

September 11th and the Bush Administration: Compelling Evidence for Complicity

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Abstract

Why 9/11 was not prevented is one of the most critical questions in current times, because answers may well reveal to more people than ever before, the true nature of the U.S. corporate global empire – the most extensive and most destructive in human history. Newspapers across the U.S. called for an investigation into Bush's lies about the reason for war on Iraq. While it is relatively easy for the American people to accept deception for the killing of the Arab people in distant lands, few people will be as accepting if it is shown that this Administration was complicit in acts of atrocities against its own people.

The evidence I present in this article suggests that the most plausible explanation of the events surrounding September 11, 2001, is that the Bush Administration was complicit in the terrorist attacks and has orchestrated its cover-up. The sources cited contain extensive detailed information, additional sources, and analysis beyond what is possible to provide in this summary. I hope that this information will incite public outrage leading to full accountability.

Introduction

The terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, September 11, 2001, has served as a pretext for draconian measures of repression at home, including a cabinet level Department of Homeland Security, the Patriot Act I, and its sequel. September 11th (9/11) also became the cause for numerous other acts in the U.S. from massive increases in military spending to a Fast Track Trade Agreement for President Bush. More importantly, 9/11 serves as a pretext for a never-ending war against the world, including preemptive strikes against defenseless, but resource rich countries.

As I outline below, there are numerous aspects regarding the official stories about September 11th which do not fit with known facts that contradict each other, that defy common sense, and that indicate a pattern of misinformation and cover-up. The official reports coming out of Washington do very little to alleviate these concerns. For

example, the Congressional report released on July 25, 2003 by a joint panel of House and Senate Intelligence Committees concluded that 9/11 resulted from C.I.A. and F.B.I. "lapses." While incompetence is frightening enough given a \$40 billion annual budget for intelligence, it is simply not consistent with known facts. It is consistent with the reports from other government scandals such as the Warren Commission's Report and the report from the Iran Contra affair, which produced damage control and cover-up but not answers to the more probing questions. But perhaps a comparison to Watergate is more apropos since the Bush Administration refuses to release twenty-eight pages of the congressional report. The report from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is believable unless you are seriously interested in the truth. Under more careful scientific scrutiny, some answers seem impossible, most are based on speculation, and still other important answers are completely omitted.

Even after more than two years, investigations stop far too short, the public is left in the dark on too many questions easily answered, and no one in the Bush Administration has been held accountable for any actions surrounding the attacks of September 11, 2001. The National Commission on Terrorists Attacks Upon the United States, formed at the insistence of the families of some of the victims, is continuing to hold hearings and a final report is expected by May, 2004.

It remains to be seen if, after a nearly three-year delay, they will come close to the truth about September 11th. I believe that this will occur only if tremendous public pressure is brought to bear from numerous sources to demand accountability from the Bush Administration. Accountability for any atrocity should attract the attention of serious investigative reporters, media critics, and even news commentators. That is their chosen responsibility. It is well known that the U.S. corporate media ask few probing questions, which aides in government cover-up. But why there has been so little coverage in the alternative press, with obvious exceptions, is a mystery. Too many of these outlets (e.g., Z Magazine and Mother Jones) have ignored the issue of accountability for 9/11. The failure of accountability should be a national and international scandal. Questions of why journalists and others in the mass media are failing the people of the U.S. and the world need to be answered.

What I show in this article is that government agencies knew of impending attacks, were capable of preventing them, but did nothing; their accounts of the events contain contradictions and lies; and they are going to great lengths to prevent any investigation. I further show that they are reaping tremendous benefits including those consistent with previously laid out plans for the U.S. to maintain its imperial hegemony through the military, economic and political takeover of Eurasia. These revelations will shock many people, which is one of the reasons for deliberate corporate media cover-up. But a significant number of people, even within the U.S. see (or will see) the inconsistencies in the events surrounding 9/11, as described below, with the long history of U.S. imperialism and atrocities both at home and abroad. (1)

Nevertheless, the degree to which this Administration is pursuing a course of world domination at any cost is unprecedented. One of the best ways of halting this destructive course is to expose the Bush Administration and insist on its accountability to the victims' families, the American people and the people of the world.

Therefore, why 9/11 was not prevented is one of the most critical questions in current times because answers may well reveal to more people than ever before, the true nature of the U.S. corporate global empire – the most extensive and most destructive in human history. Newspapers across the U.S. called for an investigation into Bush's lies

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Evidence of Complicity by the Bush Administration in 9/11 Terrorist Attacks

Here is the U.S. official story as reported by the U.S. corporate media: On the morning of September 11, 2001 four Boeing passenger jets were hijacked within an hour by nineteen Arab terrorists armed with box cutters. Pilots among these terrorists took control of the commercial planes and changed course toward targets in New York City and Washington D.C. Two of the planes were deliberately crashed into the Twin Towers, causing fires within the towers that melted the steel support structures, thereby causing the buildings to collapse completely. A third plane was deliberately crashed into the Pentagon. Passengers on the fourth plane overpowered the hijackers and caused the plane to crash in Pennsylvania. This was an attack on America planned and directed by Osama bin Laden as the leader of al-Qaeda, a previously obscure anti-U.S. international terrorist organization composed mainly of Arabs. This story cries out for further explanations, but nothing official is forthcoming. People are simply expected to believe the official version without question.

The Bush Administration Knew of the 9/11 Attacks Beforehand

There are several major sources of evidence to conclude beyond reasonable doubt that numerous people, in the U.S. and around the world were aware of the possibility of a terrorist attack on the U.S., and contrary to their claims, the Bush Administration was not caught by surprise. First, the entire U.S. intelligence community knew of the 9/11 attacks beforehand, including the fact that commercial jets were to be used as bombs; they also knew the approximate dates and possible targets. (2)

Western intelligence had been aware of plans for such terrorist attacks on U.S. soil as early as 1995. The plan was known as "Project Bojinka." It was known to both the CIA and FBI and was described in court documents in the trial in New York of Ramzi Yousef and Abdul Murad for their participation in the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center (WTC).

