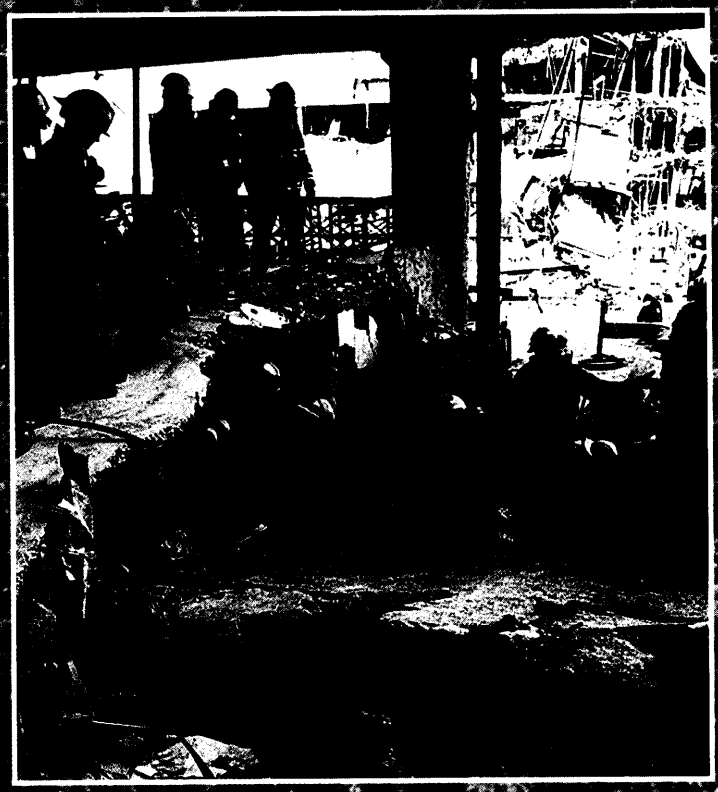


Taking Control

Part II

Taking Control
April 19, 1995, 11:22 a.m. to Midnight

As the all clear was given, Mayor Norick, Police Chief Gonzales, Fire Chief Marrs, and FBI Agent Ricks gathered in the Police Command Post to review what had been done and formalize a coordinated course of action. They agreed that the Oklahoma City Fire Department would be in charge of the rescue operation. The FBI assumed jurisdiction over the crime scene, evidence collection, and the criminal investigation. The Oklahoma City Police Department was assigned responsibility for perimeter and scene security and providing assistance to the FBI.

The officials and officers had received cellular phones with priority codes that ensured their calls were transmitted. Cellular phone numbers were exchanged. It was agreed that Gonzales, Marrs, and Ricks would be the official spokespersons for their areas and that Mayor Norick would represent the City. Chief Gonzales asked the Mayor to request activation of the Oklahoma National Guard to assist with perimeter security. The Mayor called Governor Keating, who told him the Guard would be available. The Governor immediately put the Mayor and Chief Gonzales in contact with the Guard's Adjutant General's Office. The necessary orders were issued for the Guard to assist with perimeter security and other rescue support duties.

Southwestern Bell Telephone Company's President, David Lopez, offered his One Bell Central headquarters building and parking area as a central site for all the command operations. While the blast had shattered many windows and caused some damage in the building, the four-story structure was secure and stable. Bell's workers moved to other company facilities. The Oklahoma City Police Department, the Highway Patrol, the National Guard, and other agencies located their Command Post vehicles in the One Bell Central lot during the afternoon. Other agencies set up operations at tables in the covered parking area behind the building. Bell's crews opened the building and ran telephone lines from the offices to all of the Command Posts. The One Bell Central site facilitated communication and coordination among the agencies.

Fire Incident Command used the 10:30 a.m. evacuation to reorganize and restructure the rescue operation. The General Services Administration's building engineer had provided a set of plans which identified the Murrah Building's structural elements. Several architects and engineers involved in the design and construction of the building came to the Fire Command Post to provide assistance. The blueprints, direct observations, and Chief Shannon's on-site survey were used to identify areas of concern, define the work to be done, and establish the methods to be used. The heavily damaged areas and the major hazards were identified and given names by which the rescue workers would distinguish them.

The Murrah Building did not have a steel framework. It was constructed of poured-in-place, rebar-reinforced concrete. The essential design of the building was one in which vertical columns and horizontal beams supported each other, as well as the six-inch-thick concrete floor slabs. Each floor was 200 feet from east to west and 70 feet from north to south. Three rows of columns supported the building. The south and central columns extended from the first floor to the roof. On the north side, floors three through nine overhung the first and second floors. A large, concrete transfer beam, running from east to west along the north wall, supported the upper floor columns.

