

Seeking Justice for 9/11 Heroes: An Interview with New York Area Fire Commissioner Christopher Gioia

By [Andrew Steele](#) and [Christopher Gioia](#)

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*On this week's episode of 9/11 Free Fall, host **Andy Steele** is joined by Franklin Square Fire Commissioner **Christopher Gioia** to discuss his fire district's recent passage of a historic resolution supporting a new investigation into events of 9/11.*

We invite you to listen on YouTube or to read the interview below.

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Transcript

Andrew Steele: On July 24, 2019, the Franklin Square and Munson Fire District, which oversees a volunteer fire department that serves a hamlet of 30,000 residents, just outside of Queens, New York, made history by unanimously passing a resolution that supports a new investigation into the events of September 11, 2001, becoming the first legislative body in the country to do so.

Today, we're joined by the man who introduced that resolution, Christopher Gioia. He's a former firefighter and chief of the Franklin Square and Munson Fire Department, and now a commissioner that oversees that department. Mr. Gioia, welcome to the show.

Christopher Gioia: Thank you very much, Mr. Steele.

Steele: Before we get into the big news that everybody is talking about in the movement, and all throughout alternative media, we want to get to know you a little bit more, so please tell us about yourself and your career.

Gioia: Well, let's see. I am presently in the construction industry. Franklin Square Fire Department is a volunteer fire department. We're comprised of people from all walks and all trades. I've been in Franklin Square, I guess, for most of my life. I grew up maybe a block away from the firehouse, so when I was growing up, I used to sit on the curb and watch the firetrucks go by. I always wanted to be a fireman.

In the meantime, I completed high school, and I had joined the Marine Corps. When I had

gotten out of the Marine Corps, I came back to town, and I wanted to continue my service, because the fire department is a paramilitary organization, so I went to the fire department, and I joined the local fire department. I've been with the Franklin Square/Munson Fire Department now for 32 years. I rose through the ranks, lieutenant and captain. I went through the chief's office. We have three chiefs, second assistant, first assistant, and then you become chief of department. Those are two-year terms.

Then some years went by. We also have the fire district, which is comprised of five fire commissioners, who are responsible for the buildings and the grounds, the maintenance of the equipment, uniforms, and such. Pretty much, it's administrative, and you pay the bills, but it is an elected position, and you have to submit a petition and run for office, and there are other people out there that you have to run against, so you actually have to mount a campaign. Then whatever monies, because it's public money, everything has to be done according to state law. Everything has to be voted on, and there's policies and procedures, and everything has to be on the up and up and above board.

We are audited by the state. We have our own internal auditors. Every penny is accounted for, and we do run a tight ship over here. I've been a commissioner now for about, I guess, three years. They're five-year terms, so I'm probably about halfway through. You lose track of time. When you get older, things have a tendency to blur a little bit.

Steele: Is it just one term that you have or are allowed, or are you allowed to run again, when the five years are up?

Gioia: You can run again for another five-year term. You could actually stay in office. The other four commissioners have been in office 10, 15, maybe 20 years, so I'm pretty much the new kid on the block. The other members... We have another ex-chief, who's sitting on the board, as well. He was chief of the department back in the late '80s or the early '90s. That would actually be Commissioner Malloy. Then you have Commissioner Saltzman, who is a member of Engine Company Number Three. You have Commissioner Lyons, who is a member of Engine Company Number Two. Commissioner Joseph Torregrossa, he's the chairman, and he's also a member of Engine Company Number Two.

You can run again. Five-year terms is a long time, but if you're in there, and you like what you're doing, it's pretty procedural after... For me, personally, after being chief and being commissioner, coming into the district, it's actually a less hectic pace. When you're chief, you respond to every call, and you're out there on the front lines. Pretty much, the commissioners are the ones in the background, just paying all the bills. It's a lot less hectic. It's more relaxed. When you get a little older, you want to be a little bit more relaxed.