As early as 1996, the FBI was following the activities of Arab students at U.S. flight schools. Several persons later identified by the FBI as the hijackers, including Khalid Almihdar and Nawaf Alhazmi along with the man alleged to be the principal organizer, Mohammed Atta, were under active surveillance by U.S. agents prior to 9/11. Several weeks prior to September 11th, all internal U.S. security agencies were warned of the impending al-Qaeda attacks. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) was warned of the possible attack but did nothing to beef up security. At least two weeks prior to September 11th the FBI agents again confirmed that an attack on lower Manhattan was imminent. Some field agents predicted, almost precisely, what happened on September 11th. (3)

There are numerous other reasons to dismiss as a lie the claim that the 9/11 plane hijackings and attacks caught the U.S. government agencies by surprised – a rather ominous admission in the first place. For example, an expert panel commissioned by the Pentagon in 1993 discussed how an airplane could be used as a bomb. Notably, U.S. security officials had considered and prepared for possible attacks by suicide planes during the Atlanta Summer Olympics in 1996. There were three incidents that took place in 1994, including the stolen single-engine Cessna, which crashed into a tree on the White House grounds just short of the president's bedroom, and an aborted plan to crash a plane into the Eiffel Tower. As early as 1997, Russia, France, Israel, the Philippines and Egypt all warned the U.S. of the possibility of the attacks. Warning came from several others sources as well. Recently (May 25, 2002), CBS revealed that President Bush had been warned in an intelligence briefing on August 6, 2001, that Bin Laden might be planning to hijack commercial planes for a domestic attack in the U.S.

Second, selected persons were told not to fly that day. Newsweek (September 24, 2001) reported that on September 10th, “a group of top Pentagon officials suddenly canceled travel plans for the next morning, apparently because of security concerns” (p. 26). Yet this same information was not made available to the 266 people who died aboard the four hijacked commercial aircraft. A significant number of other selected people were also warned about flying or reporting for work at the WTC. These people include San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown, who received a phone call eight hours before the hijacking warning him not to travel by air. Salman Rushdie is under a 24-hour protection of U.K. Scotland Yard; he was also prevented from flying that day. Ariel Sharon canceled his address to Israeli support groups in New York City just the day before his scheduled September 11th address. John Ashcroft stopped flying on public airplanes in July of 2001. These revelations are more indisputable evidence that people knew about the impending attacks.

Third, revelations of profits made by insider trading relating to the 9/11 attacks point to the top levels of U.S. business and the CIA. (4)

The intelligence community regularly analyzes financial transactions for any suspicious activity. Only three trading days before September 11th, an inordinate number of “put” options – bets that a stock will go down – were placed on the stocks of American and United Airlines, the companies whose planes were hijacked in the attacks of 9/11. No such speculation was made on any other airlines. Moreover, similar speculation occurred on other companies housed in the World Trade Towers, including Merrill Lynch and Morgan Stanley Dean Witter & Co. It is noteworthy that some of the put options were purchased through Deutsche Bank/Alex Brown, a firm managed until 1998 by the current executive director of the CIA, A.B. “Buzzy” Krongard. The New York Times reported that Mayo Shattuck III resigned as head of the Alex Brown unit of Deutsche Bank on September 15, 2001.

These multiple, massive and unprecedented financial transactions point unequivocally to the fact that the investors behind these trades were speculating in anticipation of a mid-September 2001 catastrophe that would involve both United and American Airlines and offices in the Twin Towers. To date, both the Securities and Exchange Commission and the FBI have been tight-lipped about their investigations of trades. The names of the investors remain undisclosed and \$5 million in profit taking remains unclaimed in the Chicago Exchange account. A probe could isolate the investors. However, this case has recently been closed without any report being made public or anyone being held accountable. The insider-trading incident further establishes the fact that important people knew beforehand of the possible attacks, did nothing about them and are now covering them up.

Emergency Procedures Capable of Preventing Such Attack Exist But Were Not Followed

There is incontrovertible evidence that the U.S. Air Force all across the country was comprehensively "stood down" on the morning of September 11th. Routine security measures, normally in place, which may well have prevented the attacks, or reduced their impact, were suspended while the attacks were in progress and reinstated once they were over. (5)

Sequence of events for each hijacked plane is as follows:

7:59a.m.: American Airlines Flight 11 leaves from Boston's Logan Airport bound for Los Angeles; 8:20a.m.: is hijacked and goes off course; 8:46a.m.: it smashes into the North Tower of the WTC. The tower completely collapses at 10:28a.m.

8:01a.m.: United Airlines Flight 93 sits on the ground for forty-one minutes before leaving from Newark bound for San Francisco; 9:20a.m.: The FAA notifies NORAD that Flight 93 has been hijacked; 9:35a.m.: the plane goes off course near Cleveland, Ohio, where it makes a 135-degree turn, and is now headed to the southeast; 10:10a.m.: it crashes in Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

8:14a.m.: United Airlines Flight 175 leaves from Boston bound for Los Angeles; 8:49a.m.: it deviates from its assigned flight path; 9:03a.m.: it smashes into the South Tower. The tower completely collapses at 9:59am.

8:20a.m.: American Airlines Flight 77 leaves from Dulles International, 30 miles west of Washington, D.C. bound for Los Angeles; 8:56a.m.: transponder signal stops. It goes off course and starts making a 180-degree turn over southern Ohio/northeastern Kentucky; 9:38a.m.: it allegedly hits the Pentagon (there are very serious questions as to whether this plane actually hit the Pentagon; see below).

Andrews Air Force Base is a huge military installation about twelve miles from the Pentagon. On September 11th there were two entire squadrons of combat-ready fighter jets at Andrews. They failed to do their job of protecting the skies over Washington, D.C. Despite over one hour's advance warning of a terrorist attack in progress, not a single Andrews fighter tried to protect the city. The FAA, NORAD and the military have cooperative procedures enabling fighter jets to intercept commercial aircraft under

emergency conditions. They do not need instructions from the White House to intercept commercial aircraft, yet these procedures were not followed.

