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Events: September 11, 2001

Tragic Days at the Capitol

Reflections on September 11th and the 1954 shooting in the House Chamber.

Interview recorded February 2, 2011

I was in my office, I believe. And we just were told to run down, down to the Mall and it was very shocking time. Now, my mother, let's go back a little bit, back in 1954, my mother was on the floor when the nationalists from nationalist group came from Puerto Rico, was it? Yeah. And shot up into the crowd down there. My mother was in a chair there and when she got down on the floor it had a bullet hole in it after she got out. She crawled on her hands and knees back to the cloakroom and had looked around to see, she was a very, you know very good woman in, in a lot of ways and knew a lot and she went in there and got the phone off the hook and said, called her office and tell them that as far as I can see the Members from New York are okay. And then Elizabeth Montgomery of the *Post* did an article about her, you know on it, that, that very night I think it was, the next day in the *Daily News*. And that was a very sad time, but I had seen it then, you see, very closely, about what can happen when something like this occurs, a terrorist attack or somebody doesn't like our government or what have you. Then there was a lot of talk about putting up a, a, a, you know a, a, a screen-like around in upstairs in the where the all the guests are and they all said, "No, we can't do that." But then let's go back to 9/11. Then I, I wasn't really completely shocked when something happened like that because I had been shocked before because how I learned about it, and I, I don't think I was there, I was up in, in 1954 I was in college, and she had them call up there to the college to tell the president of the college to tell me that she was all right. And that they did, but that was a tremendous shock, that, that was really. And of course my, I lost my father in '42 and here it was something like this happening. But, so then we go back to 9/11, I could take it a little bit because first of all she wasn't there but I was. So we just ran down the steps and, and try to do the best we could to cope with the situation. But then we went home and didn't come back for a few days and until they didn't know whether it was a grouping, you know a large group of people might do something else again. And it didn't happen but you have to be on your toes all the time.