The building was constructed to support the weight of the floor slabs and all they held. The bomb was placed near the north entrance and below the overhanging upper floors. The force of the explosion traveled upward and inward, destroying two critical structural elements — the transfer beam and an interior column. The upward force destroyed the east two-thirds of the transfer beam that supported the north

one-half of all the upper floors. This caused the floor slabs to hang for an instant and then tear loose from their rebar connections. The floor slabs fell in huge pieces that leaned against four weakened middle columns. This very unstable area was called the "Christmas Tree" because of the shape of the debris. In front of the Christmas Tree was a mass of debris called the "West Pile" or the "North Pile."

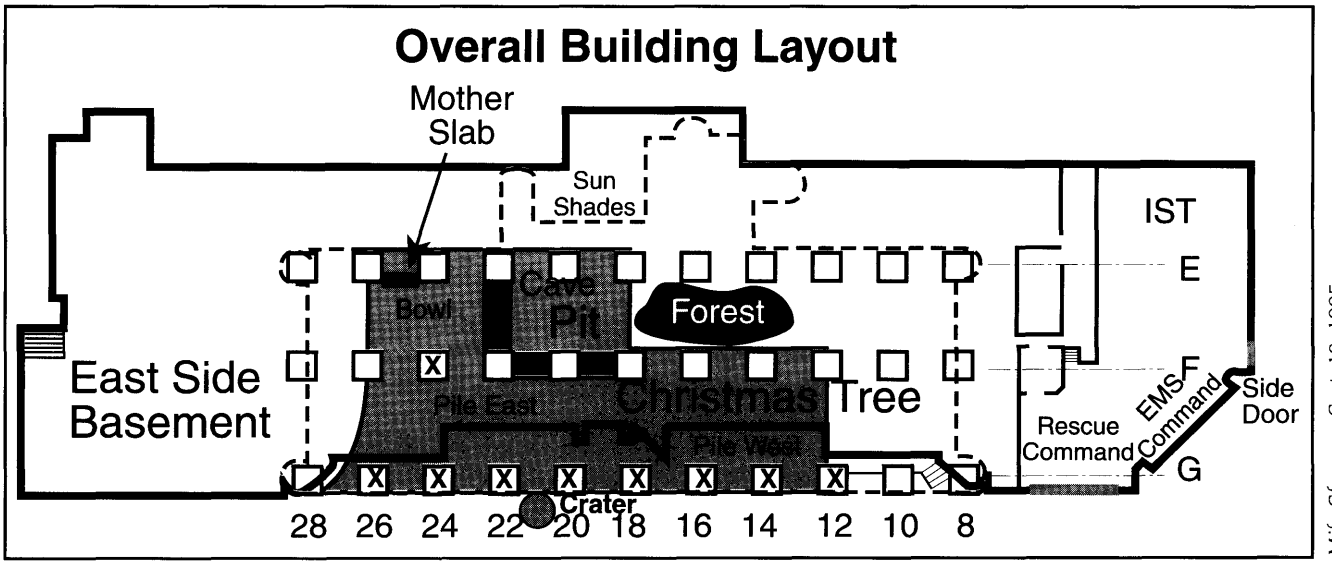
The explosion carried into the structure and destroyed a key middle column just east of the center of the building. All of the slabs and beams that the column supported fell straight down, leaving a nine-floor gash where the building was open all the way to the south wall. The gash was named the "Bowl." A 35,000-pound piece of the concrete roof, held only by stands of rebar, hung over the Bowl. This slab was called the "Mother Slab."

The second-through-ninth-floor slabs collapsed, creating a long, nearly three-story-high mass of rubble known as the "East Pile." The pile started just outside of the building, east of the bomb crater, and continued into the southeast portion of the interior. The pile was a "pancake collapse" because the floor slabs and all they had held were stacked one atop the next. In one part of the east pile, the slabs from seven floors could be counted in a space less than 20 feet high. The pile supported several weakened, but still standing, columns.

Beyond the pile, and just west of the Bowl, was an area known as the "Pit." Here the second-and-third-floor slabs at the rear of the building had collapsed onto the first floor. The Pit contained about 10 feet of debris but was lower than the adjoining east pile. Over the Pit, floors four and above were intact but weakened. Underneath the rear portion of the Pit, near a staircase between the first and second floors, was an area known as the "Cave." The Cave was a narrow, 20-foot-long void in the debris under the collapsed second-floor slab. The only access to the Cave was a narrow opening under the remains of a collapsed beam. The west end of the building was not as severely damaged. Most of floors one through nine remained in place for a distance of two columns. The south stairs were filled with debris but were intact as was the one-story loading dock on the west end of the building. Very little damage was done to the parking structure below and south of the building.

Hundreds of pieces of concrete, held by strands of rebar, hung from the remaining structure. These pieces ranged in size from 12-inches-by-12-inches to 20-feet-by-20-feet. The average size was 4-feet-by-4-feet. These pieces, which shifted and swayed in the wind and were in constant danger of falling, were called "Widow Makers." Chunks of concrete and the remains of office furnishings, including heavy file cabinets, perched on edges of the remaining structure, creating "fall hazards," which had to be removed before they fell or were knocked onto the work parties below.