Steele: I understand that myself, as I'm getting older. Believe me. Now, please tell us about your 9/11 story. Where were you on the day of September 11th, and how did you first hear the news?

Gioia: On 9/11, I was working... As I said, I do construction for a living. I'm a construction surveyor. I work for a large construction company. I was working on new construction of a small power plant on the river, the East River in Brooklyn, just north of the Williamsburg Bridge. I was working with a gentleman, who works in Upstate New York. We were working. We're less than two miles from the Trade Center, and you have a spectacular view of Manhattan from the Brooklyn side of the river.

We heard this explosion, me and my partner, and he remarked something like, "Is somebody blasting around here?" Because he knew what the sound was. It didn't register, so we looked around, and somebody said, "Hey, look! The Trade Center, the Twin Towers, is on fire." We were looking at it, and we're like... We pretty much knew right away. We're like, okay, a plane hit it or a helicopter hit it. It was up high, and there was enough smoke and fire that we could see.

Then somebody ran out of one of the trailers and said that a plane had hit the North Tower. It was a spectacularly beautiful day. It was just this beautiful blue sky. There wasn't a cloud in the sky, and it was this perfect day. I'm thinking to myself, I'm like, this guy, whoever was flying the plane, how could you hit the building? It's just absolutely perfect flying weather.

I have survey equipment, which is pretty much like a telescope, so we focused the instruments on the North Tower, and I could see the imprint of the plane. I could actually see everything. Just looking at it, it was registering that we all thought it was maybe a small propeller plane, like a Piper Cub or something like that, but just from looking at the damage, it was like you knew that it was something larger.

In the meantime, then, the person... People were running around, scurrying, and they didn't know what was going on, and then all of a sudden, we were watching. Then from our vantage point, we couldn't see the plane coming from the other side, because the second plane that hit the South Tower came from the Statue of Liberty side, which is the New Jersey side, and the building exploded, and it blew out on the side, and then all hell broke loose. We were like, we're under attack, you know?

People just wanted to leave the job. Me and my partner, we were transfixed on what we were seeing, because we had the instruments set up, and people wanted to see what was going on. We actually could see people waving for help. I could see people waving their clothes from the windows. I actually saw the lady who was perched at the bottom of the impact hole in the North Tower. I believe she was identified, and she ultimately wound up being killed, but I saw her.

Then it got even worse, because then you saw people jumping out of the building, and then that was it. I couldn't watch it anymore, and I had to get home to my wife and my kids. My son was just about a year old. I told my boss. I said, "Listen, I'm out of here," so I jumped in my truck, and we're about... From Brooklyn to my house is probably about 20 miles, and it's about maybe five or six miles to get to the Brooklyn Queens Expressway.

When I had driven about five miles to get on the expressway, when I got up to the expressway, I looked in the rear view mirror, and the whole sky of Manhattan down by the Trade Centers was just blacked out by this cloud. I guess the North Tower had collapsed, but I didn't know it yet. People had just stopped on the highway, and everybody was just staring. I turned on the radio, and then all kinds of reports were coming in. I just, I flew home, and I made it home in record time. It must've taken me 15-20 minutes, because I was literally doing 90 miles an hour down the highway to get home.

I got home, and I threw open the door. My wife looked at me, and she goes, the South Tower just collapsed. I couldn't understand. I said to her, I go, "What do you mean the South Tower just collapsed?" I go, "What happened to the North Tower?" She said, "That one collapsed 15 minutes ago." I just sat back down on the couch with my wife, and we just sat there, and we watched TV. We were just in shock, because it was just too much to take in. We just sat

there, and we just watched, watched the TV, and we just watched everything, as it unfolded.

Steele: It was horrible enough to watch it on television from Florida, where I was at the time. I can't imagine standing there watching what you just described through your equipment that day, and seeing that. I know for New Yorkers, it had, of course, a more profound impact, because they actually lived it, people in New York and in the surrounding areas. It happened right in front of them. I understand that you had friends that died on September 11th. Do you want to tell us about them, and the lives that they lived?

