

ON FEBRUARY 1ST, 1957 AT ABOUT 6P.M., AN AIRPLANE OF THE NORTHEASTERN AIRLINES FROM LAGUARDIA AIRPORT CRASH*LANDED ON THE PENITENTIARY GROUNDS ON RIKERS ISLAND A FEW MINUTES AFTER TAKING OFF FROM THE FIELD. THE PLANE APPARENTLY STRUCK THE GROUND IN THE SECTION OF THE TREE NURSERY AND FINALLY CAME TO A HALT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE FIELD ADJACENT TO THE POULTRY FARM. SHORTLY AFTER THE CRASH THE PLANE WAS A MASS OFFLAMES. THERE WERE NINETY-ONE (91) PASSENGERS ON SAID PLANE, OF WHOM TWENTY (20) WERE KILLED AS A RESULT OF THE CRASH AND EXPLOSION. THIS DISASTER REQUIRED THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DISASTER CONTROL PLAN OF THE INSTITUTION AS WELL AS THE MOBILIZATION OF ALL RESOURCES THEN AVAILABLE ON THE ISLAND. THROUGH THE UTILIZATION OF INMATES AND ALL DEPARTMENTAL PERSONNEL AVAILABLE AT THE TIME A RESCUE OPERATION WAS PUT INTO EFFECT FOR THE RELIEF OF VICTIMS OF THE PLANE CRASH. ALL SURVIVORS WERE TAKEN FROM THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY OF THE DISASTER AND ESCORTED TO FIRST AID STATIONS AT BOTH THE VISITING ROOM OF THE PENITENTIARY AND THE RIKERS ISLAND HOSPITAL. WITH ALL AVAILABLE MEDICAL SUPPLIES AND RESOURCES, FIRST AID AND EMERGENCY WAS GIVEN TO ALL THESE SURVIVORS UNTIL THE ARRIVAL OF DISASTER UNITS FROM THE NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HOSPITALS. ON OR ABOUT 11 P.M. OF SAID DATE, ALL OF THE SURVIVORS WERE TRANSFERRED TO THE NEW YORK CITY MAINLAND WHERE THEY WERE IN TURN SENT TO VARIOUS HOSPITALS IN THE CITY.

THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT COLLECTIVELY ALL OF THE DEPARTMENTAL PERSONNEL MENTIONED HEREIN DID A REMARKABLE JOB OF RESCUE AND TREATMENT WHICH DID SO MUCH MINIMIZING THE LOSS OF LIFE AND RELIEVING THE SUFFERINGS OF THE SURVIVORS. EVERYTHING THAT WAS DONE REFLECTED GOOD CONTROL AND ORGANIZATION ON THE PART OF ALL. IT WAS A SPIRIT OF COOPERATION WHICH EXTENDED BEYOND AND ABOVE THE NORMAL COURSE OF DUTY.

A COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE EDWARD F. CAVANAUGH, JR., FIRE COMMISSIONER OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, DATED FEBRUARY 15, 1957, STATES IN PART:

"MAY I TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO AGAIN CONGRATULATE YOU AND YOUR STAFF FOR THE MAGNIFICENT WORK THAT WAS ACCOMPLISHED BY WAY OF RESCUE AND RELIEF TO THE VICTIMS OF THE PLANE CRASH ON RIKERS ISLAND ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1st, 1957. ALL IN ALL, THE WORK WAS IN THE HIGHEST TRADITION OF MUNICIPAL SERVICE."

A COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE STEPHEN P. KENNEDY, POLICE COMMISSIONER OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, DATED FEBRUARY 15, 1957, STATES IN PART:

"I wish to express our sincere appreciation for the cooperation EXTENDED BY MEMBERS OF YOUR DEPARTMENT WHO WERE ASSIGNED ON RIKERS ISLAND AT THE TIME OF THE RECENT AIRPLANE CRASH. THIS IS ANOTHER FINE EXAMPLE OF THE CLOSE COORDINATION EXISTING BETWEEN OUR TWO AGENCIES, AND AIDED GREATLY IN THE MORE EFFICIENT HANDLING OF A SITUATION WHICH WAS MADE MOST DIFFICULT BY THE BAD WEATHER AND THE LOCATION OF THE ACCIDENT."

A COMMUNICATION FROM HARRY SILBERGLITT, WARDEN OF THE PENITENTIARY RIKERS ISLAND, DATED FEBRUARY 19, 1957, STATES IN PART:

"IN VIEW OF THE FINE WORK DONE BY THE PERSONNEL AND INMATES OF THIS INSTITUTION, IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN TO THE GRANTING OF DEPARTMENTAL RECOGNITION TO ALL EMPLOYEES WHO ARE FOUND TO HAVE DONE THEIR JOB OVER AND ABOVE WHAT ORDINARILY CONSTITUTES THEIR NORMAL DUTIES."

BECAUSE OF THE EVIDENCE OF UNUSUAL DEVOTION TO DUTY DISPLAYED BY THE ABOVE MENTIONED MEMBERS OF THE DEPARTMENT IN THIS INCIDENT, THE DEPARTMENTAL MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD IS BESTOWED UPON THEM IN ACCORDANCE WITH RULE 3.57 OF THE RULES AND REGULATIONS.

ANNA M. KROSS