After the explosion, the Murrah Building tenuously resettled itself on its remaining columns and beams. The south circulation core, which contained the elevator shafts and the enclosed stairs, gave stability to the



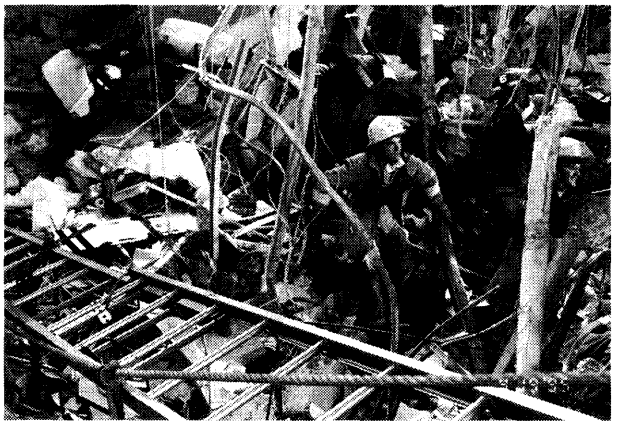
Mike Shannon, Sept. 19, 1995

west end. Some of the post-blast stability for the rest of the building came from the piles of rubble that supported weakened columns. The Piles, the Pit, and the Cave were the areas most likely to contain voids holding survivors and most of the dead. Rescue efforts had to be planned in a way that survivors and bodies could be found while the building's precarious stability was maintained and the rescue workers protected from undue hazards.

Chief Conner was assigned command at the Murrah Building. Fire companies, which had been divided during the initial work, were united and told to stand by their equipment. Most of the crews and equipment were moved to a staging area at NW 8th and Robinson. Decisions were made as to which Oklahoma City and metro area firefighters, operating under mutual aid agreements, would be used in the work. A rotation schedule was then established. From 11:20 a.m. onward, all Fire personnel assignments came from Incident Command, and firefighters reported to Operations in order to maintain accountability for those working in the Murrah Building.

Incident Command decided to rotate work parties of about 75 firefighters into the building. The work parties were limited and controlled in order to avoid unnecessary vibrations and the danger of knocking debris from the upper edges onto workers below. Teams with special skills were formed from the Oklahoma City Firefighters and the mutual aid companies. Team leaders were designated and briefed on the work ahead. They were told that the area was a federal crime scene and that federal investigators would be working in and around the building. Crews were directed to place all debris removed from the building in an area on NW 5th Street for the FBI and other investigators to examine. They were told not to remove any bodies without authorization. Other teams were formed to conduct secondary searches in the other damaged buildings. At 12:09 p.m., Fire began dispatching 15 additional units to stage at Fire Station No. 1 to support the rescue work. These firefighters would be used for relief and rotation in the afternoon's operations.

The firefighters were formed into Confined Space/Trench Rescue, High Angle, and Haz-Mat groups. The Confined Space/Trench group entered the Pit area to remove debris and search for voids that might contain survivors. They tunneled into the Cave searching for survivors. The Haz-Mat teams entered by the south stairs and combed the remaining areas of the second and third floors for survivors. The upper-floor teams entered by the stairs and completely searched each floor. Workers who approached the edges of the structure wore safety ropes tied to substantial objects. The High Angle team worked from ladders to begin removing the debris that was hanging from the exterior. Fire apparatus and EMSA vehicles were ordered to stand by to lend support and be ready to treat and transport



Members of OCFD *Station 5 work to locate and remove the injured and dead in what will soon be known as the "Pit" area — the second floor day care. The area was a mixture of concrete, steel, office furniture, and other building contents. The ladder was used as a makeshift ramp to hand people up to rescuers so that the injured could be removed to the south side of the* Murrah Building *to a large triage area established in the plaza.*

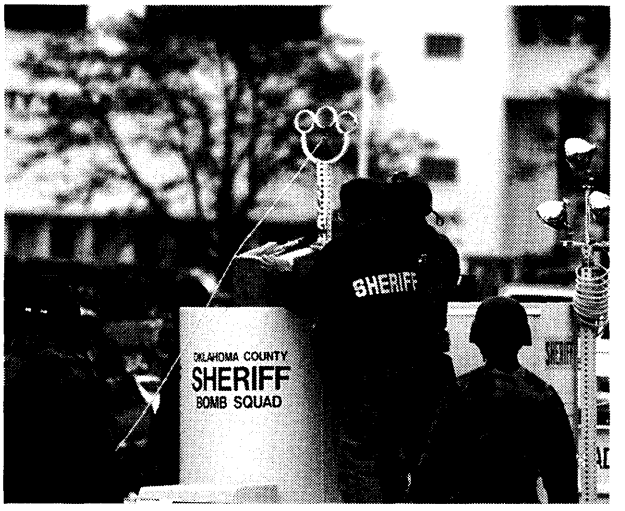
OCFD *crews search the three-story debris pile at the east end of the* Murrah Building. *The officer is standing on the large concrete beam that spanned the building's length, supporting floors three through nine.*

survivors. FBI, ATF, and other investigators searched the building for evidence. Investigators were stationed at every debris-removal area. Files, papers, personal effects, and other materials found in the rubble were turned over to them.