Within thirty-five minutes after American Airline Flight 11 departed from Boston's Logan Airport it quit responding to ground control, and radar indicated that the plane had deviated from its assigned flight-path. Two airline attendants on Flight 11 had separately called American Airlines reporting a hijacking, the presence of weapons, and the infliction of injuries on passengers and crew. At this point there was an undeniable emergency. Yet, according to NORAD's official timeline, NORAD was not contacted until twenty minutes later at 8:40a.m. Tragically the fighter jets may not have been deployed until a full thirty-two minutes after the loss of contact with Flight 11.

Flights 175, 77 and 93 all had this same pattern of delays in notification and in scrambling fighter jets – delays that are difficult to imagine considering a plane had, by this time, already hit the WTC. The official account of the plane striking the Pentagon is particularly incomprehensible. After it was known that the Flight 77 had a problem, it was nevertheless able to change course and fly towards Washington, for about forty-five minutes, fly past the White House, and crash into the Pentagon, without any attempt at interception. All the while two squadrons of fighter aircraft were stationed just twelve miles from the eventual target. Since the plane left Dulles Airport, which is close to the Pentagon, why would hijackers fly for forty minutes away from the intended target and then forty minutes back unless they believed there was no chance of being intercepted?

Moreover, well-established emergency protocols were not followed by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of Defense, or the President of the United States. Acting Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Richard B. Myers stated that he saw a TV report about a plane hitting the WTC but thought it was a small plane. So he went ahead with his meeting with Senator Max Cleland. By the time he came out of the meeting the Pentagon had been hit. Why did General Myers not know about the emergency until too late? The Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld was at his desk when AA77 crashed into the Pentagon. How is it possible that the National Military Command Center (NMCC), located in the Pentagon and in contact with law enforcement and air traffic controllers from 8:46a.m., did not communicate to the Secretary of Defense, also at the Pentagon, about the other hijacked planes especially the one headed to Washington? (6) After Secretary Rumsfeld was notified, why did he go to the War Room?

The actions of President Bush, while the attacks were occurring, were particularly suspicious because he did not do anything reasonably expected of a president wanting to protect U.S. citizens and property. The Secret Service is required to inform the president immediately of any national emergency. Yet the president was permitted by the Secret Service to remain in the Sarasota elementary school. At 9:05a.m., nineteen minutes after the first attack and two minutes after the second attack on the WTC, Andrew Card, the presidential chief of staff, whispered something in President Bush's ear. At that time the President did not react as if he was interested in trying to do something about the situation. He did not leave the school, convene an emergency meeting, consult with anybody, or intervene in any way to ensure that the Air Force completed its job. The president's approval is not required for an intercept, but it is required for commercial planes to be shot down.

Yet, President Bush did not even attend to the extraordinary events occurring in New York, but simply continued with the reading class. It was not until twenty minutes after

the second Tower had been hit that he met privately with National Security Advisor, Condoleezza Rice, FBI Director Robert S. Mueller III, and New York Governor, George Pataki. At 9:30a.m., he made an announcement to the press using the same words his father had used ten years earlier: "Terrorism against our nation will not stand". His own explanations of his actions that day contradict known facts.

In the case of a national emergency, seconds of indecision could cost thousands of lives; and it is precisely for this reason that the government has a whole network of adjuncts and advisors to ensure that these top officials are among the first to be informed, not the last. Where were these individuals who did not properly inform the top officials? In short, the CIA, the DCI, the State Department, the president and key figures around him in the White House were ultimately responsible for doing nothing in the face of the mounting evidence of an impending threat to U.S. national security. Nafeez Ahmed states that these acts are "indicative of a scale of negligence amounting to effective complicity" (2002, p. 167). Incompetence is a highly improbable explanation. Indeed, the failures of the emergency procedures could not have occurred without coordination at the top. If a routine procedure was aborted, whether accidentally or deliberately, it would be detected by those in the higher positions of the hierarchy, which is the way all emergency systems are organized. At least someone should have received a reprimand, but none has been reported.

Who Are the Alleged Terrorists and Why Were They in U.S. Flight Schools?

There are numerous questions regarding the alleged terrorists including who they were, how they were able to board the planes, and whether in fact they were even on the planes. (7) The names of the alleged terrorists were not on the passenger lists released by the airlines. Photos of the alleged hijackers appeared on the FBI website not long after 9/11, but have since been removed. Both the British and U.S. media reported that several of the individuals, identified as hijackers by the FBI, have been found alive. Thierry Meyssan noted that "Prince Saud Al-Faisal, the Saudi Foreign Minister, declared to the press that, 'It has been proven that five of the persons named in the FBI's list had no connection with what happened'" (2002, pp. 54-55, italics in the original). Indeed, how was it possible for the FBI to be caught by surprise and then produce the names of the alleged hijackers within twenty-four hours following the attacks? There are two possibilities: the FBI made up the names or assisted the hijackers in boarding the planes. Either way, complicity is implied. Questions about who were on the planes are prime examples of the kind of information that is easily verified or refuted but neither has been done officially. One outrageous claim is that Mohamed Atta's passport was found at Ground Zero. The failure to respond to these essential questions is, in itself, incriminating.

If the nineteen alleged terrorists did board the planes, the U.S. security agencies should have stopped them from entering this country for intelligence reasons, prior to 9/11, according to the testimony of Mindy Kleinberg during the hearings of The National Commission on Terrorists Attacks. Fifteen of the nineteen hijackers' visas should have been unquestionably denied because their applications were incomplete and incorrect. Most of the alleged hijackers were young, unmarried, and unemployed males. They were, in short, the "classic over-stay candidates". A seasoned former Consular officer

stated in the National Review magazine, "Single, idle young adults with no specific destination in the United States rarely get visas absent compelling circumstances". (8)

There are several cases damaging to the credibility of the official accounts of 9/11. But the U.S. response to Mohammed Atta, the alleged lead hijacker, is most extraordinary. (9) The FBI had been monitoring Atta's movements for several months in 2000. According to PBS' Frontline, the Immigration and Naturalization Service failed to stop Atta from entering the U.S. three times on a tourist visa in 2001, even though officials knew the visa had expired in 2000, and that Atta had violated its terms by taking flight lessons. Furthermore, Atta had already been implicated in a terrorist bombing in Israel, with the information passed on to the United States before he was first issued his tourist visa.