Gioia: Yes, that's correct, Andrew. I lost three of my friends, who were city firemen. One of them, Thomas Hetzel, was in the department here in Franklin Square. The other two lived in Franklin Square, and I was friends with them. I grew up with firefighter, Robert Evans. We used to pretty much hang out, maybe down at the park. He was a friend from school. Then the other firefighter, Michael Kiefer, he was one of these kids who used to come around the firehouse on his bicycle, and he was a... We'd call him a buff. He would have his scanner, and he would follow the trucks around. He grew up, and he joined the fire department.

He went into the towers. He responded. They never found him. I think they found little bits and pieces of Bobby. I was speaking to his sister the other day. They actually recovered some more parts or bone fragments. Tom they found in a stairwell. He was on his way out of the building. I was really good friends with Tom. I pretty much grew up with him. I went to his wedding. We did things together, and he was a good friend. They were all good people.

Steele: September 11th happened. You obviously have a personal connection to the event through your friends that died, through the fire department. How did you come to be exposed to the World Trade Center evidence that AE911Truth puts forth?

Gioia: After 9/11, the town really pulled together, the town of Franklin Square. We opened up the firehouse, and people were asked to drop off donations, whatever they could donate in the way of maybe food, water, clothing, whatever supplies that they could think of, that we packed onto a truck, and we actually brought down to Ground Zero to give out to the rescue workers. One of my friends in the fire department is a retired airline pilot. He was an FAA instructor. He flew every kind of aircraft, and he was totally familiar with jet planes and everything like that.

One of the stories that struck us odd, right from the get-go, and he even said this, was that they mentioned that the hijackers had turned off the system on the plane, and that stopped the air traffic controllers from seeing them. He was like, "Well, if they turn that off, that doesn't erase the radar signature." That always struck me as odd, and even struck him as odd, because they were saying, well, they couldn't track the plane, but that's not true.

That always stuck in my brain, and then years went by, and didn't think anything of it. Pretty much, we were trying to get our lives back on track, I'd say, for the first year, went to numerous wakes and funerals for a solid year, of just firemen and cops and civilians who were killed. It wasn't a pleasant time. It was actually a time that I really don't care to remember too much. I guess I've repressed the memories, and it's kind of hazy, but I do remember enough.

Then we gradually built our lives back, and life pretty much got back to normal, even though you have the wars going on, and you have... All kinds of things were going on, but people accepted it, and we had to move on. We had to carry on, and we did.

Being in the construction industry, I speak with a lot of people. I was talking with some people, and we were talking about building construction, and we got onto talking about how the towers had collapsed. Then one of the guys that I was talking with said, "You know about Building 7?"

I was like, "Well, what about Building 7? What is it? What was it?" I really didn't know too much about it. I knew that a third building had come down, but at the time you're watching this, I guess I really started watching the news a couple of days after 9/11, when Franklin Square was called into the city, and we had to do standby duty at a city firehouse. We were all glued around the TV, and they kept showing Building 7 from uptown, like around the Empire State Building, so you could see the building come down. At the time, nobody really cared about Building 7, because everybody was more fixated on the Twin Towers.

Then this person that I was speaking with, another one of the construction workers, he's like, "Yeah," he goes, "that building came down. It wasn't hit by a plane, and I have some real good photos/videos of it close up." He started showing me that, and then on one of the videos, you could actually see the windows blowing out, and the windows blew out on multiple floors, all at the same time, and then the building buckled on both ends, and then the roof... The roof had initially caved in, but then the whole building came down symmetrically.

I just stood there, and I looked at him. I was like, "You've got to be kidding me. Where did you get that?"

He's like, "It's on the web. You could go online, and you could bring up pictures of all of this."

