

LET US RAISE OUR VOICE

WE, THE AIA MEMBERS LISTED BELOW, HAVE SUBMITTED **RESOLUTON 17-5** FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION AT THE AIA CONFERENCE ON ARCHITECTURE 2017.

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LET US LEAD THE WAY

› DEAR FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES,

For four years in a row during the Vietnam War, members of our Institute debated and voted on resolutions concerning the AIA's position on one of the most important issues of that time. Nearly 50 years later, we find ourselves in a similar position with respect to one of the most important issues of *our* time: the events of September 11, 2001, which have been the foundation of our national policies for the past decade and a half.

On this particular issue, we are more compelled than ever to act because, as architects, we are uniquely qualified to contribute to the ongoing debate about the collapse of **World Trade Center Building 7**. This 47-story high-rise fell completely and symmetrically into its own footprint in just seven seconds in a manner that anyone who watches it can agree *resembles* a classic building implosion.

Seven years after 9/11, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) finally issued a report that was billed as the definitive explanation for Building 7's destruction. As I read the report, my fear that we would not get an honest answer was confirmed: NIST's story is unsupported and far-fetched, and its computer model in no way resembles the building's actual behavior. Instead, the evidence for what caused the collapse – evidence that NIST clearly ignored – points overwhelmingly to controlled demolition.

On April 26, we will have the opportunity to vote on the enclosed resolution. As was the case some 50 years ago, the question before us will not be a technical one, but a moral one: **Do we remain silent? Or do we have the courage to raise our voice for what is right?**

Some have said that this is not an issue for the AIA – that the architecture profession faces many other challenges to which we must devote our full energy. I submit to you that we have the capacity and the strength to include this among our many important goals.

Let us be the first professional association – and hopefully not the last – to call for a new investigation into the collapse of World Trade Center Building 7. Let us lead the way.



Daniel Barnum, FAIA

RESOLUTION 17-5



TITLE Investigation of the Total Collapse of World Trade Center Building 7

INTENT To adopt a Position Statement declaring the AIA's support for a new investigation into the total collapse of World Trade Center Building 7 on September 11, 2001.

WHEREAS, thousands of members of the architecture and engineering professions, including the more than 50 members sponsoring this resolution, now believe there is sufficient evidence contradicting the findings of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) to warrant a new investigation into the total collapse of World Trade Center Building 7 (WTC 7), a 47-story high-rise that collapsed into its own footprint at 5:20 PM on September 11, 2001;

WHEREAS, the cause of the total collapse of WTC 7 has become the subject of intense public debate, to which architects – through their knowledge, skill, and experience – are uniquely qualified to contribute; and

WHEREAS, prior to and since September 11, 2001, no steel-framed high-rise has ever suffered a total collapse, except buildings demolished through the procedure known as controlled demolition; and

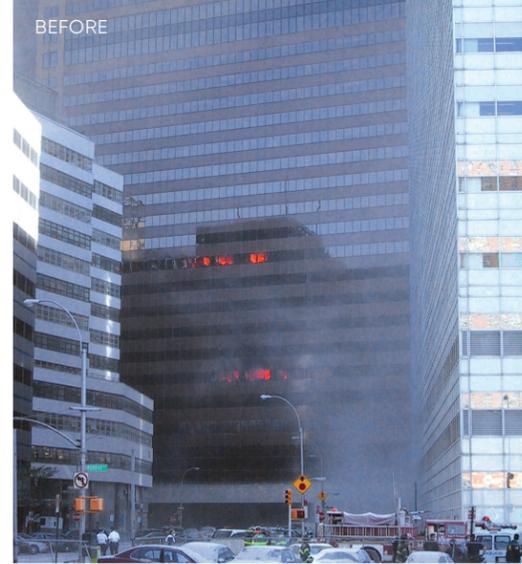
WHEREAS, the total collapse of WTC 7 exemplified many of the signature features of controlled demolition, including:

- **Sudden onset:** The roofline of WTC 7 went from being stationary to being in free fall in approximately one-half second.
- **Rapidity:** The roofline of WTC 7 fell to the ground in less than seven seconds.
- **Free fall:** For 2.25 seconds of its descent, WTC 7 fell at the rate of gravity over a distance of eight stories, meaning that the lower structure of the building provided no resistance whatsoever.
- **Symmetry:** WTC 7 fell directly downward through what had been the path of greatest resistance, with the debris deposited mostly inside the building's footprint.
- **Explosions and window breakage:** Vertical sequences of explosions and window breakage could be seen running up the north face of WTC 7 as it began to collapse.