Rescue Command gave first priority to extricating the three survivors trapped on the first floor. One survivor was removed and transported to the hospital at about 1:30 p.m. The second survivor was a young woman trapped in a confined space in the Cave. The space was so narrow that only one person at a time could enter. The woman was conscious and able to talk with the rescue workers. Before the 10:30 a.m. evacuation, firefighters removed the debris that covered most of her body and saw that her lower right leg was crushed and pinned beneath a massive concrete beam. They could not raise the beam and were concerned that her leg might have to be amputated. When operations resumed, a doctor came to the area and confirmed that amputation was necessary. The survivor agreed to the procedure. A surgeon, who agreed to perform the operation in the dangerous, unstable area, came to the site.

Rescue operations in the Murrah Building were interrupted at 1:30 p.m. when firefighters found a suspicious crate; this was reported to Incident Command. At 1:48 p.m., all work parties were ordered out of the building. All workers, except the team assisting with the amputation, cleared the building while the bomb squad investigated. The all clear was given at 2:02 p.m. and work resumed. An anesthesiologist joined the team working with the trapped survivor and administered a pain-numbing drug. The doctor amputated her leg at the knee. When the procedure was completed, firefighters attached a harness to her body and pulled her from the confined space. She was transported to the emergency room at 3:00 p.m. Two other survivors were extricated and transported to hospitals about 3:00 p.m.

At 1:41 p.m., the Fire Safety Officer reported that he had been cleared to remove bodies from the Murrah Building. A firefighter was assigned to the temporary morgue. When a body was found, Rescue Command radioed the firefighter who then brought a Medical Examiner's agent to the site. The agent examined and tagged the body and gathered other information. Firefighters placed the bodies in body bags and took them outside the building where staff from the Medical Examiner's Office received them and took them to the temporary morgue. Firefighters and others who



Bomb squad technicians place a hand-held rocket launcher, mistakenly thought to be a secondary explosive device, into the disposal unit. Since several federal law enforcement agencies were housed in the Murrah Building, weapons and ammunition were not an uncommon discovery throughout the incident.

came into contact with the dead were instructed in decontamination procedures.

From 10:30 a.m. onward, as Fire Incident Command focused on the Murrah Building, work went on at all levels to support the rescue effort, the criminal investigation, the survivors, and the families of the injured, the missing, and the dead. City, County, State, and Federal officials and agencies, service organizations, corporations, and the entire Oklahoma City community came together in a single-minded dedication to the work at hand. It was evident that the rescue effort would be long, hard, and dangerous and that it would require many kinds of support. There were hundreds of jobs to be done. There were thousands of professional and volunteer hands willing to do the work.

By midday, over 125 clergy members had come to the Murrah Building site to offer support and assistance to the rescue workers and the families of the victims. Mayor Norick appointed Dr. Robert Allen to serve as Chief of Chaplains for the civilian clergy. FBI Chaplain Joe Williams organized the Police and Fire Chaplains. Chaplain Jack Poe of the Oklahoma City Police Department and the Oklahoma National Guard organized the Military Chaplains. They made sure that clergy of all faiths were available to provide continuing pastoral support to the workers in all elements of the operation. Chaplain Poe and his wife organized a Chaplain's Corner at One Bell Central.

Ray Blakeney, the Director of Operations for the State Medical Examiner, recognized that he was dealing with a mass-fatality incident that would require his office to identify all of the bodies. He knew that support needed to be provided to the families of the missing. Blakeney had trained many of the state's funeral directors in mass-fatality procedures. He contacted the State Funeral Director's Association and asked them to implement their Mortuary Disaster Coordination Plan. The Plan provided a process for obtaining physical descriptions and other information from families of missing persons in an organized setting. The Organization's Disaster Committee met in the early afternoon. They contacted Dr. Don Alexander of the First Christian Church at NW 36th and Walker. Dr. Alexander agreed to allow them to use the church's facilities for a registration center. The church, located three miles north of the Murrah Building, provided ample room and parking in an area accessible to, but away from, the rescue site.

The Funeral Director's Association organized an initial operation and developed forms for the families to complete. The location and purpose of the Center were provided to the media. A request was broadcast for all the families of the missing to go to the church. The Center opened at 5:00 p.m. By 7:00 p.m. over 500 people had come to the church, urgently seeking information about their loved ones. The Center received lists of those treated at all area hospitals. The lists helped some families find their missing members. The rest of the families, many of whom had gone from hospital to hospital throughout the day, found some comfort in just being together at a place designated for them. The funeral directors, acting in their capacity as representatives of the Medical Examiner, worked with the families to obtain information to be used in identifying bodies.

