

9/11 MEMORIAL & MUSEUM

AUDIO TRANSCRIPT

Bruno Dellinger

Bonjour. Je m'appelle Bruno Dellinger. I came to the US when I finished business school in Paris. I got up very early that morning because I was coming back from Europe and I was still jet lagged. I went straight to the World Trade Center, then I went up the elevator to the 47th floor, went to my office, and I still remember it very clearly. Very little people have heard the sound of plane engines when they're at full strength, full force, flying up in the sky. It's one sound that comes back to me and haunt me on occasions. And then it hit. The building swung for maybe two or three minutes. We were used to the building swaying, of course, because of when it was on a stormy day. I was not panicked whatsoever. I was unaware of what's going on. There was no alarm. No call to evacuate the building. And suddenly, I felt the urge to go. And I dropped everything and left. It took me 50 minutes to come down from the 47th floor because I left about 15 minutes after the attack.

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Anyway, so we went down. People were very calm, and I think everybody in the stairwell was like this determined, but also aware that—unconsciously aware that something very dangerous was happening, and remain calm because it was the best thing we had to do. They were three flows of people, the regular people like me going down, the people who were coming down from the upper floors, and who were very badly injured. No skin, no hair, just burn. And they were walking or carried down by people, helped by people. And then the third flow of people was of course those security personnel and Fire Department people. Now, those people were exhausted. In some of those eyes you could see that they knew something, that it was dangerous. While there was no panic whatsoever in the stairwell, those people were concentrated, focused on doing their job. And while I was walking down, they were going up to their death. And I was walking down to live. I exited onto the sidewalk that was on Church. I turned around and looked, and I saw the World Trade Center in flames, and those flames were very, very dark orange. The smoke was very, very black against this beautiful sky, and they were big. Suddenly, darkness fell upon us with an unbelievable violence. I looked around a second time. I didn't see the tower. Instead, I heard a sound that today, I cannot remember. It was so powerful, such a huge sound that I blocked it. It scared me to death, and I cannot bring it back

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up to consciousness. And when I said, darkness, what was a beautiful day became darker than night. You couldn't see anymore. Even more striking, there was no more sound. Sound didn't go through anymore because the air was so thick that it wasn't vibrating anymore. So after this unbelievable sound of the building collapsing, everything in few seconds turned to be darker than night with no sound, and you couldn't breathe. I was convinced I was dead, because it's so big that your brain cannot process something like this.

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