WTC 7 WAS A 47-STORY HIGH-RISE ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE WTC COMPLEX.



WTC 7 CAME DOWN SYMMETRICALLY INTO ITS OWN FOOTPRINT, AT FREE-FALL ACCELERATION, IN UNDER SEVEN SECONDS.



- **Dismemberment:** The steel frame of WTC 7 was almost entirely dismembered.
- **Pulverization:** Most of WTC 7's concrete was pulverized to a consistency of sand and gravel.
- **Totality:** The entire structure of WTC 7 collapsed to the ground, leaving no sections of the building standing; and

WHEREAS, first responders and bystanders reported explosions and other phenomena suggestive of controlled demolition immediately prior to and during the total collapse of WTC 7, as exemplified in the following statement by a New York University medical student who was interviewed on 1010 WINS radio moments after the collapse:

"[W]e heard this sound that sounded like a clap of thunder. Turned around... [I]t looked like there was a shockwave ripping through the building and the windows all busted out.... And then about a second later the bottom floor caved out and the building followed after that"; and

WHEREAS, a CNN video camera captured the sound of an explosion coming from WTC 7 and the following statements prior to the onset of the collapse:

Unidentified voice: "You hear that?"

Voice of emergency responder #1: "Keep your eye on that building. It'll be coming down soon."

Voice of emergency responder #2: "Building is about to blow up, move it back.... We are walking back, there's a building about to blow up. Flame and debris coming down"; and

WHEREAS, numerous experts in controlled demolition and structural engineering have attested that the total collapse of WTC 7 could have been caused only by controlled demolition, as exemplified in the following statement made by Dutch demolition expert Danny Jowenko after viewing video of the collapse:

"This is controlled demolition.... It's been imploded. It's a hired job, done by a team of experts.... It's without a doubt a professional job"; and

LEFT: FIRES IN WTC 7 SEEN FROM THE NORTH SIDE OF THE BUILDING.

RIGHT: AN AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN ON SEPTEMBER 17, 2001, SHOWING WTC 7'S DISMEMBERED FRAME MOSTLY CONTAINED WITHIN THE BUILDING'S FOOTPRINT.

Building is about to blow up, move it back.... We are walking back, there's a building about to blow up."

—UNIDENTIFIED EMERGENCY WORKER

They simply blew up the columns and the rest caved in afterwards."

—DANNY JOWENKO, DEMOLITION EXPERT

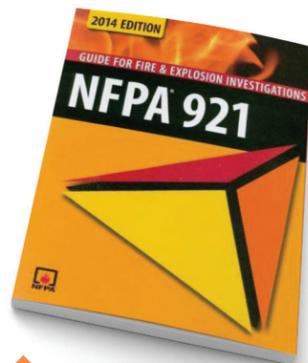
“The specifics of the fires in WTC 7 and how they caused the building to collapse remain unknown at this time.... [T]he best hypothesis has only a low probability of occurrence.”

—FEMA, MAY 2002



“We were surprised that Tower 7 collapsed.”

—JONATHAN BARNETT, FEMA INVESTIGATOR



NFPA 921: GUIDE FOR FIRE AND EXPLOSION INVESTIGATIONS

“[T]ruthfully, I don't really know. We've had trouble getting a handle on building No. 7.”