Mental health workers and clergy came to the Center to offer their assistance to the families. Dr. Dan Nelson, a psychiatrist from the O.U. Health Sciences Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma, volunteered to organize the mental health workers. Dr. Nelson had organized support for families who lost their homes in a tornado near Tulsa. National Guard Chaplains were activated to provide death notification services. The Chaplains reported to the Center and began providing pastoral support to the families. In the late evening, the Red Cross asked to assist with the support work for the facility. The Center, which began as a place for families to be together and to obtain information from them, quickly evolved into a counseling and support system for the families and was called the Family Assistance Center. The Center remained open throughout the night. It was not closed to the media and only a few security personnel were present.

The Chaplain's Corner, established in the covered parking area of One Bell Central, was another of several areas which provided goods and services to workers and volunteers.

Four public information officers, Karen Farney from Oklahoma City, Captain Bill Citty from the Police Department, Assistant Chief Jon Hansen from the Fire Department, and Lieutenant Don Stockton from the Highway Patrol, reported to the command area early in the disaster. They knew there would be a large media response and that it was important to work with the media and to provide accurate information. Because the area was a crime scene, it was necessary to keep reporters outside the perimeter. The Police Department identified an area on NW 7th and Harvey that would be appropriate for media operations. The public information officers spent much of the rest of the day assisting in rumor control and establishing working relationships with the media.

OCFD Assistant Chief Jon Hansen briefs the media at "Satellite City," separated by banner guard tape, while OHP troopers stand by for crowd control.

Local television stations aired continuous coverage without commercial breaks for several days and provided major coverage throughout the incident. The bombing received massive national and international media attention. Over 300 news agencies sent crews to Oklahoma City. By late afternoon, the area at NW 7th was filled with vans sprouting satellite dishes and was quickly named "Satellite City." On Wednesday evening, several television networks broadcast all or part of their evening newscasts from Oklahoma City.

EMSA and the medical community were prepared to transport and treat more survivors. The warehouse at NE 5th and Oklahoma was organized to receive mass casualties. Primary and secondary treatment areas were designated and staffed and the area stocked with every kind of medical supply. After 1:00 p.m., it was evident that most of the living had been taken from the building by 10:30 a.m. Any last survivors would come from voids in the debris and could be quickly transported to the hospital. The mutual aid ambulance companies were released. The primary triage unit at the Murrah site was closed at 1:15 p.m. Four ambulances were placed on standby at the Murrah Building. Doctors and nurses continued to come to the rescue site and had to be turned away because there was nothing for them to do. The Disaster Management and Assistance Team arrived at 2:00 p.m. to join the teams in the warehouse on NE 5th Street. The unit remained open through the night, to be ready if a large number of survivors was found, and was closed at 7:00 a.m. on April 20.

Governor Keating and the State Department of Civil Emergency Management (DCEM) continued to organize state support for the rescue operation and to coordinate the evolving federal response. During the day, 115 Oklahoma Army and Air National Guard personnel were activated to support the Medical Examiner's work, provide supplies and heavy equipment for the rescue work, and assist with Command Post and perimeter security duties. FEMA personnel, including Region VI Director Buddy Young, arrived at the State Emergency Operations Center at 2:05 p.m. FEMA and DCEM coordinated the provision of resources needed to support the Urban Search and Rescue task forces and the federal agencies and personnel coming to Oklahoma City. They contacted the City's General Services Department for assistance in providing office space for FEMA and other agencies. Tinker Air Force Base supplied 356 personnel including firefighters, civil engineers, military police, a dog team, and a communications unit

Members of the Oklahoma Army and Air National Guards work alongside fire service personnel in an effort to remove the injured and dead from the debris pile on the north side of the Murrah Building.

who were dispatched to the rescue site. Trucks, heavy equipment, and shoring materials, along with cots, tents, and blankets were sent to support the rescue work. The Base prepared to receive the Urban Search and Rescue task forces scheduled to arrive later in the day.

The American Red Cross, the Salvation Army, and Feed the Children assumed responsibility for providing many forms of support to the victims and their families and for assisting with food and supplies for the rescue workers and others at the site. As the day progressed, they responded to developing needs. The Red Cross provided space at its headquarters to serve as a waiting room for parents of missing children. Counselors came to wait with the families. Special phone numbers were established, and every effort was made to get information about children to the Red Cross. This work was incorporated into the Family Assistance Center on April 20. The Red Cross also established a victim's center at St. Luke's United Methodist Church on NW 13th Street to serve people displaced from the YMCA and from small apartments and rooming houses near the Murrah Building.

A Red Cross Damage Assessment Team surveyed the area and assessed the damage to the buildings. The team prepared a report that was of use to many agencies including FEMA. The Red Cross took a primary role in caring for the families displaced from the large, high-rise Regency Towers Apartments just west of the Murrah Building. The apartments, which were heavily damaged, were evacuated. An assistance area

was set up at a local motel and vouchers provided for food and lodging. The City's Transit Department sent buses to take the residents to the motel.