Another important aspect, as Daniel Hopsicker and Thierry Messyan have documented, is that many of the alleged terrorist pilots received their initial training in Venice, Florida at one of the flight schools of highly questionable credibility and with approval of U.S. intelligence. Mohammed Atta attended International Officers School at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, Alabama; Abdulaziz Alomari had attended Aerospace Medical School at Brooks Air Force base in Texas; Saeed Alghamdi had been to the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, California. These are all names of identified hijackers, but the U.S. government has denied the match. Three days after the 9/11 attacks, FBI Director Robert S. Mueller III claimed that these findings were new and had not been known by the FBI previously. This claim is a lie.

Zacarias Moussaoui was arrested after his flight trainers at the Minnesota flight school, Pan Am International Flight Academy, reported highly suspicious behavior. He was greatly unqualified; he wanted to learn to fly a 747 but was not interested in takeoffs or landings; he was traveling on a French passport and when contacted, the French said he was a suspected terrorist connected to al-Qaeda. However, a special counter-terrorism panel of the FBI and CIA reviewed the case but did not pursue it.

There are numerous glaring anomalies, illegalities and scandals connected with Wally Hilliard and Rudi Dekkers' Huffman Aviation School at Venice, Florida, where other hijackers trained. Dekkers had no aviation experience and was under indictment in his native country, The Netherlands, on financial charges. He purchased his aviation school at just about the time the alleged terrorists moved into town and began their lessons. He has yet to be investigated even though he initially trained some of the accused hijackers.

According to Hopsicker, Britannia Aviation was awarded a five-year contract to run a large regional maintenance facility at Lynchburg at a time when the company virtually had no assets, employees, or corporate history and did not possess the necessary FAA license to perform the maintenance. Britannia was a company with known CIA connections. It was operating illegally out of Huffman Aviation, the flight school that trained al-Qaeda hijackers and was given a "green light" from the Justice Department's Drug Enforcement Administration, and the local Venice Police Department was warned to "leave them alone." The CIA is known to be involved in the drug trade.

One answer to the question of how the accused terrorists entered the U.S. with ease is that the Bush Administration made it possible for Saudi visitors to come to the U.S. under a program called U.S. Visa Express, introduced four months before September 11th. This was at a time when the U.S. intelligence community was on alert for an imminent al-Qaeda attack. Michael Springmann, former head of the Visa Bureau at the

U.S. Consulate in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia said that he was repeatedly ordered by high-level State Department officials to issue visas to unqualified applicants. His complaints to higher authorities at several agencies went unanswered. In a CBC interview, he indicated that the CIA was indeed complicit in the attacks. (10)

As is well known, most of the accused hijackers were Saudis, as is Osama bin Laden, and the Saudi Arabian government is known to give financial support to terrorist organizations. Why then is Iraq and not Saudi Arabia a target if the U.S. government is concerned about terrorism? The obvious answer seems to be because the Saudi Arabian Monarchy has a long standing cooperative business relationship with U.S. oil and arms industries, possibly including a provision to curtail surveillance on their activities. (11) Iraq at that time of 9/11 had no such cooperative arrangement. Iraq is now forced to cooperate with the U.S., of course. There is evidence that Osama bin Laden continues to receive extensive support, not only from members of his own family, but also from members of the Saudi establishment. A New Statesman report stated that "bin Laden and his gang are just the tentacles; the head lies safely in Saudi Arabia, protected by U.S. forces." The hijackers the FBI identified as being responsible for 9/11 were not illiterate, bearded fanatics from Afghanistan. They were all educated, highly skilled, middle-class professionals and not the typical kamikaze pilots they are alleged to have been. Of the alleged men involved, thirteen were Saudi nationals.

Was Osama bin Laden the Mastermind, an Accomplice, or Set-up?

Osama bin Laden was unofficially convicted of the attacks within a time frame that could not possibly have allowed any intelligence to have been gathered which supported the accusation. That is, it would be impossible if they did not already have that information. It is impossible for the Bush Administration to have had no warning of an operation that must have been very difficult to keep secret, but then be able to name the culprit in less than a day. Either the charges are contrived, or the government agencies had some forewarning of the attacks, even if it was not specific, and either way, it raises more questions about government agencies' complicity.

It is nearly impossible that bin Laden was involved except in the capacity of complicity with U.S. authorities or at best, in the context of the current Administration knowing all along his plans and deliberately allowing him to carry them out. From the beginning no convincing evidence against bin Laden has been made public. Up until mid-December, there was nothing but the continued repetition of his name. Steve Grey reports that an official document from the U.K. government detailing allegations against bin Laden provides no convincing evidence. Of the sixty-nine points of "evidence" cited, ten relate to background information about the relationship between bin Laden and the Taliban. Fifteen relate to background information regarding the general philosophies of al-Qaeda, and its relationship to bin Laden. None give any facts concerning the events of 9/11. Most do not even attempt to directly relate anything mentioned to the events of that day. Twenty-six list allegations relating to previous terrorist attacks. Even if bin Laden were convicted of previous terrorist attacks, it is well known that this fact alone would not stand up in a court of law as evidence for involvement of September 11th.

Within less than four hours of the attacks, the media were fed comments that assumed bin Laden's guilt and were made on the basis of events that could not possibly have

occurred. The Pentagon and the Department of Defense used dialogue attributed to bin Laden, in an effort to incriminate him, while refusing to release all of the dialogue and refusing to issue a verbatim, literal translation. On December 13, 2001 the Bush Administration offered an alleged "confession" tape as the only evidence, and this has simply been accepted by many in the media and in the general population as sufficient to declare guilt. But a fake tape is easily produced with today's technology. Thus, against the backdrop of the many reported denials by bin Laden that he was involved in the attacks, there are few reasons to accept this "evidence" as convincing. Rather, one must ask why was it considered necessary to lie, in order to create a case against bin Laden? The truth could well implicate the Bush Administration.

What is known for certain is that Osama bin Laden's picture became the focus of most people in the U.S., establishing an image of an evil enemy, thereby creating the important psychological mind-set to accept revenge. This constant barrage of news coverage of bin Laden and al-Qaeda also drew attention away from questions about why the attacks were not prevented. Creating diversions away from embarrassing or incriminating issues is a very common practice for government officials operating in the context of an uncritical media. Added to this is the fact that today, with the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq declared over, bin Laden, "public enemy number one," is all but forgotten by the U.S. corporate media.