That's what spurred my curiosity, so I went online, and I started researching pictures of the collapses. I'm looking at the collapses, and then I'm hitting different websites. There's a lot of crap out there, and there's a lot of people who are off the wall with all kinds of different theories about everything, but I wasn't interested in that. I was more interested in the dynamics of the collapse.

I looked at Building 7 in the closeup, and then somebody had stitched together, I guess, some pictures of a controlled demolition, and they put it side by side, next to Building 7. Then I was looking at... I was going through the interviews, and then I was looking at the news reports. There was a report from Dan Rather, and he said he was watching Building 7, and how it reminded him of a controlled demolition.

I'm looking at that building, and now, from a construction point of view, and then from being a fireman, and I'm like, "There's something literally wrong with this picture, because fire doesn't act like that." If the building wasn't hit by a plane... They said there were raging fires, and there were no raging fires in Building 7. There was fires on a few floors, and by the time of the collapse, they had pretty much gone out. There was damage when the North Tower collapse. Okay, I get that, but the building would've collapsed on the damaged side, and it would've been an asymmetrical collapse. It wouldn't have been a symmetrical collapse.

Even if you look at the video of the building coming down, it doesn't collapse from the top. You see the roof coming down, but it starts to collapse from the bottom. All the core columns, I know from construction, all the core columns had to have been severed at the

same time, for a uniform, symmetrical collapse like that. There's no two ways about it, never going to have a steel frame building collapse in that fashion without something else going on.

That spurred me on even further, and I started looking into more videos. Then I was interested in what eyewitnesses had to say, because I don't... I'm not going on hearsay, and I'm not going on theories. I want to know what people saw. There's a lot of testimony there from the firemen and police, first responders, as to what they saw and they heard. I believe about 200 or so mention explosions. They saw red flashes. There was a lot of popping, explosions, and everybody had pretty much... There was a common theme. They all said they thought it was... It almost looked like a controlled demolition. The people actually said that.

Then I'm like, all right, but you know, I'm going through. I'm surfing the web, and then I hit Architects and Engineers website, and this website had it all together, and it presented it in a logical fashion, yeah, all right, this is what happened. Then they back it up with professional people, and they... backed up by eyewitness testimony and how certain things are just not possible. You can't suspend the laws of physics. Gravity only operates downward. It doesn't operate from outward. The laws of science most certainly do apply. The laws of the building, the way the buildings were constructed, that applies. If you put theories to the test, which they have, then you prove that it's not really a theory anymore, or you eliminate things that just are impossible to happen.

That coalesced in my mind. Then after, I would say, two or three years of doing research and digging, digging through testimony, and looking at pictures, and hitting various websites, it pretty much was obvious that the official government narrative is not really what happened that day. It's absolutely far from the truth, and it's not a good thing.

What was done, it was something... It was terrible, and it was perpetrated on the American public by, I'm just going to say, a rogue group, and there was an agenda. There definitely was an agenda. There was a lot going on, and a lot of good people got killed. That's something that this country cannot tolerate, because it just goes against everything that we stand for. People were murdered for that, and that's something that... You know what? That really disturbs me, and I know it disturbs a lot of other people, too.

Steele: Absolutely, and I think you really lay out the evidence very well, from your own research and perspective. When you woke up to this, through your slow process of deep research, like so many of us, did you speak to other people about this, other firefighters? What were their reactions? I'd also like to know, what did this do to your world view?

Gioia: When I first started talking to people about it, they just kind of laughed it off, and they were like, you're crazy, and you don't know what you're talking about. They just kind of blew it off. Then I would say, "Well, wait a minute. Look at these pictures with me." You could see, if you look at the Twin Towers exploding, and really look below the collapse, at the beginning, you could actually see floors blowing out in a pattern coming down. Then the debris from the collapsing floors covers it up, but you can actually see the floors blowing out. There's some really good pictures of that.