The Salvation Army brought five trucks to the site to serve meals and drinks and received and distributed supplies for the rescue workers. Over the next few weeks, they provided financial assistance to many victims to help with food, lodging, and transportation costs. Feed the Children brought stocks of emergency supplies and equipment to the site. They set up a distribution center and worked to fill special equipment needs for the rescue work. Feed the Children also provided food supplies to the Restaurant Association and provided food and drinks at the site. They provided clothing, groceries, and other items for displaced persons and families.

The blast had shattered windows in many of the high-rise office buildings south of the Murrah Building. Companies throughout the downtown area brought in contractors and workers to begin replacing shattered windows and glass doors or to cover them with plywood. The doors and windows in all of the stores and offices near the blast area were completely destroyed, leaving the buildings open to passersby throughout the day. No looting was reported. In the afternoon, owners of offices and businesses within the perimeter obtained permission to return to their buildings to assess damages, secure cash and records, and begin covering the shattered storefronts. The Oklahoma City Police developed identification badges for businesspeople entering the perimeter. The sounds of saws and hammers filled the air during the afternoon and evening. The owner and some of the employees of the *Journal Record*, the city's business and legal newspaper, entered their building and removed computers and files. The staff developed an off-site location and published a newspaper on Friday, April 21.

Volunteer workers for the Salvation Army and Red Cross constantly cared for the workers and each other by providing meals and refreshments, along with many other goods and services, throughout the incident - 24 hours a day.

The City's downtown offices closed at the time of the 10:30 a.m. evacuation. Some employees stayed in various offices to carry on work in support of the rescue operation. Others went to various sites to volunteer their services or to give blood. The Mayor's Secretary, Fran Cory, stayed at her desk until 5:00 a.m. on April 20. She handled calls of concern and support from city officials across the nation and from Oklahoma City's sister cities around the world. She took calls from reporters seeking to schedule Mayor Norick for interviews with national and international networks. Two members of the Council Support Group stayed at City Hall until about 12:00 noon. The Action Center, a section of the Public Information Office, remained open until 1:30 p.m. The Center's Customer Services Manager, Marsha Ingersoll, and one staff member stayed to handle hundreds of calls for information and offers of donations. The Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Section of Water Engineering produced base maps of the damaged area for all the Command Posts.

Line Maintenance personnel shut off the water to the Murrah Building and other damaged buildings. Two supervisors heard reports of flooding on the first floor and entered the building to see if pumps were needed. They assisted Fire and Police in recovering the body of one victim. Water and Wastewater crews with heavy equipment were staged to support the rescue work. The General Services Department directed its Equipment Services Division to provide mechanics and workers to support the vehicles and equipment used in the rescue work. Supervisors and crews from the Building Maintenance Division helped provide additional electrical service to the temporary morgue. They cleared the rubble from the Post Office Substation at NW 5th and Harvey and boarded the windows. The Parks Department provided golf carts for transportation within the perimeter and a tent for the morgue.

The utility companies, working under the direction of Fire Incident Command and Fire Rescue Command,

carried out many duties. ONG continued to assess the damaged buildings and to disconnect gas service in the area until all of its lines could be checked. OG&E cut off electric power to the Journal Record Building and several other damaged buildings. In the afternoon, OG&E crews brought temporary electrical connections to many of the command vehicles parked at One Bell Central. Temporary power was supplied to the First Methodist Church to support the morgue. Incident Command had identified the Rectory behind St. Joseph's Catholic Church as a rest and relaxation center for rescue workers. OG&E crews supplied temporary power to that building. However, it was not used, as Fire Incident Command decided to locate rescue crew services at One Bell Central.

The power poles in the parking lot north of the Murrah Building were knocked down. OG&E erected new poles and installed floodlights directed on the building. Local contractors, the military, and the Oklahoma City Airport supplied additional high-intensity light towers to illuminate the front and interior of the building. Both OG&E and ONG provided supplies and equipment, including saws, cutting torches, chains, pulleys, and hard-hat lights. A call went out for generators. Citizens and businesses brought generators to the rescue area and to the Red Cross and Salvation Army stations.

Fire Logistics contacted the Associated General Contractors of Oklahoma (AGC) and asked if they would serve as a clearinghouse for donated construction supplies and equipment. The AGC, which had offices just north of downtown, had already received calls for assistance from contractors who would be working at the site. Offers of donations were directed to the AGC and their number was broadcast. So many offers were received that the AGC went to a 24-hour operation to support the clearinghouse. Employees kept lists of what was offered and what was needed. The lists were used to identify items and get them to the site.

At 1:00 p.m., Mayor Norick met briefly with Chiefs Marrs and Gonzales and other leaders for a status update. They decided to hold a formal news conference at 3:30 p.m. The City's Civic Center Music Hall was selected for the conference because it provided adequate space and was close to, but outside, the perimeter. The City's Public Information Officer coordinated arrangements for the conference. The Civic Center staff began preparing the large Hall of Mirrors on the second floor. A local company provided a special sound system. Southwestern Bell installed cables and phone lines for the media.

