

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Event: Briefing by Lisa Jefferson, GTE airphone Customer Service Representative who talked with United Flight 93 passenger Todd Beamer on 9/11.

Type: Briefing

Date: May 11, 2004

Special Access Issues: None

Prepared by: John Raidt

Team: 7

Participants (non-Commission):

Participants (Commission): John Raidt

Location: Ms. Jefferson talked with Mr. Raidt by phone from her home.

[U] Ms. Jefferson said that Phyllis Johnson, another GTE operator, took the original call from Todd Beamer aboard UA 93. According to Ms. Jefferson, Beamer told Ms. Johnson his name and that his plane had been hijacked.

[U] Ms. Jefferson came over to Ms. Johnson's desk to find out what was going on. Upon learning that the caller had reported a hijacking, Ms. Jefferson went over to inform the Airplane Operations Surveillance Center (AOSC) about the report so that the center could notify the authorities. Ms. Jefferson said the AOSC contacted the FBI, United Airlines and perhaps other authorities. The FBI remained on the phone with the AOSC while Mr. Beamer was on the phone with Ms. Johnson and then Ms. Jefferson.

[U] After notifying the AOSC about what was happening, Ms. Jefferson returned to Ms. Johnson's desk who had been on the phone with Todd Beamer for about 5 minutes. She heard Ms. Johnson say "you're serious aren't you?" Ms. Johnson was very upset and Ms. Jefferson took over the headset.

[U] Ms. Jefferson said that she told the caller that "I already know your name, it's Todd Beamer." Mr. Beamer told her that three people had taken over the flight. Two with knives had locked themselves in the cockpit. A third had a red belt with a bomb. The one who had the bomb was standing at the curtain between coach and First class. Mr. Beamer told her that they had ordered everyone to sit down and a flight attendant had sat down next to him. Mr. Beamer then told Ms. Jefferson that two people were lying on the floor bleeding. Ms. Jefferson heard the flight attendant say to Mr. Beamer that the two on the ground were the pilot and co-pilot.

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[U] Mr. Beamer then told Ms. Jefferson that the hijackers had just closed the curtain so that passengers couldn't see into First Class.

[U] Mr. Beamer then asked Ms. Jefferson if she knew what the hijackers wanted. Ms. Jefferson replied that she did not know.

[U] Ms. Jefferson then asked how many people were on board. Mr. Beamer repeated the question to the flight attendant. (Ms. Jefferson said she could tell that the flight attendant was African American by her voice). Ms. Jefferson heard the flight attendant tell Mr. Beamer that there were 10 in front, 27 in back and 5 flight attendants. (Note: this description reflects the manifest for the flight, not how many passengers were in the two parts of the cabin at the time the question was asked.)

[U] Ms. Jefferson then asked if there were any children aboard. Mr. Beamer replied none that he could see. Ms. Jefferson then told him that the authorities had been notified and not to endanger himself by talking on the phone. Mr. Beamer replied that he was free to talk.

[U] At this point Mr. Beamer said that the plane was starting to fly erratically and said something to the effect [REDACTED] Mr. Beamer stopped talking and for about the next four minutes she heard a lot of commotion and screams. The commotion did not sound like a fight, but of people reacting to the erratic flying. (Ms. Jefferson thought that this commotion started about 7 minutes into her call with Mr. Beamer). Ms. Jefferson said she heard Mr. Beamer say "wait we're coming back up (the airplane)" and the commotion died down. [REDACTED]

[U] Mr. Beamer then told Ms. Jefferson that he dialed zero because he wanted to talk to someone and asked Ms. Jefferson to let his family know how much he loved them. [REDACTED]

[U] Ms. Jefferson and Mr. Beamer then talked about family. He told Ms. Jefferson that he had two boys. He then gave Ms. Jefferson his home phone number. Around this time Mr. Beamer remarked that they were "turning around." Shortly after that Mr. Beamer told Ms. Jefferson that a few of the passengers were getting together to jump the guy with the bomb.

[U] (Ms. Jefferson indicated that she had overheard from others standing around her desk during the call with Mr. Beamer that suicide missions were taking place). She did not tell Mr. Beamer about the suicide missions.

[U] Ms. Jefferson told Mr. Beamer that she would stand behind him whatever he decided. Ms. Jefferson informed the commission that Mr. Beamer talked as if there was someone on the plane that could fly it if they recaptured it, and he gave her the impression their plan would be to try to land it safely.

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[U] Shortly thereafter, she heard Mr. Beamer say to someone near him: "Are you ready? Okay! Let's roll." That's the last she heard. She held on the phone for 15 minutes calling his name every now and then, but couldn't hear anything. Others in her office heard the news reports that the plane had crashed. The call was then terminated.

Additional clarifications:

[U] Ms. Jefferson thought that Mr. Beamer had told Ms. Phyllis Johnson only that the plane had been hijacked, and no other details. She is not sure whether Ms. Johnson took notes.

[U] Ms. Jefferson said that she took notes but only a few basic notes on a small post-it pad. The FBI has the notes but she said they wouldn't really provide any additional information.

[U] Ms. Jefferson believes that everything that Mr. Beamer had told her up to the part about the hijackers closing the curtain to First Class had already happened and that Mr. Beamer was bringing her up-to-date.

[U] Ms. Jefferson said she thought that a Verizon operator may have listened into the call from Jeremy to his wife Lyzbeth, because Verizon was the Glick's carrier. Verizon also owned GTE airphone.