

September 11, 2001

Excerpts from the testimony of Chief Postal Inspector Kenneth C. Weaver before the Senate Subcommittee on International Security, Proliferation and Federal Services

September 20, 2001

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Subcommittee for the opportunity to appear today. I have a written report of the activities of the United States Postal Inspection Service and would like to have it entered into the record.

Mr. Chairman, today I am wearing an American flag on my lapel in place of the Postal Inspector lapel

pin that I normally wear. I have served in the Army, as you have, under this flag. I have served under this flag in Vietnam. I have served under this flag for 30 years in the United States Postal

Service, 27 of them as a Postal Inspector. As the Chief Postal Inspector, I've always been proud of the outstanding work performed by the men





and women of the Postal Inspection Service. But I've never been prouder of how Inspection Service employees handled themselves and answered the call to duty than I have during this crisis.

The tragic terrorist events of last week have impacted all people of our nation. The Postal Inspection Service immediately took action in support of the Postal Service and all Americans. Across the country, Inspectors, Postal Police Officers and support personnel have performed acts of heroism and provided significant security and investigative assistance that have truly impacted the nation.

This page, above and right: Postal Inspectors from the Washington Metro Division responded to the site of the plane crash at the Pentagon, joining FBI agents in collecting evidence for a criminal investigation. Below: In Somerset County, Pennsylvania, a team of Inspectors was on hand to assist in securing the crash site and the mail. Opposite page: The Church Street Station, across from the World Trade Center, housed numerous Inspectors, Postal Police Officers and support staff, plus the New York Crime Lab. Miraculously, no employees were hurt, and Inspectors assisted injured civilians and local law enforcement officials in evacuating the area and reaching safe ground.



The Inspection Service has the responsibility to ensure the safety and security of postal employees, facilities and assets, as well as the U.S. Mail. We have done just that. And we have done more. I visited New York yesterday to express my heartfelt appreciation to all our people for the outstanding effort they have put forth during this crisis. Although shaken from the attacks, there is a "steely" New York resolve to put things back together. I saw it in the eyes of our employees. They will not be defeated.

Let me outline more specifically responses of Postal Inspection Service personnel since the terrorist attacks. Our New York Metro Division suffered the most serious effects of the attacks. The postal facility across from the World Trade Center, Church Street Station, was the office for numerous Inspectors, Postal Police Officers and support staff, as well as for employees of our New York Crime Lab. The station sustained extensive structural damage from the initial explosion, and from the ash and falling wreckage resulting from the collapse of the World Trade Center towers. Remarkably, the Crime Lab remains intact, with only slight damage. Inspectors at Church Street assisted civilians and local police officers injured in the attack, evacuating the area as glass and debris fell to the ground.



Photos by Postal Inspector Charles E. Prucnal

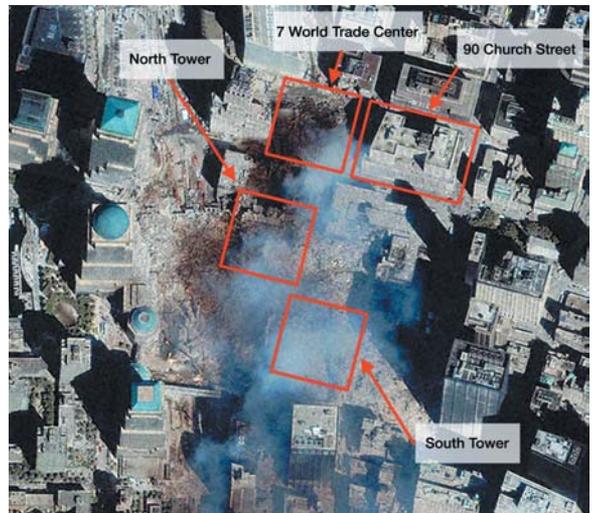




Since the attacks, Postal Inspectors in New York and at outlying offices have been following up on the numerous bomb threats that have forced evacuations of postal facilities. Inspectors are also working with the FBI on investigative leads in the New York area.

When the attack on the Pentagon occurred, Postal Inspectors from the Washington, DC, area responded to assist FBI agents with evidence collection at the crash site. In Somerset County, Pennsylvania, a team of Inspectors from the Pittsburgh area reported to the plane crash site to assist in securing that site and the mail. Three teams of Postal Inspectors are rotating shifts at the FBI Command Center.

Since the attacks, the Postal Inspection Service has provided significant investigative assistance and support to the FBI, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and emergency management agencies across the nation. As part of our role in national security, an Inspector was dispatched to the Federal Emergency Management Agency secure command post to participate with representatives from more than 25



federal agencies to continue operation of the government.

As the Postal Service has dealt with moving the mail during the last week, the Inspection Service has worked to ensure mail security nationwide. The Amtrak network has been implemented, and Postal Inspectors are present at the 80 locations nationwide that will serve as transfer points for the mail.

Since 1979 the Postal Service has had an aviation mail security program in place. In 1996, working with the FAA, the Postal Inspection Service tightened restrictions to further improve security. Although this may be an inconvenience to our customers, we feel it strengthens airmail security.

Tragedies so often bring out the best in people. Unfortunately, tragedies also bring out those who would prey on the misfortune of others and on that very desire to help victims. These include the con artists who solicit donations for the families of victims, yet submit not a dime to those in need. Postal Inspectors will aggressively pursue those con artists, and we've offered some advice to the American public on how to make sure their donations go where they are intended.

The safety and security of Postal Service employees is our top priority. Security must be a part of all postal employees' daily activities. We have advised employees of security precautions they should be taking to contribute to this overall effort. Information provided to us by employees has led to

investigative leads, and has been helpful. Information was received that some of the hijackers were renting boxes to receive mail anonymously at commercial mail receiving agencies. As we've all too frequently seen, criminals hide behind the protection afforded by an address at a commercial mail receiving agency.

The outstanding commitment to duty by all postal employees during this time of crisis is greatly appreciated by the Postal Service and the American public. The United States Postal Inspection Service will continue to keep employees safe, the mail moving and America's confidence in the mail intact.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my remarks.



Above: Interior shots of the Inspection Service offices at Church Street Station show some of the damage that resulted from the crashes of the two hijacked planes. Bottom left: Just days after the attacks, Postal Inspectors, Postal Police Officers, local law enforcement agents, members of the National Guard and emergency service personnel worked together to remove mail and accountable postal property from the Church Street Station. Bottom right: In a ceremony in September 2001, Inspector in Charge of the New York Metro Division Jay Skidmore presented Postmaster General John E. Potter (right) with the flag from the Church Street Station.

