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*Figure 3-7 Partial collapse of WTC 3 after collapse of WTC 2.*

continue down to the foundations or extend horizontally to the edges of the structure. In fact, the two northernmost bays (approximately 60 feet) remained intact all the way to the roof. A similar, but lesser condition existed in the southern bays. Even in the center of the building, the collapse stopped at approximately the 7th floor. This arrested collapse implies that the structure was sufficiently strong and robust to absorb the energy of the falling debris and collapsed floors, but at the same time the connections between the destroyed and remaining framing were able to break apart without pulling down the rest of the structure. This complex behavior resulted in the survival of large portions of the building following the collapse of WTC 2.

The second loading event was the collapse of WTC 1. Debris from WTC 1 fell along the entire length of the hotel. Lower floors at the southwest end of WTC 3 survived although they suffered extensive damage. The remaining portions of the building after both collapses of WTC 1 and WTC 2 are shown in Figure 3-8.

An FDNY fire company was in the building during the collapses of both WTC 1 and WTC 2 and survived. The firefighters were near the top of the building in the process of making sure that there were no civilians present in the building, when the south tower collapsed. Firefighter Heinz Kothe is quoted as saying, “We had no idea what had happened. It just rocked the building. It blew the door to the stairwell open, and it blew the guys up near the door halfway down a flight of stairs. I got knocked down to the landing. The building shook like buildings just don’t shake.” Subsequently, the firefighters were in the lower portion of the southwest corner of the building when the north tower collapsed (Court 2001).

The Chief Engineer of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, Frank Lombardi, was in the lobby of WTC 3 with other Port Authority executives during the collapse of WTC 2. They survived the collapse and were eventually able to leave the building (Rubin and Tuchman 2001).