interior agencies, as well as the National Park Service, than I do going down to Herbert Hoover or Grand Coulee Dam, which you know, we have very good presence as far as physical security.
- Mark Schoepfle: Sure.
- Gil Goodrich: So, that is certainly — part of that might be an option, as well, but my preference was to work downtown. I've actually asked if there was some — you know, informally, some of my park police friends — if there was some way that the Rangers could assist park police officers in rotating some of their group security details, because those guys have been working 12-hour shifts, six-day weeks, since September 11th, and I know a lot of the agencies have been down there, but you know, that's how the Capitol police — you know, at some point they said we've got to have some relief, and that's how the National Guard got transitioned down there to assist the Capitol police, but the park police have been — those guys have been working, I believe since September 11th on 12-hour shifts, six-days — you know, as far as I know with no relief in sight. So.
- Mark Schoepfle: That's what I've been — that's the impression I'm getting.
- Gil Goodrich: Yes.
- Mark Schoepfle: So, you're looking forward to getting in there and lending them a hand?
- Gil Goodrich: Oh, absolutely. Yes, sure. My understanding is that there haven't been park police assigned to the Main Interior Building, and it's been all National Park Service Rangers, some Fish and Wildlife officers, some [Navy BLE] officers. I'm not sure about that, but I know the last time I was down there, I saw a Park Service and Fish and Wildlife officer. So, yes, absolutely. It's my opportunity to contribute to the effort.
- Mark Schoepfle: Great.
- Gil Goodrich: So, I'm looking forward to that.
- Mark Schoepfle: Well, looking back on all this, both from the standpoint that you've been discussing, and sort of the personal, the professional; I'd almost call it the quasi-professional; you're with the Olympics and everything, I mean, you wouldn't be in those sorts of things if you weren't already part of the police, and that kind of thing. What have been — in the broadest sense, from Park Service on out, from what you've been describing, what are the lessons? What lessons have been learned from this?

Gil Goodrich: Well, I guess most importantly, from my view, what we should take away from this is that we — the United States — we are as vulnerable in the international environment, as I think any other country. I mean, that's been established. Obviously, our security nationally has been heightened tremendously since September 11th, but I think we can no longer just sit home and watch TV or read in the paper about these type of acts taking place in India; the situation in Pakistan and India, or the Middle East situation. We should — that should all be much more personal to us now, and not view it as just something that happens somewhere else. I think from the Park Service perspective, I think we have been heightened to the sense that we have facilities; we have areas within the Department of Interior and National Park Service that could well be targets for some sort of terrorist activity, be it a dam, be an icon — the most obvious being the lighthouse, the Washington Monument, and certainly the Independence — you know, the Liberty Bell. I mean, these areas, I think all could be looked at by extremist groups as — again, just to make a statement — to take out the White House or the Washington Monument would, I think, be seen as a moral victory, if nothing else, by certain groups, just to make a point, that the US is vulnerable. And I think our sense of awareness of — it should not ever diminish. I think usually after an incident like this, there's a tendency, maybe six months, maybe a year, that we kind of get back to where we were, and I don't think we can allow that to happen.

Mark Schoepfle: No getting back to where we once were?

Gil Goodrich: I don't think so. I think that's a natural tendency, but I don't think we have the luxury of allowing that to happen in this case. I think there's a sense of frustration in the Park Service right now, with our resources, in that we're being asked to preserve and protect the visitors and the resources within our parks, and yet we find that increasingly difficult to do, when we, the Law Enforcement Rangers, are being sent out of parks to other areas throughout the United States. Again, I know some parks have had their staffs reduced significantly in response to this — you know, in this park, we have sent folks up to Catoctin on a number of occasions to assist them at Camp David. Prince William Forest Park, for example, they have a number of vacant law enforcement positions right now, so we've been going up there, and — some of our guys have been going up there and working at Prince William Forest Park, just to provide basic patrol coverage for them. And then, of course, I'll be at — in WASO, at the Main Interior for two weeks. My Chief Ranger was in WASO for two weeks on a security assignment last month, so I think, if we're going to continue to engage in that sort of activity — I mean, I don't know how much longer we can continue.

