



9/11:

**UNRAVELLING
THE LIES**

JAMIE MACPHAIL

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A comprehensive and up to date analysis summarised into one volume to provide an overview for both convinced sceptics and those inclined to believe the official account.

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INTRODUCTION:

Why Another Book about 9/11?

After spending several years studying the events of 9/11, I have written this book in an attempt to present a comprehensive and up to date analysis of the available evidence. There is an enormous amount of information available in book form, online and in official reports. I have sought to summarise and integrate the best of it into one volume, to provide an overview for both convinced sceptics and those inclined to believe the official account. In other words, do what the official 9/11 Commission Report set out to do, but failed to achieve. The reader is entitled to know what I think really happened on 9/11 and this will become apparent throughout the course of the book.

The Failings of the 9/11 Commission

The main conclusion of this book is that the 9/11 Commission was a cover-up and that the truth about what happened on that fateful day is still being concealed. Even the Commission's Senior Counsel, John Farmer, was forced to concede that: "At some level of the government...there was a decision not to tell the truth about what happened...the perpetuation of the untrue official version remains a betrayal of every citizen who demanded a truthful answer to the simple question: What Happened?" (1)

The Commission stated in its preface that "our aim has not been to assign personal blame." (2) Could it be that the reason why nobody was blamed for any of the issues relating to 9/11 is that pointing the finger and sacking or prosecuting them would have resulted in potential whistleblowing, and escalating culpability within the US government?

The formation of the Commission was strongly resisted by the Bush administration, providing it with "an insultingly small budget - \$3million over eighteen months, compared with more than \$40 million for the federal commission that investigated the *Challenger* disaster" in which the space shuttle broke apart 73 seconds into its flight, killing all seven crew members aboard. (3) Indeed, it would not have been convened at all were it not for pressure from the 9/11 Family Steering Committee, most notably "the Jersey Girls" (widows whose husbands died in the attacks).

Henry Kissinger was the first choice to be executive director of the Commission, but a conflict of interests forced him to withdraw. When interviewed by the Jersey Girls, he refused to disclose the names of clients of his company, Kissinger Associates. Veteran journalist, Philip Shenon, described how Kissinger suggested hypothetically that a lawyer could vet his client list for any conflicts of interest, but that it be kept secret from the public. He became perturbed when it was pointed out that one of the Jersey Girls was a lawyer, as "handing over his clients list to one of the media-savvy 9/11 widows was not what he had in mind," and told them that they should just trust him. Jersey girl widow Lorie Van Auken responded, "with all due respect Dr Kissinger, I have to ask you: Do you have any Saudi clients? Do you have any clients named bin Laden?" (4) The next morning, Kissinger resigned from the Commission.

Unfortunately, the departure of Kissinger did not lead to a more transparent choice of executive director as he was replaced by Philip Zelikow, who was virtually a member of the Bush administration. He had worked with Condoleezza Rice on the National

Security Council in the administration of George H. W. Bush; Rice and Zelikow later co-authored a book. Zelikow was part of the GW Bush transition team. He was also a principal drafter of the Bush administration's 2002 version of the *National Security Strategy*, which used 9/11 to justify a new doctrine of pre-emptive war, according to which the United States can attack other countries even if they pose no imminent threat. This was hardly the man to be in charge of an investigation that should have been asking, among other things, whether any part of the Bush-Cheney administration, was itself complicit in the 9/11 attacks.

As Monica Gabrielle, of the 9/11 Family Steering Committee, described it, "Phil Zelikow was the fox guarding the chicken coop." (5)

Such was Zelikow's control over the Commission that he "had prepared a detailed outline of the commission's final report at the very start of the investigation." (6) Also, he had exercised such a degree of control over the information flow within the different investigating teams, that he was the only person within the Commission who really knew what was going on. (7)

One fact about the Commission that most people still do not know is by whom its work was carried out. Investigative reporter Peter Lance has shown that although the public face of the Commission was provided by the ten commissioners led by Thomas Kean and Lee Hamilton, the actual research and writing of reports was carried out by a staff of about 75 people, with nearly half being former members of the CIA, the FBI, the Department of Justice, and other governmental agencies. (8)