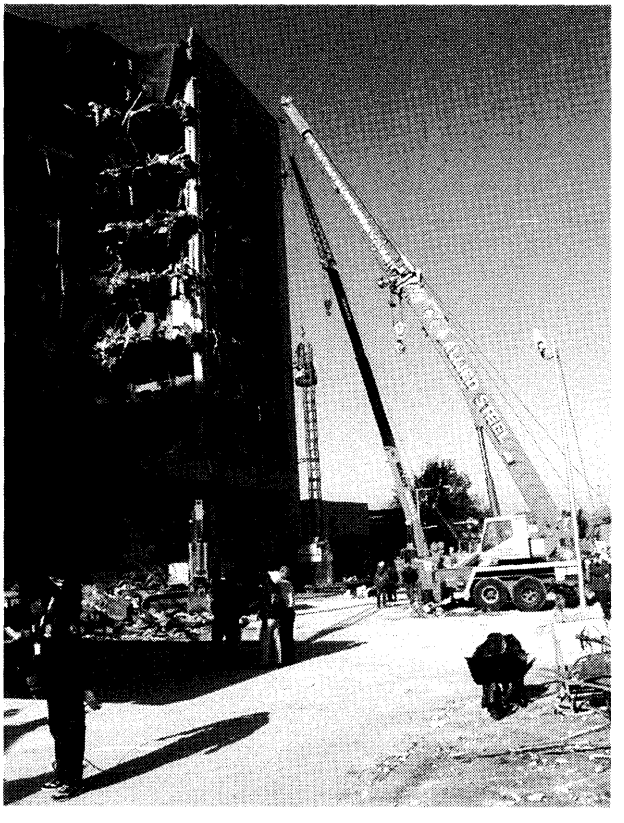
By early afternoon, Fire Incident Command recognized that this was the first day of a long, grueling incident. It was important to conserve the resources of all the personnel. Preparations were made to turn the command functions over to officers of the Blue Shift who were not scheduled for regular duty until Friday. Blue-Shift officers took over the Incident Command functions at 3:00 p.m. The Fire Department's Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) Team, in cooperation with the State Critical Incident Stress Management Team, organized a site at One Bell Central to provide immediate counseling services, called "defusings," for firefighters and other rescue personnel. By late afternoon, all firefighters were sent to defusing sessions when they were released from their shifts. The 20-to-30-minute group sessions were designed to reduce the trauma and stress incurred while working in the difficult rescue environment. The OCFD CISD team also developed prebriefings to deal with safety issues and inform the incoming crews of the working conditions, the tools and equipment they would be using, and conditions to expect at the site.

Chief Jackie Edmonson relieved Chief Conner at Rescue Command at 3:00 p.m. His first concern was to tighten security at the site. Even though the perimeter was established, persons in uniform or offering assistance continued to be allowed into the area. Off-duty fire and law enforcement personnel as well as civilians and unassigned on-duty firefighters wanted to participate in the rescue effort. They continued to work their way into the building. Edmonson contacted the U.S. Marshals guarding the inner perimeter and directed them to limit access to the south side of the building. He requested fencing for the area around the building.

Firefighters were ordered to search the building and evict all unassigned workers. They found 20 to 30 unauthorized people working on the second floor and escorted them out. Because so many Oklahoma City and mutual aid firefighters were standing by, urgently wanting to work, he revised the work schedule. Shorter work periods, generally of two hours, were developed to use as many as possible of the available forces. Workers were instructed to leave after completing a two-hour shift or after recovering a body. Many would not leave the area. They gathered on the northwest corner of NW 5th and Harvey and watched the operation.

The contractors, who provided the special skills and equipment needed to clear the debris and stabilize the building, began to move into the site. Front-end loaders were used to clear debris from in front of the building to make room for cranes and other equipment. Allied Steel positioned its first crane to begin debris removal on the north face. Boldt Construction was assigned to work with Rescue Command to construct and erect prefabricated shoring for damaged columns and beams. Boldt's first assignment was to secure four precast panels over the south entrance. The panels, loosened by the blast, were a hazard to the work parties entering from the plaza. Boldt fabricated brackets and secured the panels to the building making the entry safe. Flintco Construction from Tulsa was assigned other construction and specialized shoring tasks.

At 3:30 p.m., officials were prepared to hold the news conference. It was delayed when the White House announced that President Clinton would address the nation at that time. The President's broadcast was delayed and aired at 4:30 p.m. When the President and Attorney General Reno completed their remarks, Mayor Norick, Chief Marrs, Chief Gonzales, F.B.I. Special Agent-in-Charge Ricks, and FEMA Region VI Director Buddy Young spoke to the people of Oklahoma City and the nation. They told what they knew about the incident and what each agency was doing.