- Gil Goodrich: I think it's fortunate that we're being pulled out of parks, and if there's ever a time to do it, this is probably it, and that at most parks, this is — we're kind of getting to the shoulder of the slow season for a lot of parks, so now — if there's ever a better time for resources to be drawn from, it's now. If we continue to try to maintain this level of support to dams and some of the other parks next summer, we're also going to try and maintain our usual level of protection in the park, and it's going to be very, very difficult unless the funding becomes available to hire some new Rangers. You know, I'm also aware that the one thing I did mention is that we've also got some folks pulled into the Sky Marshall Program. I'm not sure you're aware of that.
- Mark Schoepfle: Uh-uh.
- Gil Goodrich: I mean, not in this park, but there are National Park Rangers — Rangers or special agents, one or the other, I'm not sure — but I'm just pleased that we do have some National Park Service law enforcement folks that are working as Sky Marshalls.
- Mark Schoepfle: I had no idea of that, but in other words, the ones that are on the planes?
- Gil Goodrich: Yes.
- Mark Schoepfle: Wow! I had no idea of that.
- Gil Goodrich: Yes. A lot of the agencies across the board - federal agencies have had folks pulled into that, and coincidentally, I'm having dinner tonight with a close friend of mine, who is a Fish and Wildlife agent, who came to work one day about a month and a half ago, and was told "you've been assigned to the Air Marshall Program for the next six months." And so, for the last month and a half, he rides a plane.
- Mark Schoepfle: [Laughter.] Good grief.
- Gil Goodrich: And he's a Fish and Wildlife agent, and he says that they work in pairs; he happens to be working with another Fish and Wildlife agent, but he says you never know who you're going to run into. He says, you know, Customs, Border Patrol, INS; he says, virtually every internal agency that folks in that program.
- Mark Schoepfle: Yes. Yes. I didn't realize that.
- Gil Goodrich: Yes.

- Mark Schoepfle: I had been aware from talking to some of the park police that they were feeling even more pressure, because a lot of the police now had to be on fixed positions, rather than mobile, so that that actually created more pressure on them, because there were fewer arrests made routine drugs, and a lot of that other stuff going on.
- Gil Goodrich: Yes. When you're on fixed post, that's pretty much what — you know, you're on fixed post, and you don't have a lot of latitude. So, yes, we were just down in DC a couple of nights ago, and we were down by the ellipse, and I was amazed that the amount of resources that we have to expend at the monuments and along the Mall, and so forth — still — I mean, these guys are still down there. And we were down there, like, a weekend or two ago late at night, and my understanding is they've got — I don't know if this is for common knowledge, but just off the record, they've got like four —
- Mark Schoepfle: You want me to —
- Gil Goodrich: Oh, that's fine. I think they've got like a minimum of four officers per monuments assigned right now, so I mean, that's a lot of folks.
- Mark Schoepfle: I'm sorry. A minimum of four officers for —
- Gil Goodrich: My understanding is that — and again, this is not for public consumption, but I have heard that they're trying to maintain a minimum of four park police officers per monument, 24 hours a day.
- Mark Schoepfle: Are there plans for increasing the number?
- Gil Goodrich: Of park police?
- Mark Schoepfle: Yes.
- Gil Goodrich: Well, you know, they would be better to speak to that issue than me. I know that they're short — my understanding is that they're short — I can't give you the exact figure, but I know it's over 100 officers, and of course, their entire force, they've only got like 650 officers or 600 officers, something like that, so I mean, you're talking being down one-sixth or so of your entire force. But my understanding, because I just have casual conversations with a lot of friends is that they are short like — for some reason 125 officers stays in the back of my mind — they're short. Now, you know, they just got their new chief, and she officially comes on the job in February, but she was just hired like last week or so. So, we'll just see what happens once she gets into place, and sets some things in motion, but they're in desperate need of staff, as is the Park Service.