Kyle Hence of the 9/11 Citizen's Watch group suggested that "in one way or another, they all have some baggage that makes them loyal to the defence, intelligence or justice departments that failed to prevent these attacks." Monica Gabrielle, who lost her husband on 9/11, summed it up: "How do they do an objective review of intelligence failures, when the investigative staff and the Commissioners themselves are so close to the agencies or interests they're supposed to audit?" (9)

There are a number of areas in which the Commission showed it was not concerned with getting to the bottom of what happened. For example, the Commission's report completely ignored the collapse of World Trade Building 7, which will be discussed in Chapter 2. Similarly, the evidence of Norman Mineta, Secretary of Transportation, was omitted from their report because it challenged their timeline for Dick Cheney, with great significance, as we will see in chapter 3. The Commission disregarded the evidence of Able Danger, a Department of Defence data mining project that had been tracking Mohammed Atta and other al-Qaeda suspects, which will be discussed in Chapter 5. Also, the Commission made a serious mistake (according to Commission consultant Ernest May) by not insisting on access to al-Qaeda prisoners in US custody. Instead, they were provided by shoddy reports from the CIA and Pentagon that were further devalued by having almost certainly been derived through torture of the prisoners. (10) Why did the Commission not insist on their authority to interview al-Qaeda suspects in person?

Furthermore, why did the Commission allow Bush and Cheney to give their evidence together in a private session, not under oath and with no written record - what did they have to hide and why did the Commission allow them to get away with it?

Another glaring blunder was the failure to consider the evidence of David Schippers and whistle-blowing FBI agents: Attorney David Schippers had been the House Judiciary Committee's chief investigator in the impeachment trial of President Clinton. Two days after 9/11, Schippers declared that he had received warnings from FBI agents about the attacks six weeks earlier - warnings that included both the dates and the targets.

These agents had come to him, Schippers said, because FBI headquarters had blocked their investigations and threatened them with prosecution if they went public with their information. They asked Schippers to use his influence to get the government to take action to prevent the attacks. Schippers was highly respected in Republican circles, especially because of his role in the impeachment of Clinton. And yet, he reported that Attorney General John Ashcroft repeatedly failed to return his calls. (11) Perhaps that's not surprising as Ashcroft told acting FBI Director Thomas Pickard on 12 July 2001, that "I don't want you to ever talk to me about al-Qaeda, about these threats...I don't want to hear about al-Qaeda anymore." (12) However, that didn't stop Ashcroft from deciding to stop flying on commercial airplanes some time before 9/11, following advice from the FBI. (13)

Schippers' allegations about the FBI agents were corroborated in a story by William Norman Grigg called "Did We Know What Was Coming?", which was published in *The New American*. According to Grigg, the three FBI agents he interviewed told him "that the information provided to Schippers was widely known within the Bureau before September 11th." (14)

Suffice to say, neither Schipper's name nor his allegations were mentioned in the Commission report. As this was the man considered to have sufficient gravitas and integrity to lead an investigation into presidential misconduct, the failure to mention him (and the FBI agents) is astounding. Further criticism of the Commission will be presented throughout the book.

The Commission's failings have been addressed in great detail by author Ray McGinnis in his recently published *"Unanswered Questions: What the September Eleventh Families Asked and the 9/11 Commission Ignored."* He noted that "after the 9/11 Commission Report was released, the Family Steering Committee found 70% of their questions remained unanswered. Only 9% of their questions were satisfactorily addressed. A final 21% of their questions were given incomplete answers." (pxxxvi) A more scathing analysis of the Commission would be hard to imagine.

Ray McGinnis has described how the Family Steering Committee were particularly concerned by the use of "minders" from respective agencies who sat alongside witnesses and were often senior to those called to testify: "The FSC objected to their presence, considering it a form of intimidation of the witnesses" and noting that "it does not yield the unfettered truth." (p48)