If bin Laden was really the mastermind of the attacks, it is not likely that the FBI agents would have been ordered to curtail their investigation of these attacks on October 10, 2001. (12) Moreover, the FBI was called off its investigation of bin Laden and of the Saudi Royal Family prior to 9/11. Soon after entering the White House, the Bush Administration strengthened an existing order to "back off" investigations of Saudi-based terrorist organizations, including the World Assembly of Muslim Youth, headquartered in Falls Church, Virginia, and run by a relative of Osama bin Laden. John O'Neill, the FBI agent who for years led U.S. investigations into bin Laden's al-Qaeda network, complained bitterly that the State Department blocked attempts to prove bin Laden's guilt in the bombing of the USS Cole. He resigned in protest and became head of security for the World Trade Center where he was killed on September 11. One law enforcement official was quoted as saying, "The investigative staff has to be made to understand that we're not trying to solve a crime now." The FBI agents were commanded to cut short their investigations into the attacks and those involved. FBI agents were threatened with prosecution under the National Security Act if they publicized information from their investigations. David P. Schippers, noted Chicago lawyer and the House Judiciary Committee's chief investigator in the Clinton impeachment trial, is now representing some of the FBI agents in a suit against the U.S. government in an attempt to enable them to legally tell what they know.

The Official Story of 9/11 Is Simply Not Plausible

In the first place as former German Minister of Technology, Andreas von Buelow remarked, "Planning the attacks was a master deed, in technical and organizational terms. To hijack four big airliners within a few minutes and fly them into targets within a single hour and doing so on complicated flight routes! That is unthinkable, without backing from the secret apparatuses of state and industry." Thus, it should not be surprising that many important unanswered questions surround the attacks on the WTC and the Pentagon.

According to some scientists it is not possible for the World Trade Center's Twin Towers to have completely collapsed in the manner they did as a result of two jet planes. The first official version, that the burning jet fuel caused the steel girders supporting the Twin Towers to melt, had to be changed when no credible scientific evidence supported it. But subsequent versions are also simply speculation. The WTC towers were designed to take the impact of a Boeing 707. It is not possible that fire from the jet fuel could have melted the steel girders. South Tower was hit second and fell first. Both towers collapsed evenly and smoothly in a manner consistent with that caused by a planned demolition. Steel buildings are not known to collapse because of fire and concrete does not turn into powder when it crashes to the ground. Rather, based upon scientific evidences, photos and videos of the event, and reports of scientists, the WTC architect and engineers, it is more convincing that the towers collapsed because of demolition rather than burning jet fuel.

The collapse of the tower known as WTC-7 raises even more questions because it was not hit by anything but debris and yet it collapsed in a manner similar to the Twin Towers only seven hours later. (13) There is record only of small fires seen on a few floors prior to its collapse. No one, including FEMA, has explained why WTC-7 collapsed. Since no thorough investigation into why the WTC Towers collapsed was allowed, it is reasonable to assume that definitive answers were not desired by the Bush Administration.

Even more outrageous is the official story and secrecy regarding the Pentagon. The Pentagon is the largest office building in the world (6.5 million square feet of floor space) housing more than 20,000 people. At the time of the attacks, its occupation was normal except for the one section being renovated. The story people are expected to believe is that a large commercial plane was piloted by a hijacker inexperienced in flying, but who nevertheless circled the Pentagon making a 280-degree turn, traveling approximately 345 mph (555 km/hr), and flew very low to the ground (the Pentagon is 80 feet high) in order to crash orthogonally into the one section being renovated. An aerial view shows that the only sensible way to crash into the Pentagon as a kamikaze is to fly straight on aiming at the center. Also damaging to the official story is the fact that on September 14th the Department of Defense announced that emergency workers had found the two black boxes, but except for the existence of small pieces, no plane, luggage or passenger debris was recovered. The military first denied that there were any videos of the crash and then produced five images after French investigator Thierry Meyssan's (2002) book showed the improbability of the official account.

Unless one is prepared to allege complicity, the official scenario of the Pentagon crash is not possible by any stretch of the imagination. The account of Flight 77 is one more example of the length to which the Bush Administration is willing to go to cover up the truth of 9/11.

Mystery also surrounds the plane crash in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. The most obvious question concerns the remains of the plane and its passengers, which seem to have vanished in thin air. Who were the passengers aboard Flight 93? The official reports of cell phone contact with passengers of Flight 93 are highly unlikely given recent research and expert testimony. (14) No recording of these calls has been made public. Also, what was the explosion reported by some of the local people who witnessed the crash? Another eyewitness reported seeing a white plane resembling a fighter jet circling the site just after the crash. As in the case of Ground Zero, no one has been allowed near the site. Amidst government secrecy and cover-up speculation abounds.

Moreover, the USA and bin Laden are not the enemies they pretend to be. Michel Chossudovsky and others have established beyond doubt that senior members of the Bush Administration have close links to the bin Laden family and this relationship is still going on behind the scenes. In fact, there is plenty of circumstantial evidence to indicate that bin Laden may have had something to do with 9/11, but the problem is that it also implicates the Bush Administration, the CIA, George Bush Senior, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and The United Arab Emirates.

It is also well known that bin Laden's close working relationship with the CIA began in the 1980's. The claim is that they have since fallen out, but this story is a lie. Indeed, on October 31, the French daily Le Figaro reported that while in a Dubai hospital receiving treatment for a chronic kidney infection in July 2001, Osama bin Laden met with a top CIA official. The bin Laden and Bush families have maintained close business ties through the Carlyle Group. Some of the members of the bin Laden family and the Saudi Royal Family were in the U.S. during the attack and were flown safely out shortly after. George Bush Sr. met with Shafiq bin Laden, one of Osama's brothers, on September 10th in Washington, D.C. at a Carlyle Group business conference. According to the corporate media spin, this is okay, because the rest of the family has disowned Osama for his terrorist activities and anti-U.S. views. This spin is also a lie.