- Gil Goodrich: I mean, I'm sure you're aware — maybe you're not — that it was an independent — I'll call it an audit for lack of a better term — of the National Park Service law enforcement program, which was conducted the year before last by the International Association of Police Chiefs, I think. And they came up with a figure of how many additional law enforcement rangers were needed, and I can't give you that figure off the top of my head, but it was significant.
- Gil Goodrich: And I haven't seen any increase in position vacancies for Rangers, but we'll just let it stay at that. And we don't have a chief, you know? Our chief — I mean, for the National Park Service there is a chief of — Chief Ranger for the entire national program at WASO, and that position has been vacant for several months, and I don't where they want to hire in that position.
- Mark Schoepfle: Well, I'm sorry for the dumb question, like I said, we were not really well-prepared with even coming out, but are you part of the Manassas Park Police, or are you a ranger, or what is your position?
- Gil Goodrich: My title is park ranger in Park Services, identified usually as park ranger and then in parentheses —
- Mark Schoepfle: Protection.
- Gil Goodrich: That's usually how it's identified. Because we have Park Rangers who are historians, and museum curators, and interpreters, and so on and so forth. So, we operate under a different organization than the park police, which is very paramilitary in terms of privates and corporals and lieutenants and sergeants, and so forth. So, basically every park you go to is going to be set up differently, but you'll see a standard organization kind of filter through. Basically, you've got Field Rangers, which is what I am now. I'm a control ranger, depending on the size of the park, and the organizational structure. You will then either have — and as you move up the organization, you'll have area rangers or subdistrict rangers. Sometimes parks are divided into districts or subdistricts, and they'll typically supervise all the patrol rangers in their area or their subdistrict, and then you'll have district rangers; there are usually subdistricts — well, areas within subdistricts, and subdistricts within districts — and for each of those organizations there's a supervisor who supervises a patrol staff, and then ultimately you'll have — in some large parts, you'll have an assistant chief ranger, and then you'll always have a chief ranger.

Gil Goodrich: And chief rangers are — again, depending on the complexity and size of your park, the chief ranger can either be responsible for overseeing only the law enforcement operation, which also includes having said only law enforcement, also includes — it's what we call visitor protection activities, and that includes law enforcement, search and rescue, emergency services — EMS — and fire; those types of things. Or in smaller parts, you'll have a chief ranger who oversees all of that, plus the interpretive operation, and then they could even oversee the resource management operation. You know, every park I've worked has been different. I was chief ranger at Lake Roosevelt National Recreation Area. I supervised the law enforcement, the EMS, the fire, the search and rescue.

Gil Goodrich: We had a chief of interpretation; we had a chief of resource management. I transferred to Atlanta; I was the chief ranger at Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area. I supervised the interpretive operation. I supervised the law enforcement, fire, EMS, and search and rescue. Here, we have a chief of the law enforcement operation. We have a chief of the interpretive operation, and we have a chief ranger, and then we just have patrol rangers. The park is not large enough to have areas or subdistricts or districts. So, we have a chief ranger, and we have five patrol rangers.

Mark Schoepfle: Yes.

END OF SIDE 1

START OF SIDE 2

Gil Goodrich: —from Cumberland Island to Lake Roosevelt; Lake Roosevelt backed the Chattahoochee River, and I've been here about — I've been aboard for two years.

Mark Schoepfle: Okay. Chattahoochee, Grand Canyon, out through the Inspector General at the Chattahoochee to Lake Roosevelt. Wow. Pretty good.

Gil Goodrich: I mean, I ended up here — I actually came up from Chief Ranger at Lake Roosevelt to Chief Ranger, Chattahoochee, and then went from a GS-13 to a GS-9, because my wife had a very good career opportunity — well, she also works for the Park Service here in DC, and for almost two years we had worked in separate parts of the country, and lived in separate parts of the country, and we tried — you know, we just got tired of trying to maintain two households, and for the better part — almost a year and a half — she was in Washington state, and I was in Atlanta, and we only saw each other like one weekend every six weeks. So —

Mark Schoepfle: Been there and done that, and the novelty wears off real fast.

Gil Goodrich: Yes. We started off; we said we'd give it three months, and three months went to six months, and six months went to a year, and then after a year and a half we said that's enough. And then she transferred to DC, and we could make that work, so for six months we did the DC to Atlanta commute. And after six months then I said I will take the first law enforcement position in the DC area and this is ridiculous, you know? So, that's how I ended up here. She works over at Heath. She's the Assistant Superintendent.

Mark Schoepfle: At which one?

Gil Goodrich: At the National Council of Parks East.

Mark Schoepfle: Right. You're saying the Assistant Superintendent?

Gil Goodrich: She's the Assistant Superintendent, yes.

Mark Schoepfle: Very good.

Gil Goodrich: So, I kind of parked my career for a while, so she can do —

Mark Schoepfle: I know what you mean.

Gil Goodrich: — do what she needs to do.

Mark Schoepfle: I know what you mean; that's great. Well, this has been very informative.

Gil Goodrich: Well, I hope I haven't rambled too much.

Mark Schoepfle: No. This is what I want. I mean, it's important to be able to get this broad view.