—DR. SHYAM SUNDER, MARCH 2006

WHEREAS, in spite of the fact that the fires in WTC 7 were unextraordinary and the building had only modest structural damage, the New York City Office of Emergency Management (OEM) began warning members of the New York Fire Department (FDNY) sometime before 11:30 AM that WTC 7 “was in serious danger of collapse,” and the FDNY proceeded to establish a safety zone around WTC 7 in the early afternoon; and

WHEREAS, officials at the scene were so certain of WTC 7's impending total collapse that it became widely covered in the media, as exemplified by MSNBC's Ashleigh Banfield, who reported, “I've heard several reports from several different officers now that that is the building that is gonna go down next. In fact, one officer told me they're just waiting for that to come down at this point” — and by the BBC, who erroneously began reporting the total collapse 23 minutes before it actually occurred; and

WHEREAS, in spite of the fact that the total collapse of WTC 7 had been predicted with absolute certainty and accuracy starting six hours in advance, investigators for the Building Performance Study, conducted by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), were reportedly “stunned” by the collapse and concluded in May 2002:

“The specifics of the fires in WTC 7 and how they caused the building to collapse remain unknown at this time. Although the total diesel fuel on the premises contained massive potential energy, the best hypothesis has only a low probability of occurrence”; and

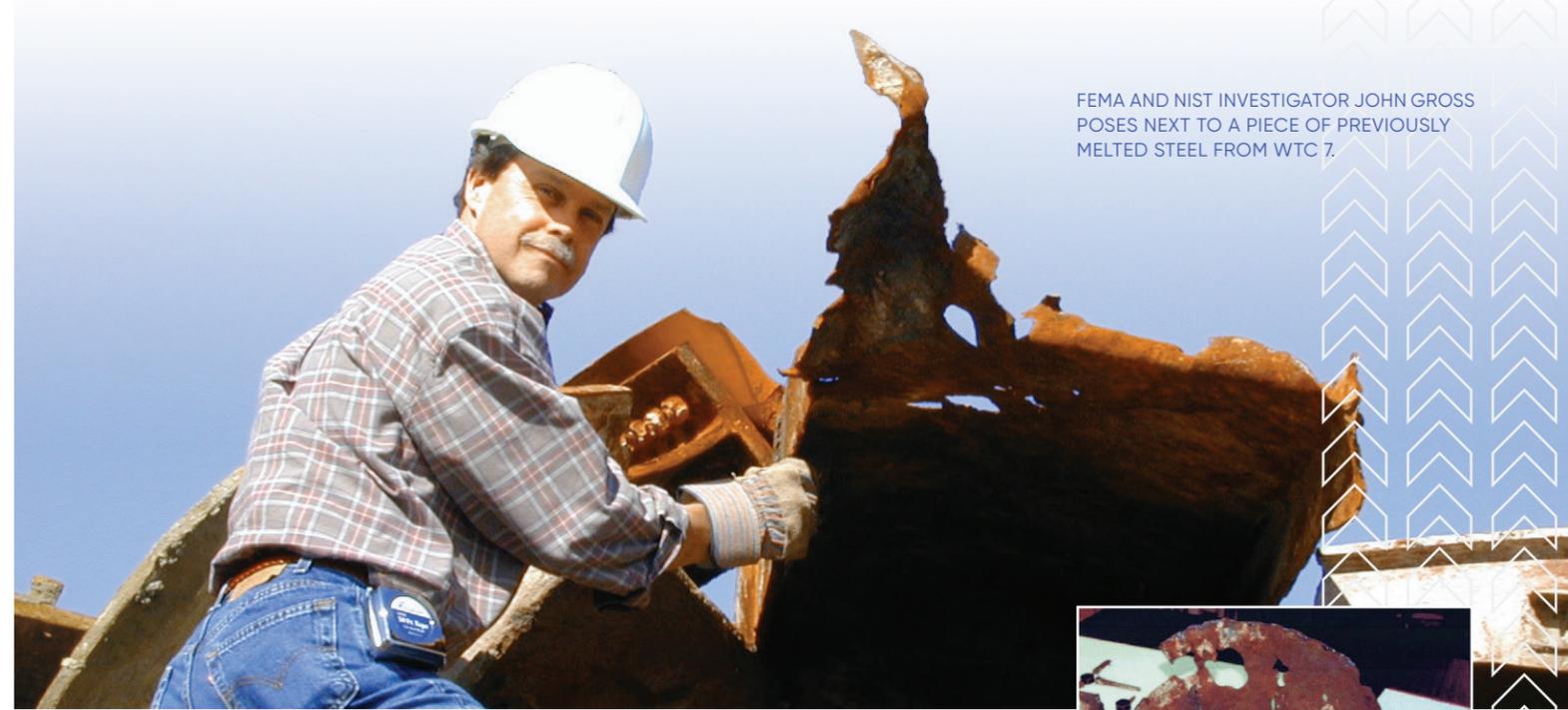
WHEREAS, NIST stated at the beginning of its investigation in August 2002 that fires “played a significant role” in the total collapse of WTC 7 — thus violating Sections 4.3.7 and 4.3.8 of NFPA 921: Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigations, which advise:

“Until data have been collected, no specific hypothesis can be reasonably formed or tested. All investigations of fire and explosion incidents should be approached by the investigator without presumption....” and,

“Expectation bias is a well-established phenomenon that occurs in scientific analysis when investigator(s) reach a premature conclusion without having examined or considered all of the relevant data.... The introduction of expectation bias into the investigation results in the use of only that data that supports this previously formed conclusion and often results in the misinterpretation and/or the discarding of data that does not support the original opinion”; and

WHEREAS, three and one-half years after NIST began its investigation, NIST's lead investigator, Dr. Shyam Sunder, stated that NIST had some “preliminary hypotheses,” but conceded, “[T]ruthfully, I don't really know. We've had trouble getting a handle on building No. 7”; and

WHEREAS, NIST finally concluded in 2008 — three years after the originally scheduled release of its WTC 7 report — that the total collapse of WTC 7 was caused by normal office fires that burned “at temperatures hundreds of degrees below those typically considered in design practice for establishing structural fire resistance ratings,” and ruled out earlier hypotheses that diesel fuel fires and structural damage contributed to the collapse; and



FEMA AND NIST INVESTIGATOR JOHN GROSS POSES NEXT TO A PIECE OF PREVIOUSLY MELTED STEEL FROM WTC 7.

WHEREAS, NIST declined to examine previously melted steel from WTC 7 that had a “Swiss cheese appearance,” and which had been documented in Appendix C of the FEMA/ASCE Building Performance Study as follows:

“Evidence of a severe high temperature corrosion attack on the steel, including oxidation and sulfidation with subsequent intergranular melting, was readily visible in the near-surface microstructure. A liquid eutectic mixture containing primarily iron, oxygen, and sulfur formed during this hot corrosion attack on the steel.... The severe corrosion and subsequent erosion of Samples 1 and 2 are a very unusual event. No clear explanation for the source of the sulfur has been identified”; and

WHEREAS, NIST's computer model — which terminates less than two seconds into the seven-second collapse — fails to replicate the observed structural behavior, showing large deformations to WTC 7's exterior not observed in the videos, while not showing the observed period of free fall; and

WHEREAS, NIST omitted critical structural features of WTC 7 from its computer model, which, in the opinion of independent engineers, if corrected, would show that the initiating failure reported by NIST had zero probability of occurring; and

WHEREAS, NIST has refused to release key portions of its modeling data to engineers studying the collapse of WTC 7, claiming that to do so “might jeopardize public safety” — thus making it impossible for any building professional in the world to independently verify NIST's findings;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the AIA Board of Directors shall commence the process to adopt a Position Statement, to be published in the AIA Directory of Public Policies and Position Statements, declaring both:

- The AIA's belief that incidents involving the catastrophic failure of buildings and other structures must be investigated using the highest standards of science-based investigation and analysis; and
- The AIA's support for a new investigation into the total collapse of WTC 7.