Operation Northwoods

The reader might well think it incomprehensible for the US government to have been complicit in an attack on itself. However, there is a precedent. Operation Northwoods was a proposed false flag operation against the Cuban government, presented to President Kennedy in March 1962 by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The plan was to covertly engineer various pretexts to justify a U.S. invasion of Cuba. The proposals called for agents working on behalf of the US government to both stage and actually commit acts of terrorism against American military and civilian targets, blaming them on the Cuban government, and using the incidents to justify a war against Cuba. The possibilities detailed in the document included developing a fake "Communist Cuban terror campaign in the Miami area, in other Florida cities and even in Washington." Among the other false flag operations considered were: "sinking a boatload of Cubans (real or simulated)" or "we could blow up a US ship in Guantanamo Bay and blame Cuba." Another plan offered to the President was that: "It is possible to create an incident which will make it appear that Communist Cuban MIGs have destroyed USAF aircraft over

international waters in an unprovoked attack.” Suffice to say, Kennedy rejected the proposals of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. (15)

The Operation Northwoods document was only released to the public on 18 November 1997 by the JFK Assassination Records in the National Archives. Finally, on 30 April 2001 the operation’s documents were published online in full by the National Security Archive revealing the truth of what had been planned.

Author and journalist James Bamford, expressing his concern, noted that "the scary thing is none of this stuff comes out until 40 years after," and suggested that Operation Northwoods “may be the most corrupt plan ever created by the U.S. government.” (16)

Project for the New American Century - "Rebuilding America's Defences"

The gung-ho attitude of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1962 resounded with a little-noticed think tank called the Project for a New American Century (PNAC). The network behind this think tank and its key report, *Rebuilding America's Defenses*, not only had a formative influence on the Bush administration which came to power in January 2001, but also occupied powerful positions in it. (17) For example, Vice-President Dick Cheney and his chief of staff, Lewis “Scooter” Libby, Secretary of Defence, Donald Rumsfeld and his deputy, Paul Wolfowitz were all signatories to the PNAC Statement of Principles. The above document was published in September 2000, presenting the actions necessary for the US to retain its position of global hegemony: “If we shirk our responsibilities, we invite challenges to our fundamental interests.” (18) "At present the United States faces no global rival. America’s grand strategy should aim to preserve and extend this advantageous position as far into the future as possible...Preserving the desirable strategic situation in which the United States now finds itself requires a globally pre-eminent military capability both today and in the future. But years of cuts in defense spending have eroded the American military’s combat readiness and put in jeopardy the Pentagon’s plans for maintaining military superiority in the years ahead.” (19) The PNAC blueprint warned that the process of transforming the US for future global domination "*is likely to be a long one, absent some catastrophic and catalysing event - like a new Pearl Harbor.*" (my italics) (20). This sentence has been noted by many commentators and is relevant to the question "Why would they (the secret government cabal) have needed to demolish the towers - surely the plane damage would have been enough?" As the PNAC document highlights, the incident needed to be like a new Pearl Harbour in order to traumatize the public sufficiently to bring them on board for the foreign wars that were already being planned.

Given the PNAC stance, it is not surprising that the document also clarified the need for US forces to retain control over Iraq (and its oil) even if Saddam Hussein was removed from power:

"After eight years of no-fly-zone operations, there is little reason to anticipate that the U.S. air presence in the region should diminish significantly as long as Saddam Hussein remains in power. Although Saudi domestic sensibilities demand that the forces based in the Kingdom nominally remain rotational forces, it has become apparent that this is now a semi-permanent mission. From an American perspective, the value of such bases would endure even should Saddam pass from the scene." (21) As Michael Meacher (UK Environment Minister 1997-2003) noted: “The 9/11 attacks allowed the US to press the "go" button for a strategy in accordance with the PNAC agenda which it would otherwise have been politically impossible to implement." (22)

As the PNAC made such a big issue of the need to spend more on defence, it seems an odd coincidence that Donald Rumsfeld (Secretary of Defence) declared the day before

9/11 that "according to some estimates, we [the Pentagon] cannot track \$2.3 trillion in transactions" for the year 1999. (23) At any other time, this story would have been sensational news and led to a serious debate about defence spending. However, nobody was interested in this debate after the 9/11 attacks.

President Eisenhower stated in his farewell address on 17 January 1961 that, "we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex." His warning was disregarded after the attacks, as defence spending grew enormously in the years following 9/11, with an estimated cost of \$6 trillion for the post-9/11 wars. (24).