Mark Schoepfle: I mean, I can just sit there and go through all the — you know, and I'll just stick to what's going on in the institutional history of the stuff, but I think you miss a lot that way otherwise.

Gil Goodrich: Yes. You know, unfortunately — or maybe fortunately, I didn't rush into any burning buildings; didn't carry anybody to safety on my back, or anything like that, so it was — I'm almost reluctant to even talk about my role, because my role I view as being so insignificant in relation to what other folks did.

Mark Schoepfle: Sure.

Gil Goodrich: You know? I mean, — I really don't feel like I did a whole hell of a lot, to be honest with you. Even the other squad of Rangers, that was in DC — and I haven't spoken with any of those guys to find out exactly what they did. I was told they assisted in securing all the kids from the day care center, and getting them to a safe area, and getting them back with their family.

Gil Goodrich: To me, those guys made more of a contribution to the effort than we did. I mean, we were there, and if — our contribution was we responded to a request by the US Park Police to supplant their resources.

Gil Goodrich: So, that was our assistance, and that was our contribution, and a lot of those guys that are down there at 2:00 o'clock in the morning sitting in a patrol car, and trying to stay warm at the Lincoln Memorial, you know, they're probably asking themselves the same thing, you know? What contribution am I making sitting here? But if by being there, they're deterring — you know, even the thought of some sort of act, then their contribution has been made, and they'll never know it. And like I said, I guess, we're more action-oriented, you know? We feel like we need to be saving somebody, or putting a bandage on someone, or something, or we're not doing something, and you try not to feel this sense of helplessness when you go into a situation like this, if you're not doing something.

Gil Goodrich: I mean, it's kind of like all the — I used to be heavily involved in the fire program and went on a lot of fires out west. It's kind of like a fire operation in that if you don't get in there right at the first, and you're out on the fire line, like battling the flames, you get there a couple of weeks later, and you just are putting out hot spots, or you're building water bars, or whatever, then you kind of feel like — I'm not really on a fire, you know? I'm just at a fire scene, and sometimes I catch myself thinking what really am I contributing here, other than just being a warm body? But again, the request was made by the park police; they needed assistance. We provided that assistance, and so we have to think kind of that that was our contribution. And you know, going down to Interior for the next two weeks — I trust that it will be an easy two weeks in the sense that nobody will try to crash a car or a truck into the building, and no one will take anybody hostage or whatever, but that's what we're there for, and if simply by our presence we deter something like that from happening, then that's the whole purpose of being there.

Mark Schoepfle: Yes. Well, I mean, that's one of the things we find in this kind of interviewing, is that a lot of people, their first question is, "you know, why me? I wasn't really right there in the front lines."

Gil Goodrich: Yes.

Mark Schoepfle: But what we find in a lot of these things is first of all, showing up — I don't know exactly how the saying goes, but you know, showing up is 95 percent of the battle won.

Mark Schoepfle: And in a lot of cases like that, people who are not on the dramatic front lines, but nonetheless changed, and made substantial contributions, and they're not obvious, and any decent history that we're doing here, is to get at these less than obvious things, because all of those are going to be important when the Park Service has to learn the institutional lessons of all this; so, that's why — you know, what you're having to say is really quite important.

Gil Goodrich: Well, I appreciate that. I guess it's our nature that if we didn't really do something significant that we really didn't do much at all, and so it's interesting to hear that there is that thread.

Mark Schoepfle: Sure.

Gil Goodrich: Throughout your contacts, and I don't know what else I can contribute to this, but if there's any follow-up or anything that you need to do, I'll be more than happy to talk to you, and —

Mark Schoepfle: Well, I definitely want to stay in touch. Is there anything that you'd like to know about us that I haven't mentioned?

Gil Goodrich: No. I was just curious as to — first of all, who had initiated this, and what the purpose of the interviews are, and so forth, and that — and that it makes perfect sense to me now.

Mark Schoepfle: Great.

Gil Goodrich: I was kind of curious as to — that's why I asked, you know, how did my name come up, because —

Mark Schoepfle: And why me of all people?

Gil Goodrich: Yes, yes. But I think it's great that you're doing a broad-brush approach to talking to folks, and consolidating all that, and coming up with a final product. I'll be real interested to see the report.

Mark Schoepfle: You're on the list

Gil Goodrich: Great.

Mark Schoepfle: Well, again, thanks a lot. I really appreciate your help on this.

Gil Goodrich: I'm happy to do it.

END OF TAPE