I would try to tell people that maybe it's not all as it seems, and that there's definitely something else here that we need to look at. Initially, people didn't want to know, and it is definitely a sensitive issues, because we're pretty much right on top of it, but I'm persistent.

I brought it up to a few people, and I showed them a few things to spur their curiosity. I don't think it changed my world view. I think that, if anything, I always knew that the other world was a crazy place.

Steele: What first gave you the idea to pursue this resolution, and how difficult was the decision for you to go ahead and broach this subject with your colleagues?

Gioia: I have been putting it out there for a couple years now in the fire department. Being commissioner, I do go to meetings with other fire districts, and being an ex-chief, I do go to meetings for chiefs, The Chiefs Association in Nassau County. I brought it up at a fire district meeting. I actually read the petition. I saw the petition. I agreed with the need to have another investigation, because a lot of evidence has surfaced in the past 18 years that needs to look at. A lot of it has been uncovered by Architects and Engineers. It's been uncovered by a lot of people, who have taken the time to analyze, and to render a professional opinion on what the evidence shows. That, to me, was very important.

I started telling people about the petition. I said that the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York actually has this petition to get a grand jury investigation going. I said, "That's where we need to go." I said, "My feelings on the matter don't mean anything." I said, "We're not engaging in conspiracy theories at all. Let's look at the evidence, and let the evidence guide us on the direction that we need to go." That is so important. I think that the American people, I think that any rational person, would agree with that, that you discount everything else. You can't go on hearsay. Let's take a hard look at what's there, and let that just guide us. We owe it to the people who were murdered on 9/11 and the countless thousands, or tens of thousands of people who were killed in these wars overseas, in the name of fighting terrorism or whatever you want to call it, and get to the heart of the matter, and get to the truth.

If the evidence takes us in that direction, and we do find out that there are other people responsible, and they're in the government, or if they're in the Pentagon, or they're in the business sector, then these people need to be held to account. They need to be brought to justice. We need to get this country back on track.

Steele: Absolutely. I couldn't agree with you more. So much was affected by September 11th. We're still living the ramifications of it to this day. That's why so many people are dedicated, and I can tell, probably one of the reasons why you're so dedicated, too. I'm curious about the interactions in discussing this resolution. What was some of the feedback and discussion that took place before you guys actually met and passed this thing?

Gioia: I approached the other commissioners, and I said, "Listen, I want to sponsor a resolution in support of the petition at the U.S. Attorney's Office." The other commissioners were receptive. They've been in the fire service for many years. We've been intimately involved with everything with 9/11, and they know where I'm coming from. They know that I don't get myself involved in anything unless I believe in it 100%. They looked. They listened to what I had to say. I said, "I'd like to do, introduce, a resolution." I said, "I looked it up, and a resolution, a legal resolution is... It's not really binding. It's pretty much mostly symbolic, but it is a statement from a legislative group, and where elected official is a statement that we recognize certain things, and that we support the investigation. Coming from a fire department, that would lend some weight to the movement to get the U.S. Attorney's Office to present the petition," which I understand they're not talking, and they've had it for about year.

That was the impetus on getting the resolution going. That was just to add some weight, and to add some considerable support to the movement that's out there. I think we accomplished that.



The Franklin Square and Munson Fire District commissioners: Philip F. Malloy, Jr. (left); Dennis G. Lyons (second from left); Joseph M. Torregrossa (center); Christopher L. Gioia (second from right); Les Saltzman (right).

Steele: You absolutely did. Now, I understand from the article, that AE911Truth has posted and sent out to all of our supporters that you had family members of the fallen at this meeting. Can you talk about that?

Gioia: I invited Tommy Hetzel's parents, his widow, his sister; and I invited my friend, Bobby Evans... His mom and his sister were there. We had them sit there up front. The family of Michael Kiefer, they really took the hit, because Mike was their shining star, and I don't think they ever fully recovered from losing Michael. He had a couple of sisters and whatnot. I think he was the only son. His was a real big loss over there. I know that the Evans family definitely took the hit. I know his mom. His mom was devastated.

