

Foreword

There are some moments in history that make the world totally different, that change our understanding of time into before and after. 9/11 was such an event, not only for the United States but for the entire world. This book is about what happened in and around the World Trade Center and Lower Manhattan after the attacks on 9/11 and the collapse of the Twin Towers. This book is not about terrorism. It covers only the World Trade Center disaster, not the events at the Pentagon or United flight 93.

In my experience studying disasters of all kinds, in all regions of the world, it can be difficult for contemporaries to understand the true meaning of the event because they are part of it. However, this difficulty must be overcome because it is both a privilege and responsibility of contemporaries to provide a firsthand account about the incident based on their direct experience. The account provided by contemporaries should be logical and rational and provide the big picture of what happened. It also should focus on those elements that might be recurrent, as lessons learned from the event. In the reconstruction of the big picture of the event, it is indispensable to piece together many individual perspectives – like a collage by the artist David Hockney. It requires a great amount of work to reconstruct what happened in a coherent way. This is what Dave Mammen has accomplished in this book as a keen and impartial observer.

I have come back to Ground Zero every year since 9/11 with my colleagues and our students to monitor the progress of recovery efforts. During these ten years, reconstruction at the World Trade Center site has appeared slow. It has been difficult for outside visitors to understand what was going on in and around the World Trade Center unless Dave Mammen briefed us about the process and invisible progress each year. Through his lectures, we learned so many different aspects of this complicated recovery process such as urban search and rescue, debris cleaning,

land use planning, memorials, economic development, health issues, and the impact of the financial crisis of 2009.

When Dave began to compile his notes he asked me, “Who should I be writing for?” and I answered, “For the governor of Tokyo; for office workers and students; for a housewife taking care of her family; for my mother living in the suburbs.” I do believe he has accomplished this. Drawing on his extensive experience in Japan he has identified many issues and themes that will resonate with Japanese readers. In Japan, the central government has great power and authority over local government; Dave explains in detail how recovery in New York has been created by strong intergovernmental relations involving the federal, state and city governments. In Japan, public participation and nonprofit organizations are relatively weak, although growing in importance; Dave explains how public participation has been instrumental in shaping New York’s recovery. In Japan, disaster recovery has usually meant rebuilding what was there before; Dave explains how the World Trade Center disaster was taken as an opportunity to make improvements. Dave’s account also describes how recovery efforts in New York have had to adapt, as issues not well-understood at the time of the disaster – such as health problems – have become known and understood over time. As he explains, recovery has been created, not simply administered. I believe these are all issues of universal appeal.

While recovery from 9/11 is an unprecedented endeavor, taking place in a highly and densely developed central business district, many major cities of the world could experience a large-scale urban disaster by natural, unintentional, or intentional causes. For example, our studies have clarified that there is a 70% probability that within the next 30 years, the Tokyo Metropolitan Area may be hit by a Mw7.0 Near Field Earthquake disaster. If this earthquake disaster occurs, it is forecast that 11,000 persons could be killed, and damage and losses could amount to 1.4 trillion U.S. dollars. In such a scenario, the central business district of Tokyo will be susceptible to severe damage like the experience in Lower Manhattan on 9/11.

Nine and a half years after 9/11, on March 11, 2011 the Mw 9.0 Great East Japan earthquake and tsunami struck Japan. That disaster – includ-

ing the resultant nuclear plant accidents in Fukushima – is sometimes referred to as 3/11. More than 15,000 persons were killed and 5,000 are still missing as of late July 2011. 6,000 were injured. More than 160,000 buildings were destroyed or damaged. Almost half a million persons were displaced from their homes in the aftermath of the disaster, and 100,000 are still displaced from their homes as of late July 2011. Long-term recovery efforts are just beginning. The Great East Japan disaster and the probability of an earthquake in Tokyo strengthen our resolve to learn about the World Trade Center disaster and recovery efforts in order to incorporate their lessons and try to make Tokyo and other urban areas more disaster-resilient.

I am pleased to have this book published on the tenth anniversary of 9/11, in both English and Japanese editions, as a concise but thorough account of ten years of recovery efforts. I respect and appreciate Dave Mammen's patience and commitment to this project as a New Yorker who was a witness to these significant events.

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