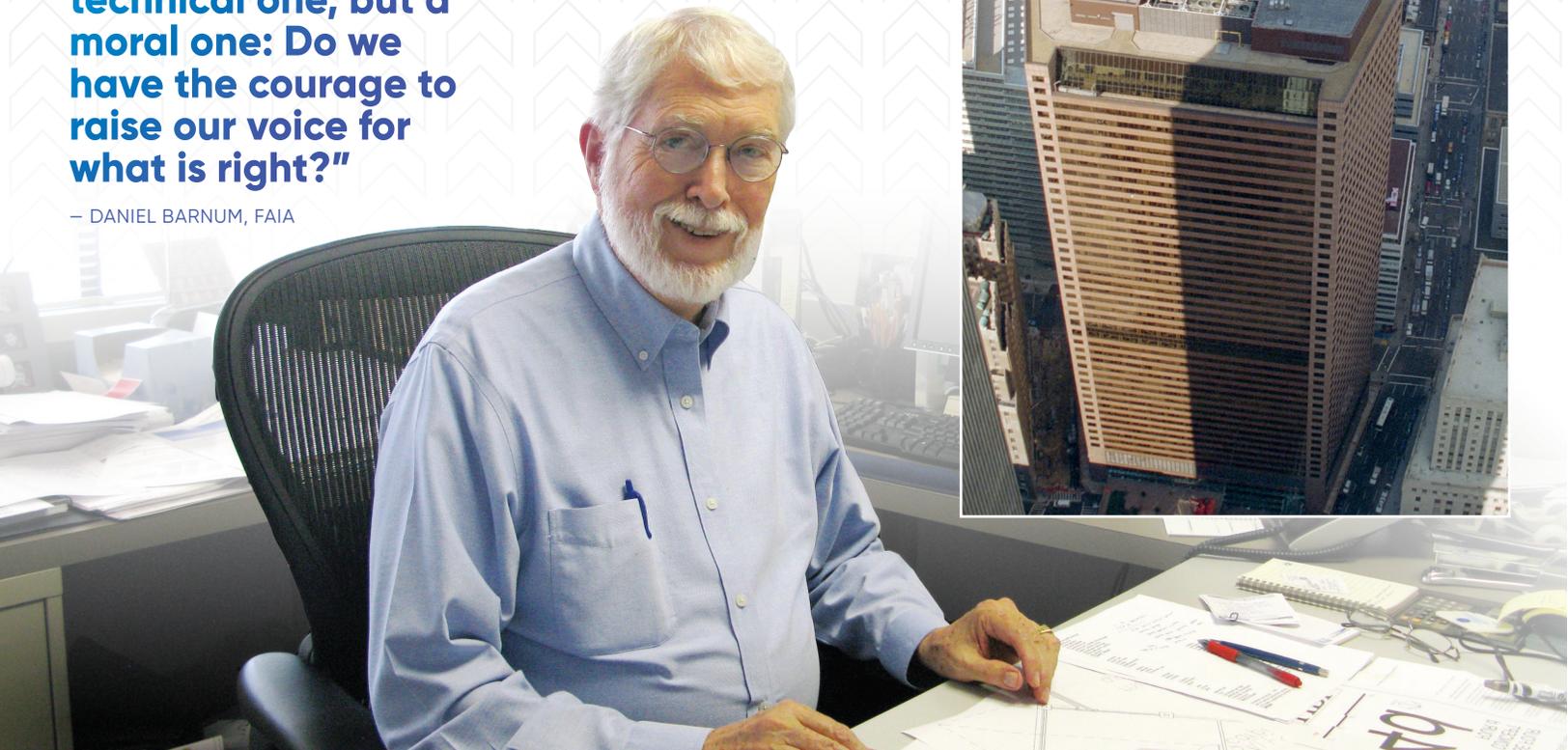
PREVIOUSLY MELTED STEEL FROM WTC 7 (THE SAME PIECE AS SHOWN ABOVE). THIS PHOTO IS TAKEN FROM APPENDIX C OF THE FEMA BUILDING PERFORMANCE STUDY.



NIST'S COMPUTER MODEL TERMINATES LESS THAN TWO SECONDS INTO THE COLLAPSE. IT SHOWS LARGE DEFORMATIONS TO THE EXTERIOR NOT SEEN IN THE VIDEOS, AND DOES NOT SHOW ANY PERIOD OF FREE FALL. EVEN USING FAVORABLE ASSUMPTIONS, NIST'S MODEL FAILS TO REPLICATE THE OBSERVED BEHAVIOR.

“The question before us is not a technical one, but a moral one: Do we have the courage to raise our voice for what is right?”

— DANIEL BARNUM, FAIA



VOTE **YES** TO SUPPORTING A NEW WTC 7 INVESTIGATION