Mysteries about the Hijackers

There are a number of anomalies about the hijackers that will be briefly mentioned here. They were presented as religious fanatics and yet there are numerous reports of them acting in a manner contrary to their religious beliefs. For example:

"The leader of the September 11 terrorists and four other hijackers made several trips to Las Vegas over the summer to hold meetings, gamble and be entertained by topless dancers."

According to the FBI, Mohamed Atta, the pilot of the first hijacked aircraft that crashed into the World Trade Centre, and his accomplices spent some of their time in Las Vegas at the Olympic Bar, a downtown strip club. The Muslim fundamentalists, who supposedly believed that their terrorism would earn them the pleasures of eager virgins in heaven, also sampled some of the forbidden pleasures of America's capital of decadence.

Samantha, a 29-year-old stripper, told the San Francisco Chronicle, that she had been paid to lap dance for Marwan al-Shehhi, the pilot of the second aircraft to hit the World Trade Centre. (25)

The Commission reported that the hijackers "had defeated all the security layers that America's civil aviation security system then had in place to prevent a hijacking" (26). It was unable to explain how the hijackers could smuggle mace, forbidden by FAA regulations, through airport security, even though 9 of the 19 hijackers were selected for special security screening before boarding their flights. (27)

Furthermore, in Chapter 3, we will see that Hani Hanjour, allegedly the pilot of Flight 77 which crashed into the Pentagon, was judged by trainers to be a totally incompetent pilot. He therefore could not possibly have executed the skilled manoeuvres reported by air traffic control as the plane descended rapidly and flew at high speed into the outside wall of the Pentagon.

How could known al-Qaeda terrorists have roamed so freely for so long in the US? In Chapter 5, we will see how the CIA was fully aware of the presence of two of the terrorists who arrived in the US in January 2000, but deliberately kept the FBI in the dark. Also, we will see that the Defence Department were aware of the presence of Mohamed Atta in the US at around the same time, but this information was again not shared with the FBI, as it should have been.

Was 9/11 Really so Unexpected?

In 2002, National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice said, "I don't think anybody could have predicted that those people could take an airplane and slam it into the World Trade Center, take another one and slam it into the Pentagon, that they would try to use

an airplane as a missile, a hijacked airplane as a missile." (28)

Condoleezza Rice told the Commission in her evidence on 8/4/04 that the infamous Presidential Daily Brief (PDB) of 6 August 2001 titled "Bin Laden Determined to Strike in US" "did not warn of attacks inside the United States." However, the White House didn't release the PDB until two days after she gave evidence. (29) In fact, the PDB referred to FBI information of "patterns of suspicious activity in this country consistent with preparations for hijacking or other types of attacks, including recent surveillance of federal buildings in New York." (30) Was the delay in the release of the PDB designed to keep the pressure off Rice when she gave her evidence? The Commission supported Rice's false claim that a 9/11 type of attack was not recognised beforehand, stating that "the threat of terrorists hijacking commercial airlines within the United States - and using them as guided missiles - was not recognised by NORAD before 9/11." (31) This view will be challenged in Chapter Six.

The Commission ignored the evidence of Louis Freeh, FBI Director from 1993 to June 2001. He told the Commission when questioned by Commissioner Ben-Veniste, that in 2000 and 2001, the subject of "planes as weapons" was always considered in the planning of National Special Security Events (NSSEs), in which the FBI and FEMA (Federal Emergency Management agency) participated, and that "resources were actually designated to deal with that particular threat." He confirmed that "the use of airplanes, either packed with explosives or otherwise, in suicide missions" was "part of the planning" for NSSEs. Here is the verbatim confirmation:

MR. BEN-VENISTE: So it was well-known in the intelligence community that one of the potential areas or devices to be used by terrorists...was the use of airplanes, either packed with explosives or otherwise, in suicide missions.