The "blowback" thesis is a fabrication. The evidence amply confirms that the CIA never severed its ties to the Islamic Militant Network. Since the end of the Cold War these covert intelligence links have not only been maintained, they have become increasingly sophisticated.

If bin Laden was an enemy of the U.S., he could have been captured before 9/11 and should have been captured since. There have been several opportunities to capture Osama bin Laden after naming him wanted for the 1993 bombing of the WTC, but no effort to do so was made. (15) Prior to 9/11, the FBI attributed the attacks on the embassies in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam to Osama bin Laden and offered a \$5 million ransom. Sudan offered to assist the Clinton Administration in capturing bin Laden but was ignored. It was also reported that bin Laden was meeting with the CIA as late as July 2001 (while in the American Hospital in Dubai). An examination of U.S. efforts to capture Osama bin Laden show they have in fact, with the help of two allies, Saudi Arabia and The United Arab Emirates, consistently blocked attempts to investigate and capture him. Eleven bin Laden Family members were flown safely out of the same Boston airport where the hijacking took place a few days earlier. Why were the family members of the most wanted man in America not detained for questioning?

An Alternative Story Ties the Alleged Terrorists to the CIA and Pakistan's ISI

It is most likely that Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) was directly involved in 9/11. (16) The links between al-Qaeda, Pakistan's ISI and the CIA; and, between the ISI, Osama bin Laden and the Taliban Axis are a matter of public record. The CIA also has close cooperative links with Mossad (Israeli Intelligence) which also may have played an important role in 9/11. Pakistan has long been a supporter of al-Qaeda. The ISI has been a mechanism by which the CIA indirectly channeled support to al-Qaeda and has been used by successive U.S. administrations as a "go-between." Pakistan's military-intelligence apparatus constitutes the core institutional support to both

Osama's al-Qaeda and the Taliban. Without this institutional support, there would be no Taliban government in Kabul. In turn, without the support of the U.S. government, there would be no powerful military-intelligence apparatus in Pakistan.

It was reported that ISI's Director-General, General Mahmoud Ahmad, had funneled \$100,000 to the alleged lead hijacker, Mohammed Atta, shortly before September 11th. The U.S. government protected him, and itself, by asking him to resign quietly after the discovery, thus blocking a further inquiry and a potential scandal. In the wake of 9/11, the Bush Administration consciously sought the "cooperation" of the ISI, which had been supporting and abetting Osama bin Laden and the Taliban. In other words, the Bush Administration's relations with Pakistan's ISI, including its "consultations" with General Mahmoud Ahmad in the week prior to September 11th, raise the issue of cover-up and complicity. While Ahmad was talking to U.S. officials at the CIA and the Pentagon, the ISI allegedly had contacts with the 9/11 terrorists.

Israel is an occupying power in the Middle East surrounded by Arab States viewed as its enemies. It is a dominating military power in the area with nuclear capabilities, owing largely to the United States' \$3 billion annual aid package (\$100 million for the Palestine Authority). U.S. aid, for the most part, is not charity – there is an expected return. Israel is an instrument in U.S. Mid-East regional policy but it is a mutual exchange rather than a colonial relationship. It is not clear the exact role Israel played in 9/11 as all details are not fully known publicly.

It was reported that a few hours after the attacks, five Israelis were arrested for puzzling behavior described as cries of joy and mockery as they watched and filmed the WTC attack. One man was found with \$4,700 in cash hidden in his sock, another had two passports, and a box cutter was found in the van they were driving when arrested. ABC News later reported that the FBI determined that the men were on a Mossad surveillance mission. The FBI is said to have held them on immigration violations and interrogated them for weeks, but released them on November 20, 2001 as part of a deal with the Israeli government. In addition, months before September 11, a firm partly owned by the Israeli government broke the lease on its offices in the WTC and moved out.

There Is No Question Who Benefited the Most from 9/11

The 9/11 attacks came at an extremely fortuitous time for the Bush Administration, the Pentagon, the CIA, the FBI, the weapons industry, and the oil industry, all of which have benefited immensely from this tragedy, as has Israel. It is worth noting the astute observations of Canadian social philosopher John McMurtry: "To begin with, the forensic principle of 'who most benefits from the crime?' clearly points in the direction of the Bush administration. . . . The more you review the connections and the sweeping lapse of security across so many coordinates, the more the lines point backwards" [to the White House]. If you add "follow the money", one trail goes from the CIA to Pakistan's ISI to al-Qaeda, and another trail goes from the U.S. tax payers to particular players in the military industrial complex connected to the Bush Administration.

The September 11th disaster has resulted in power and profit at home and abroad by both the bin Laden and the Bush families. There are significant business ties between bin Laden and senior members of the Bush Administration through the Carlyle Group,

the giant private and secretive investment firm managing some \$14 billion in assets, including many defense-related companies. Carlyle employs former President George Bush Sr., and has had long standing financial ties to the bin Laden family. So while there is compelling evidence that Osama bin Laden has not broken away from his family, it is also a matter of record that the Bush Administration is in turn very significantly tied to the same family. Reports have emerged that the Carlyle Group, Halliburton and many other firms with ties to the Bush Administration have profited immensely from the wars on Afghanistan and Iraq and from the militarization of U.S. foreign policy.

Israel is the regional watchdog for the West, but is also dependent on the U.S. for its security. Clearly it benefits from the U.S. occupation of one of its most dreaded enemies. It may also now share in some of the benefits from the world's second largest oil reserve.

The Wars on Afghanistan and Iraq Were Planned, Prior to 9/11

Two important documents suggested that in order for the U.S. to remain the preeminent power (i.e., the imperial hegemon), a military takeover of Eurasia was required, which in turn required a Pearl Harbor type event to enrage the American people. (17) This strategy was called for by the Project for a New American Century (PNAC), formed in 1997, in their published document "Rebuilding America's Defenses" (September 2000) and in "The Grand Chessboard" authored by Zbigniew Brzezinski (1997), National Security Advisor during the Carter Administration. In describing the U.S. after the collapse of the U.S.S.R., Brzezinski notes rather straightforwardly, "[i]t became simultaneously the first and the only truly global power. And yet America's global supremacy is reminiscent in some ways of earlier empires . . ." (p. 10). He further states that, "[f]or America, the chief geopolitical prize is Eurasia" (p. 30).