I just couldn't say enough about the Hetzel family, because they've been through so much. There's been other tragedy in the family. His mom and his dad and his brother and his sister, his remaining siblings, have been so strong throughout everything, and I just can't imagine the strength that it takes for them to continue, but they do. Yes, they were there for the vote on the resolution.



The Franklin Square and Munson Fire District commissioners greet the families of fallen firefighters Thomas J. Hetzel and Robert Evans, both Franklin Square natives.

Steele: Obviously, you're aware of how significant this was. Again, it's the first legislative body in the country to put forth such a resolution. Were other commissioners in this body aware of the historic significance of this resolution?

Gioia: I don't think they realized the full impact of what we were doing until after it was done. They knew it was significant, though, because I told them. Everything is transparent with the fire district. One commissioner doesn't do anything without letting the other commissioners... We don't operate independently, and we do have a district council, which oversees everything that we do, and they guide us, and they give legal advice on everything.

The resolution was drafted. The commissioners, we all, had a chance to look at it. It was run by counsel to make sure that the T's were crossed, and the I's were dotted, and that it was presented in a legal fashion. Whether or not they knew the full impact of what the resolution was going to do, I don't think any of us did. I think we had a narrow focus, and that was just to support the resolution, and then to have this thing literally... It got big real fast, and I think that that took everybody, including myself, by surprise, but no. They knew it was going to have an impact, but I don't think we all realized the tremendous impact that it was going to have.

Steele: Us veterans in the movement are fully aware that, many times, those who don't want discussion of the evidence, who don't want to talk about this issue, that want to stifle any questions about September 11th, will oftentimes try to invoke the firefighters and the emotional impact of that day on them, to try to shut down the discussion. What is your reaction to those kinds of methods to try to stifle discussion of the evidence?

Gioia: I think it's a diversionary tactic. I think that the psychological implications of 9/11 were definitely discussed and implemented, that 9/11 was a very sophisticated attack and plot, that it was very well planned, and they covered all the bases. To me, it's like psychological warfare, so if you constantly shift the focus from the facts to the dramatic effect, then you've been successful, because now you've taken the focus off where you need it to be.

I'd just tell people, listen, I've always said that 9/11 needs to be viewed from a clinical standpoint, where you just disassociate yourself from all emotion, and you just look at the facts, and that's it. You don't get involved in the drama. You don't get involved in the emotion, the feelings, any of that. That's a non sequitur. That just has no bearing on what we're trying to do.

I tell people bluntly, listen. You know what? This is a crime. This was a mass murder. That's what this was, okay? That's all it was. It was a mass murder; 3,000 people were murdered in cold blood, on TV, or in front of your eyes, okay? Buildings collapsed, and planes crashed into this, and all kinds of things happened. We need to look at it, and we have to put literally everything under the microscope. Everything has to be looked at and analyzed. It has to be analyzed from a scientific point of view, and there's no emotion to it. It's this, and it's that.

If it's this, then we need to go there. If it's that, we need to go there. If you look at the evidence, and you look at the testimony, any reasonable person would say there's plenty of reasonable doubt there, and you know what? You can't violate the laws of physics, and you can't say that steel frame buildings just collapse for no reason at free fall. You just can't make these statements the way the government's throwing out these statements. They didn't even want to entertain some of the evidence. What they didn't want to look at, they didn't look at.

To give you an example, in the case of Building 7, they asked the gentleman, who was giving the report... Actually, he came out and said, he goes, "Oh, there was no evidence of explosives found." Then they asked him, "Well, did you look for explosives?" He said, "No, we didn't look for explosives." How disingenuous is that, that we didn't find explosives because we didn't look for explosives? There's a lot of doublespeak going on.