MR. FREEH: That was part of the planning for those events. That's correct. (32)

Furthermore, the Congressional Joint Inquiry's report, the first major overview of Intelligence failings, which preceded the 9/11 Commission, described in detail a dozen separate plots in which Islamic terrorists considered using airplanes as weapons. (33) Chapter 8 of the Commission's report was titled, "The System was Blinking Red", quoting CIA Director George Tenet from July 2001. His warning clearly indicated that an al-Qaeda attack was expected imminently. The attacks would certainly have come as no surprise to Secretary of Defence, Donald Rumsfeld, who predicted a terrorist attack on the US in the near future over a breakfast meeting on the very morning of 9/11. (34)

As signatories to the PNAC, Rumsfeld and Cheney would have been aware that 9/11 was precisely the "catastrophic and catalysing event - like a new Pearl Harbour" that they seem to have been hoping for. Not only that, but with the second wave of terror created by the Anthrax Attacks, (to be discussed in chapter 9) the Bush Administration had the perfect opportunity to crack down on civil liberties and freedom in the US as well.

Cui Bono? Who Stood to Gain from 9/11?

As we saw in the section on the PNAC, the "military-industrial complex" was the number one winner, as defence spending grew incrementally following the "new Pearl Harbour." There is no doubt that the attacks enabled the US to establish a primary objective of a permanent presence throughout the Middle East and Eurasia, in order to control the planet's most valuable assets (particularly oil) as part of its larger strategy of achieving global hegemony.

The first target was Afghanistan, with war commencing four weeks after 9/11. The capture of Osama bin Laden was the ostensible target, along with the destruction of al-Qaeda and the removal of the Taliban from power. The establishment of a military presence in Eurasia was also part of the plan. To judge the US by its actions rather than the words of its leaders, the arrest of bin Laden was way down the list of priorities. Before the start of the air campaign, the Taliban had demanded evidence of Bin Laden's involvement in the attack and had offered to try him before an Islamic court inside Afghanistan or hand him over to a third country (Pakistan) - proposals that the US promptly rejected. (35)

Also, "leaders of Pakistan's two Islamic parties negotiated bin Laden's extradition to Pakistan to stand trial for the 9/11 attacks. According to reports in Pakistan, this had both bin Laden's approval and that of Mullah Omar, the Taliban leader." (36) However, the offer was rejected by the US as, according to an official, "it would have been casting our objectives too narrowly". (37)

One of the "objectives" was to secure Afghanistan as a secure point of passage for planned oil pipelines. US government representatives had been negotiating with the Taliban for several years before 9/11, on the assumption that "the Taliban would bring stability to Afghanistan and permit the building of oil pipelines from Central Asia through Afghanistan to Pakistan." (38) US companies involved in the project included UNOCAL and ENRON. According to Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed, "as early as May 1996, UNOCAL had officially announced plans to build a pipeline to transport natural gas from Turkmenistan to Pakistan through western Afghanistan...[which] would allow the Central Asian republics to export energy to Western markets without relying on Russian routes." (39)

Unfortunately, US diplomatic negotiations with the Taliban were unsuccessful, even though they met several times in 2001. Former French intelligence officer, Jean-Charles Brisard, stated that "at one moment during the negotiations the US representative told the Taliban, either you accept our offer of a carpet of gold, or we bury you under a carpet of bombs." (40)

Indeed, Niaz Naik, a former Pakistan Foreign Secretary, was told in mid-July 2001 that military action against Afghanistan would go ahead by the middle of October. (41)

Two days before 9/11, President Bush "was presented with detailed military plans to invade Afghanistan and topple the Taliban." (42) Jim Miklaszewski, of *NBC News*, stated that the plan, which was a formal National Security Presidential Directive, amounted to "a game plan to remove al-Qaeda from the face of the earth." (43)

According to journalist Patrick Martin: "Both the American public and dozens of foreign governments were stampeded into supporting military action against Afghanistan, in the name of the fight against terrorism. The Bush administration targeted Kabul without presenting any evidence that either bin Laden or the Taliban regime was responsible for the World Trade Centre atrocity. It seized on September 11 as the occasion for advancing longstanding ambitions to assert American power in Central Asia." (44) This view is shared by Nafeez Ahmed, who considered that the plan for war was "rooted in broad strategic and economic considerations related to control of Eurasia, and thus the consolidation of unrivalled global US hegemony." (45)

Martin further stated that "there is no reason to think that September 11 was merely a fortuitous occurrence. Every other detail of the war in Afghanistan was carefully prepared. It is unlikely that the American government left to chance the question of providing a suitable pretext for military action."