The primary architects of the PNAC plans include Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Perle, Richard Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld, all now part of the current Bush Administration. These plans describe specifics for taking military control of Central Asia, including regime change in Iraq, and beyond. In the "Rebuilding America's Defenses" document a startling prediction is made about the military transformation the authors believe necessary: "Further, the process of transformation, even if it brings revolutionary change, is likely to be a long one, absent some catastrophic and catalyzing event – like a new Pearl Harbor" (p. 52). George W. Bush allegedly confirmed in his diary that 9/11 was the Pearl Harbor they wanted and the follow-up strategy is currently being witnessed.

It is public knowledge that Unocal and others in the oil industry were negotiating with the Afghan officials for a pipeline across their country as part of the "Silk Road" strategy. It was also reported that the talks had broken down. A specific threat was made at a meeting in Berlin, Germany, in July 2001: the Taliban can choose between a "carpet of bombs" – an invasion – or a "carpet of gold" – the oil and gas pipelines. Experts agree that Central Asia and the Caspian Basin are central to energy in the 21st century and that energy is central to political, economic and military power. James Dorian noted in the Oil & Gas Journal: "Those who control the oil routes out of Central Asia will impact all future direction and quantities of flow and the distribution of

revenues from new production".(18) As another source of revenue, and part of a major global industry, Afghan farmers are once again producing large quantities of poppies, a crop the Taliban tried to eradicate in 2001. Opium production went from 185 metric tons to 3,600 metric tons or seventy-five percent of the world's production according to the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime.

As early as 1991, following the defeat of Iraq in the Persian Gulf War, Newsweek magazine reported that the U.S. military was preparing an operation in Kazakhstan and U.S. companies began acquiring natural gas and oil rights in the Caspian region. U.S. Special Forces began joint operations with Kazakhstan in 1997 and with Uzbekistan a year later, training for intervention especially in the mountainous southern region that includes Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and northern Afghanistan. In early September, prior to 9/11, the U.S. and NATO mobilized troops in and around Pakistan, Egypt and the Arabian Sea in preparation for a possible attack on al-Qaeda.

There Are Precedents for These Kinds of Acts of Complicity and Fabrications

Complicity cannot be discounted on the claim that no country would do this to its own citizens, because such past events are documented. The previously classified "Operation Northwoods" document reveals that in 1962, the Joint Chiefs of Staff seriously considered the possibility of carrying out terrorist attacks against U.S. citizens, and blaming it on Cuba in order to justify a war to overthrow Fidel Castro. The plans were never implemented, but were given approval signatures by all the Joint Chiefs of Staff and its chairman, General Lyman L. Lemnitzer. The plan included several options, such as killing Cuban defectors or U.S. soldiers, sinking ships, and staging simulations of planes being shot down. (19)

A more recent example is the conspiracy to assassinate Martin Luther King Jr. as described in detail by Attorney William Peppers in his book *Act of State* (2001). In 1999, after seventy witnesses provided unimpeachable evidence it took the jury only one hour to determine that J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI, Richard Helms and the CIA, the military, the local Memphis police, and organized crime figures from New Orleans and Memphis plotted to murder King. The very fact of the trial itself was buried by corporate media.

Far from being an unprecedented shocker, government complicity in 9/11 would build on an august and cynical tradition. It is the oldest trick in the book, dating at least back to Nero's burning of Rome. In 1933, after Hitler came to power, the Nazis burned down the Reichstag (Parliament) building and blamed it on the Communists to justify abolition of civil liberties and the imposition of Nazi rule. They also staged the "Polish" attack on a German radio station to "justify" their invasion of Poland. Other examples of citizens being hoaxed include the sinking of the Maine, Pearl Harbor bombardment (which President Roosevelt not only knew about beforehand but helped provoke), the hoax of the Gulf of Tonkin attack, and the staging of the Kuwaiti incubator-babies incident. Bush Sr. also lied about Iraqi tanks massed on the Saudi Arabian border prepared to invade – ground reconnaissance and satellite photos showed no tanks there. Each of these deceptions served to rally popular support for a war of aggression.

The Bush Administration is clearly capable of creating or allowing such atrocities to occur. Hitler was able to play the anti-communist card to win over skeptical German industrialists. Certainly the Bush family is not a newcomer to melding political and business interests; they obtained their start as key Hitler supporters. Prescott Bush, grandfather of George W. Bush, was Hitler's banker in New York, until Franklin D. Roosevelt confiscated his holdings during World War II using the Trading With The Enemy Act. George Bush Sr. used Manuel Noriega – who had been laundering money and abetting drug shipments for the CIA – as a scapegoat, killing thousands of innocent Panamanians in the process of reestablishing U.S. control over Panama. It is also now clearly demonstrated that the current Bush Administration knowingly misled the people about the war in Iraq.

While the focus of this article is on 9/11 and the Bush Administration, it is incumbent to reiterate that this atrocity must be viewed in the contexts of a long history of U.S. imperial expansion. The Bushgang may be more bellicose and aggressive than previous administrations in recent history. Some of Bush's critics claim that this preemptive strike against Iraq is unprecedented. However, this war is more accurately described as a war of conquest, which is by no means unprecedented. The historical account is undeniable; the European invaders did not stop on the west coast of North America but continued to the Philippines and beyond.

Lies, Secrecy and Cover-Up

There has never been a single event in the history of the U.S. republic which has received more media coverage. Moreover, there were 2952 people killed in the 2001 World Trade Center attacks, more civilian deaths on a single day than at any other time. In spite of the unprecedented magnitude of death and destruction in New York City on 9/11/01, the U.S. Government spent only \$600,000 for its single study of the causes for the WTC Buildings' collapses. Compare this to the \$40 million that was spent for investigation of Bill Clinton's activities with Monica Lewinsky in 1988-1999 and the only rational conclusion is that there is no desire on the part of the Bush Administration for the public to know the truth about 9/11.