Steele: Now, you've passed this resolution. You're getting a lot of attention on the Internet from alternative media, and I think the corporate media is probably aware of this, whether

or not they choose to report it. We all know the situation with them, but do you think that other firemen, who may hear about this, particularly in New York City, in the surrounding areas, do you think they're ready to hear out this issue with an open mind, or do you think the emotion of that day still carries 18 years later?

Gioia: I think, Andrew, it cuts both ways. I think you have firemen out there, who actually are embracing this, because they know that something's not right. I know that for a fact, because from the meetings that I've attended with the chiefs, the ex-chiefs, fire district commissioners from the other towns around Nassau County, that there are people out there, who do not accept the official narrative. They know that something is wrong, and they're absolutely willing to look at the evidence, and they do want to see some movement. They want to see another investigation, because they know that things just don't add up.

You have some people, who, they're pretty much in denial, and they don't want to go down that road anymore, because they've been affected so much that... We've been destroyed up here in New York. We have. We took the hit. People, they just... You mention 9/11, and they go right into the shell. They go right into a defensive posture.

Now that time has elapsed a little bit, you have a younger crowd that wasn't really as much on top of it, and they are willing to embrace the evidence, and they're willing to embrace people who are talking about it, because if you stick to the facts, and that's all we need to do is just stick to the facts and say, listen, these are the facts, and this is the evidence, and we need to look at this, then nobody's going to argue with that. All right, we need another investigation. Let's talk about things. Let's talk about this. We're all adults. We all have a stake in this.

There's no rational person out there that's going to tell me, as a firemen, "You know what? Oh, we can't talk about that," because I'd be the first one to tell them, "You know what? No. You know what? I'm going to talk about it. My friends were murdered. They were murdered right in front of me. You know what? I want to get to the bottom of it, so what are you telling me? You going to tell me, no, you don't want an investigation? What's up with that?"

It's beyond belief that there are people out there that would not embrace a new investigation, so we could get to the truth, and we could look at evidence that hasn't been looked at and is mandated by Congress that they have to show this evidence, and it's mandated by law that the U.S. Attorney has to present this to a grand jury. That's the rule of law, and that's what this country is all about. That's what makes this country what it is. That's what sets this country apart from other countries in the world, is that we have respect for law and order. There is the rule of law, and that has been violated. It's been grossly violated, and we need to get back to that, because if we do not get back to the rule of law, then this country, the ideals, everything that this country has been built on is going to take the hit.

You know what? I don't think you're going to let it happen. I know damn sure I'm not going to let it happen.

Steele: Those are powerful words, and I know that there are other firemen out there, all over America, who have gotten wind of what happened in the Franklin Square and Munson Fire District, and are maybe even listening to this interview, wanting to meet the man who proposed that resolution. They may be inspired, but they may be holding back for various reasons. They may want to do the same thing in their fire districts, maybe other fire

commissioners with that authority. What would you say to them, as they're considering this? What would you say to them, in terms of why it's so important, and why they should pursue the same action that your district did?

Gioia: Andrew, I would say this to the other firefighters, to the police officers, to anybody, any other person out there, any American, that you know what? We're all Americans here, and we believe in ideals which make our country great. There comes a point in everyone's life when you have to make a stand, and that's a really tough thing to do for people. You make a decision that, you know what? You're going to stand up for something.

Now, a lot of people talk tough, and a lot of people, they just... That's it. They're just talk, and they don't really act, and back it up with actions, but it's incumbent on especially firemen. We've taken the extra step. We've gone the extra mile. We're out there protecting lives and saving property, and we're on the forefront of all of this.

I would say to anybody who believes in this country that it's time to make a stand, because 3,000 people were murdered, and you can't let this go. You're not going to let it go, because if they're going to murder 3,000 people, what are they going to do next? I'm not going to have my kids jeopardized. I don't really like how the country has been guided down this dark path. We need to get back on track, and it's up to the people in this country, the good people.

