

Preface

Like many others in New York and elsewhere, in the days and weeks after 9/11 I was searching for a way I could help with recovery efforts. It was a crowded field, and it was difficult to find something that I felt I could do or contribute that wasn't already being done.

At the time I was president of a research institute concerned with urban planning and public management. The organization, the Institute of Public Administration, was based in New York City but operated worldwide, and soon we were receiving requests from colleagues overseas who wanted to know more about recovery efforts. In particular, a large number of inquiries came in from Japan where I had lived, worked and, over fifteen years and dozens of visits, had developed close relationships with many research scholars and government officials. Many Japanese told me that they could well imagine a disaster of similar scope or severity as 9/11 occurring in their country and that New York's recovery experience might be useful reference to them for the future.

In the weeks after 9/11 I came to understand that the way I could be helpful was by helping others learn from New York's experience. In November 2001 I was asked to speak about New York's incipient recovery effort to a meeting of Japanese local government officials. In December 2001, Professor Haruo Hayashi from Kyoto University came to New York and we began planning a visit by an official Japanese delegation for the following March. That group grew from 10 to more than 40 persons, and examined all aspects of recovery efforts that were just beginning to unfold.

My involvement grew when the leaders of the Kyoto delegation launched a research project, funded by the government of Japan. As a member of the project team I had an opportunity to stay informed about various aspects of recovery, to periodically compile my notes and discuss them at workshops and conferences, and to host occasional visits to New York by

members of the team. At the conclusion of that project, I was invited to serve as a visiting professor at Kyoto University. From July 2006 through July 2007, my affiliation with the Disaster Prevention Research Institute at Kyoto University afforded me time and resources to prepare a fuller account. On my return to New York City I kept my account up to date as developments continued to unfold.

I have attempted to tell the story as clearly as I can, based primarily on published materials. My challenge has been to tell the story thoroughly and to provide sufficient context for a reader who may be unfamiliar with New York institutions and personalities. I have taken note of the issues that Japanese visitors have told me are of greatest interest to them, but I hope I have identified issues of broad appeal. Both New York's successes and mistakes can be instructive.

Writing this book has been my small contribution to recovery.