The lies of the Bush Administration are numerous and currently many of them are well publicized including President Bush's claim that he saw on TV one of the planes crashing into the tower before any video was ever shown. This was just one of Bush's seven different "recalls" of the events on September 11th. The statements of the FAA, NORAD, the Air Force Pilots and Traffic Controllers conflict, contradict known facts and defy reason. In spite of this deliberate deception, the mass media have made very little of the fact that from the beginning, the Bush Administration has vigorously attempted to thwart any investigation into the circumstances of an attack that killed more U.S. civilians on a single day than any other act of violence perpetrated on U.S. soil.

Airline crashes are routinely investigated with great thoroughness, and the results released to the public. By contrast, the Bush Administration has barred virtually any release of information about 9/11. For nearly six months, it blocked congressional hearings and rejected calls for a special commission of inquiry. The White House finally worked out a deal with the Democratic and Republican congressional leaders to consign the investigation to hearings held jointly by the House and Senate intelligence committees but continued its intimidations.

The joint congressional hearings were held behind closed doors, and their more-than-800-page secret report detailing the intelligence and law-enforcement failures that preceded the attacks (including provocative, if unheeded warnings, given President Bush and his top advisors during the summer of 2001) was completed last December. Yet only a bare-bones list of "findings" with virtually no details has been made public. But nearly six months later, a "working group" of Bush Administration intelligence officials assigned to review the document has taken a hard line against further public disclosure. By refusing to declassify many of its most significant conclusions, the administration has essentially thwarted congressional plans to release the report. The intelligence officials' attempt to reclassify other aspects of the report seems ludicrous. As noted at the beginning of this article, only because the families of some of the victims of 9/11 were persistent was an independent commission formed. After stonewalling, the White House, quite incredibly, appointed Henry Kissinger as its head. He resigned shortly after. With New Jersey Governor Thomas Kean finally appointed to lead the commission, questions of conflict of interest still remain. Even so, the White House wrestled with the Kean Commission, refusing to release necessary documents.

It is also noteworthy that officials in the Bush Administration illegally removed pages from the Iraq U.N. report, pages that are believed to identify those who supplied Hussein's regime with weapons of mass destruction and training on how to use them. These acts are not isolated unfortunate mistakes, but demonstrate a consistent pattern. While President George W. Bush and Attorney General John Ashcroft call for more and more intrusive surveillance capabilities on citizens of the U.S., they themselves operate in unprecedented secrecy.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's failure to investigate and its cover-up are beyond belief. Only a team of volunteer investigators was assembled, then given no funding and not allowed to go to Ground Zero. People were threatened with arrest if they took pictures at the two sites of the attack and the site of the plane crash in Pennsylvania. Instead of being made available to the investigating team, the debris from the collapsed Twin Towers was hauled from the site without forensic examination and sold to scrap merchants overseas with pledges of secrecy about the contents. Controlled Demolition Inc. of Phoenix, Maryland was one of the site's main cleanup management contractors and their plan for recycling the steel was accepted.

The Securities and Exchange Commission refused to report on its insider trading investigation into people who made millions from the 9/11 tragedy. As part of the cover-up there have been constant distractions away from the real issues of 9/11 with such media headlines as orange alerts, anthrax attacks, and CIA agent exposures. Moreover, the reasonable calls for an investigation into the events surrounding 9/11, made by U.S. Congressional Representatives, Nancy Pelosi and Cynthia McKinney, inspired the kind of outrage that is generally motivated by a desire to suppress rather than reveal the truth.

Summary and Conclusion

If government agencies knew of impending attacks, were capable of preventing them, but did nothing, their accounts of the events contained contractions and lies; they went to great lengths to prevent any investigation and subsequently reaped tremendous benefits, what should be concluded? The evidence presented above seems clear that if the many agencies of the U.S. government had done their jobs, the September 11th attacks most likely would have been prevented. If there had been an immediate investigation into 9/11, the wars on Afghanistan and Iraq could not have been justified simply on the basis of terrorism. Surely questions must be asked as to why no one in any of the government agencies has been held accountable, and why journalists and others in the mass media are not held responsible for the cover-up, deception and lack of investigative reporting. Given the evidence presented it is not surprising that public whistle-blowing is beginning to occur. It remains to be seen what will happen with the pending class-action lawsuits being brought against persons in the administration for letting 9/11 happen. The reluctance of the alternative media to weigh in on the issue of accountability may be due to the lack of courage or to "conspiracy phobia". (20) However, the "attack on America" by definition and its very nature was a conspiracy. These coordinated acts required very extensive and careful planning, which by necessity was done in secret because the intent was to harm innocent people for political gain. The only question is who are the conspirators? This does not suggest there should be a lack of skepticism, caution and an awareness of a conspiracy culture. Rather it emphasizes that a rigorous science does not dismiss conspiracy theories out of hand, but only after a thorough investigation.

One important insight into conspiracy theories concerns how hierarchical authoritarian social systems function. Top down directives and commands, especially if they carry the weight of threats of censorship and punishment, serve to keep any dissent in check. There is a great deal of self-censorship operating in all institutions in the U.S. Shared ideology, or perhaps more specifically what social psychologists in studies of organizational behavior call "groupthink," also plays a major role among the decision makers. Groupthink is decision making characterized by uncritical acceptance of and conformity with the prevailing view. Thus, the will of a few key persons can be spread within and across government agencies.

Thus the possibility of complicity on the part of the Bush Administration is very real. Past history, as well as the currently established facts, is on the side of those raising this possibility. At the very least, further and more honest investigations must take place and some accountability exacted from those responsible.

It seems apropos to conclude (I paraphrase): "if you are part of the problem, then you are not part of the solution." Thus the solution lies with the people themselves and not with any U.S. government agency, least of all the Executive Branch. It is critical to appeal to the several important alternative media outlets who have bought into the official story of "blowback," to reconsider their position. It took twenty-five years for Robert B. Stinnett (21) to bring to conclusion the evidence showing Roosevelt's involvement in Pearl Harbor. Will it take twenty-five years before the truth of 9/11 is brought to light? Are the efforts of Stinnett and others to be for naught?

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- (8) Cited by Mindy Kleinberg: <http://www.9-11commission.gov/hearings/>; www.unansweredquestions.org. See especially the testimony of Mindy Kleinberg, Stephen Push and others on the First Public Hearings Archives, p. 163.
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