Cranes from Boldt Construction and Allied Steel work to place the manlift (elevator) to provide crews access to upper floors.

The news conference closed with a request for all persons who had gotten out of the Murrah Building to call the Mayor's Office. The OSBI manned phones at City Hall as a part of the effort to develop a missing persons list. Estimates of the number of people who had been in the building had ranged from 500 to as high as 900. OSBI agents worked with GSA and other agencies in the building to develop lists of workers by agency and floor. The hospitals provided lists of those they had treated. It was eventually determined that 358 people had been in the building. Over the next several days, a missing persons list was developed along with information about where each person had been at 9:02 a.m. Rescue Command and the Medical Examiner used this information to help locate and identify the bodies.

Cellular phones were the primary means of communication among the units and agencies at the site. So many phones were in use that many calls would not transmit. Requests for citizens not to use their cellular phones were aired throughout the day. AT&T Wireless Services and SWBMS needed additional capacity to support the rescue work and maintain regular communications for citizens. Each company ordered cells-on-wheels (COWS) to supplement their downtown cell sites. AT&T Wireless Services brought a COW from Tulsa and placed it on Walker Avenue at Main Street. It was connected to their system at 6:00 p.m. SWBMS brought a unit from Dallas that was placed at NW 7th and Hudson and was operational early the next morning.

Weather began to affect the rescue operation. A severe storm pattern developed in the afternoon. Wind gusts halted work on the north front. It rained from 2:30 p.m. to about 5:00 p.m. and then cleared for a while. The evening weather report predicted more rain with the possibility of high winds and tornados.

Rescue Command needed a secure, dry, forward Command Post. Architects and engineers who had helped design and build the Murrah Building came to the site. They investigated the enclosed loading dock at the west end of the building and declared it structurally sound. Mail trucks and cars were pulled from the dock, debris was removed, and some minor dam-

age repaired. OG&E provided temporary electric service and directed the work of City and volunteer electricians who installed breaker boxes, outlets, and lights. Southwestern Bell Telephone provided temporary phone lines. Parks and Public Works provided tables, chairs, and portable toilets. By late evening, Rescue Command was able to move into a forward Command Post that would serve for the rest of the operation. A fencing contractor and Public Works crews erected a chain link fence around the Murrah Building and the NW 5th Street area.

At 6:00 p.m., the first contingents from the National Guard arrived for assignment to perimeter security. Oklahoma City and mutual aid firefighters continued to clear debris and look for voids that might hold survivors. The workers passed debris out by hand or in five-gallon buckets. Hand tools including prybars and sledgehammers were used. They sawed through rebar to disentangle the debris. The National Guard and Tinker Air Force Base (TAFB) supplied entrenching tools and other equipment, including generators to power lights and equipment. Workers erected shoring as they moved forward into the Cave. Work in the Pit and the Cave was tedious, dangerous, and backbreaking. The teams worked steadily with no complaints.

Construction workers erected this steel pipe reinforcement for column G12. Above the column is the remaining portion of the transfer beam, which had supported floors 3-9.

At 7:00 p.m., a worker in the Cave thought he heard a moan. He called for quiet. Work was halted and the area became still. They heard a muffled cry for help and moved toward it and began to lift the debris. They uncovered a shoe and then a hand, which a firefighter grasped. They had found a young woman. She was buried in the rubble along with several bodies. The area was cramped and unstable. Shoring parties were assigned to help in the area. After three hours of work, firefighters and a doctor were able to free the survivor. Rescue teams and dog teams continued to search the upper floors. They re-searched the east extension and searched the parking garage. Several nonload-bearing walls were knocked down and minifront-end loaders, called Bobcats, were used to help remove debris from part of the first floor. FBI and other law enforcement personnel continued to search for evidence. Rain began again in the early evening. At 8:30 p.m., winds from another passing storm were gusting to 40 to 45 miles per hour. Exterior work was halted as the winds shook and rattled hanging debris and caused loose items to fall into the Pit.

Public Works crews and military units erected tents and built plywood shelters to protect waiting work parties and support groups from the rain and the cold north winds. A call went out for rain gear, leather gloves, and warm clothing. Soon, cars were lining up at the Red Cross, Salvation Army, and Feed the Children centers and hundreds of items were donated. They were received and transported to the site. Houses of worship of all faiths and denominations opened for special prayer services and vigils. Lights in the windows of the city's tallest building, the Liberty Bank, were turned on to form the shape of a cross, which shone out over the downtown.

Rescue teams continued to rotate into the building. By 10:00 p.m., primary, secondary, and canine searches of all floors were completed and no survivors were found. Rescue teams worked two-hour shifts in the confined Pit and Cave areas. They erected shoring. They found and removed bodies and returned to tunnel deeper into the debris. Boldt Construction worked throughout the evening to fabricate and erect 12-inch pipe supports for column G12, which supported the northwest portion of the building. Rain, hail, and cold winds finally drove all but the work parties, standby crews, and the perimeter security forces from the site.