As part of the ongoing "war on terror" arising from 9/11, the invasion of Iraq in 2003

followed on seamlessly from the war in Afghanistan. One company that did particularly well out of the war against Iraq was Halliburton, which was awarded a \$15.6 billion no-bid contract after the invasion. Vice-President Cheney was V-P of Halliburton until 2000 and he was one of the leading hawks for the invasion. (46) As Bob Woodward described it, "on the long walk-up to war in Iraq, Dick Cheney was a powerful, steamrolling force...For Cheney, taking care of Saddam was high necessity." (47) The invasion of Iraq fulfilled one of the aspirations of PNAC, as referred to earlier.

The 9/11 attacks provided the Bush administration with just the excuse it needed to establish their control over Iraq's oil and exert a powerful strategic influence in Eurasia through control of Afghanistan. Zbigniew Brzezinski was President Carter's National Security Advisor and arguably the most powerful architect of American foreign policy over the last 50 years apart from Henry Kissinger. He clarified the PNAC agenda in his 1997 book, *"The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and its Geostrategic Imperatives."* The title didn't leave much to the imagination, and he explicitly stated that "the most immediate task is to make certain that no state or combination of states gains the capacity to expel the United States from Eurasia." (48)

President Biden decided to withdraw all American troops from Afghanistan by the time of the twentieth anniversary of 9/11. However, "It appears that US special forces, CIA paramilitaries, and the private contractors who have taken an increasing role in fighting Washington's wars, will remain in-country." (49) It remains to be seen if these forces are able to exercise any meaningful power in the region, but there is no doubt that the ignominious retreat of American forces from Afghanistan is a bitter pill to swallow for the advocates of the Project for the New American Century.

We can see how 9/11 enabled the US government to achieve some primary strategic and economic goals, but an equally insidious outcome of the declared "war on terror" has been the erosion of fundamental human rights and freedom, as epitomised by the rapid passage of the Patriot Act. This Act laid the foundation for the modern surveillance state and was followed by the creation of the Department of Homeland Security in the US. Human dignity, as exemplified by the rigours of airport security, has been sacrificed on the altar of security, as we are all potential terrorists now. This approach has been instrumental in creating an atmosphere of fear, making us perfect fodder for ever increasing manipulation and control by government - and not just in the US.

So, what we now face as a result of 9/11 is increasing levels of domestic suppression of fundamental elements of freedom in the US (and elsewhere) accompanied by increasing levels of oppression towards other countries - such as Afghanistan and Iraq, as the US empire seeks ever greater spoils (and profits). 9/11 therefore provided the perfect solution for the US elite who inhabit what has now come to be known as the "deep state". This is why a new impartial investigation into the events surrounding 9/11 is so vitally important - for the US, but also for the rest of the world.

What this Book covers

Chapter One discusses the NIST report and the scientific evidence that seems to refute the official analysis of what happened to the Twin Towers. Multiple witness statements of first responders are also presented, further undermining the government's story.

Chapter Two describes the free-fall collapse of WTC7, which wasn't hit by a plane and yet its collapse was predicted hours in advance. No steel-structured building had ever

entirely collapsed before due to fire. Again, eyewitness reports contradicted the official story, as does the scientific evidence.

Chapter Three investigates the activities of Cheney and Rumsfeld on the morning of 9/11, raising serious questions about what they were (or were not) doing and whether their bizarre behaviour indicates complicity in the morning's events.

There is also a thorough analysis of the damage caused to the Pentagon, which clearly indicates that a plane the size of Boeing 757 crashed into its facade, but also raises questions about who was in control of the plane.

Chapter Four challenges the official story of what happened to Flight 93, with considerable evidence indicating that it was shot down.

Chapter Five investigates the extraordinary behaviour of various agents in the CIA, FBI and NSA, who (intentionally or not) enabled the hijackers to achieve their goals.

Chapter Six explores the numerous communication breakdowns between the Federal Aviation Administration and the military and investigates whether they were deliberately engineered to enable the attacks to succeed. We will see that three different timelines have been given by the military, with a further one being provided by the Commission.

Chapter Seven considers some of the activities of Saudi Arabia, Israel and Pakistan and considers what part they may have played in facilitating the attacks.