Americans, to me, aren't afraid to stand up for what they believe in. We've been so beaten down that, you know what? You're afraid to speak, because, God forbid, they're going to say, "Oh, you're a hater," or, "You're a racist," or, "You're a truther," or something like that. You know what? I'm not afraid to get out there and speak my mind. You know, you speak intelligently, and you speak armed with the facts, but you know what? You have to speak. People really need to make a stand on this one, because if we don't, if we don't, then something else even worse is going to happen, because it only emboldens things like this to happen.

I think there's a quote. It says, "For evil to triumph, good people need not do anything." That is so true, so it depends on the person. I would just encourage people out there, listen, if you feel strongly about this, then do something about it. Don't sit there. Get up and do something about it, because there's a lot of people out there that will help you, that'll embrace this. Like you said, there's a movement out there of people who just, for whatever reason, they just don't believe what we've been told.

The more you look at it, you could see the truth. I tell people, listen. I'm not going to tell you how to think, okay? I'm not going to tell you one way or the other about what happened on 9/11. You do that yourself. You look at it. You research it. You come to your own conclusions, all right? Then, maybe a few months or a year down the road, we could meet up again, and we could talk about it, and see if your position has changed. We need to get behind the investigation. People need to get behind this, and get the investigation going, and let the wheels of justice do their job.

Steele: Something I always commonly mention, or I have been doing for the past year or so is we're here 18 years after this event took place. If the post-9/11 world were a person, it would be old enough to vote at this point, or I guess it would be this September, so it's been a long time. Some people say, why do you keep at this? It was so long ago. Maybe it was a controlled demolition. Maybe it wasn't, but all those people, or most of them, are out of

office now. Why can't we just move forward? Why do we have to focus on the negative? I mean, this is an attitude that exists out there among the rank and file of America. I hear it often. What's your response to that? What do you have to say to those sentiments?

Gioia: I hear the same thing, Andrew. I hear it. It's 18 years later. Why are you bothering? I say to these people, because these people were our friends. They were our neighbors. They were sons. They were daughters. They were husbands. They were wives. They had lives. These were Americans, who went to work. They just were going about their business, and they died horrible deaths.

These were my friends, and I'm not going to forget that. I'm not satisfied with the way they've been treated. Like I said, reinvestigate. I get choked up. I get emotional. I would get emotional with people and just say, listen, unless you've lost somebody, and I always say, listen, if somebody murdered somebody in your family, and there was evidence that came about after, that pointed at somebody else, or it took you in a different direction, wouldn't you want to pursue that? There's no statute of limitation on murder, and these people were murdered.

That's why, after 18 years, I'm still looking for justice for my friends, because I know that there are people out there who need to be held to account. I'm not going to let go. I'm not going to let go. If I spend the rest of my life pursuing this, pursuing justice for my friends, I'm going to do that.

Now, with regards to that, being a fireman, and being a firefighter... This is for all of the firemen out there. You know it's a brotherhood, and we've been trained that when you fight the fire, you go in. You don't go in alone. You go in with your brother or your sister. You go in together, and if something happens, you come out together. You don't leave that person behind, so I would say this.

We're not leaving our brothers behind. We're not leaving these people behind. These were Americans. These were firefighters, cops, EMS, and they were just ordinary people who went about their business that day. We're not leaving them behind. We're not forgetting about them. They deserve justice, and we're going to see that justice is done.

Steele: Yes, we are, through efforts like yours, through efforts like the ones being put forth by AE911Truth, the Lawyers' Committee for 9/11 Inquiry. Nobody will be left behind, especially the victims, who we do this work in pursuit of justice for.

Christopher Gioia, I want to thank you for what you got started out there in your district and what I think you're getting started in the rest of America and the wider world. Of course, thank you so much for coming on 9/11 Free Fall today.

Gioia: All right, thank you very much, Mr. Steele.

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