Chapter Eight presents a brief overview of the clear evidence of insider trading, which indicates that some individuals had foreknowledge of 9/11 and were able to gain financially as a result.

Chapter Nine investigates who was really behind the anthrax attacks, shortly after 9/11, concluding that it wasn't the FBI scapegoat, Bruce Ivins. However, the attacks certainly achieved their goal of ensuring the rapid passage of the Patriot Act and the curtailing of civil liberties in the US.

Lies as Currency among Government Insiders

How feasible would it be for government insiders to have lied about what really happened on 9/11 – and get away with it? There are in fact many examples of an official story being proven to be entirely false. For instance, the "weapons of mass destruction" lies that were used as a pretext for the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Consider this quote from Neil Barofsky, who was appointed Special Inspector General of the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP), a component of the government's measures in 2008, brought in to address the sub-prime mortgage crisis.

"I think one of the most interesting things of Washington for someone who had not previously been there was the comfort and frequency with which people lie to each other. And I had spent eight years as a prosecutor, prosecuting fraud cases and narcotics cases.

“And the lies were almost like a currency in Washington. People would lie to you, and I mean, people within the government would lie to you. And you would know they were lying. And they would know that you knew they were lying.” (50)

In view of Barofsky's experience of working with US government officials in Washington, it will not be easy to unravel the truth from the lies, but the rest of this book will seek to do so.

Please note that all dates are in the format of the day followed by the month and then year, which is contrary to the American way of the month followed by the day then year. I hope this doesn't cause any confusion.

INTRODUCTION NOTES

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- 33) Summary: https://fas.org/irp/congress/2002_rpt/findings.html Full Report of Joint Congressional Inquiry, 24/7/03, pp209-215
- 34) Lance p232

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- 36) Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed, *War on Freedom*, Media Messenger Books, p78
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- 41) George Arney, "US Planned Attack on Taliban" BBC News, 18/9/01 Also: <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2001/11/afgh-n20.html>
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CHAPTER 1

THE DESTRUCTION OF WORLD TRADE CENTER 1 AND 2.

IS IT REASONABLE TO ASSUME THAT THE TOWERS COLLAPSED DUE TO PLANE IMPACT AND FIRES?

It is generally thought that the World Trade Towers collapsed due to the impact of planes crashing into them, exacerbated by the ensuing fires. However, the towers were constructed with the clear awareness that a plane could fly into one of them. After all, a B-25 bomber had accidentally crashed into the Empire State Building at the 79th floor due to fog in 1945, creating a hole 18 feet wide and 20 feet high. "The plane's high-octane fuel exploded, hurtling flames down the side of the building and inside through hallways and stairwells all the way down to the 75th floor." Notwithstanding the smaller size of the B-25 to a 767, the structure of the building was not compromised, but it was well-recognised thereafter that high rise buildings had to be designed to sustain the worst possible scenario. (1)

Indeed, John Skilling, who was the Lead WTC Structural Engineer, stated in an interview in 1993 in *The Seattle Times* that:

"We looked at every possible thing we could think of that could happen to the buildings, even to the extent of an airplane hitting the side...Our analysis indicated the biggest problem would be the fact that all the fuel (from the airplane) would dump into the building. There would be a horrendous fire. A lot of people would be killed. [But] the building structure would still be there." Somewhat presciently, Skilling said later in the same article that "I would imagine that if you took the top expert in that type of work [ie demolition] and gave him the assignment of bringing these buildings down with explosives, I would bet that he could do it." (2)

As noted on the *Architects and Engineers for 911 Truth* website, (an organization with nearly three and a half thousand professional members) not only were the towers designed to survive crashes of large jet aircraft, but they were expected to survive multiple plane crashes. This assertion is supported by Frank Demartini, the on-site construction manager for the World Trade Centre, who stated on 25 January 2001 in a documentary *World Trade Centre - A Modern Marvel* that "the building was designed to have a fully loaded 707 crash into it. That was the largest plane at the time. I believe that the building probably could sustain multiple impacts of jetliners because this structure is like mosquito netting. On pencil puncturing that screen netting, it really does nothing to the screen netting." *Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth* also note that, "airplane impact tests conducted by WTC structural engineers during the design of the Twin Towers used the Boeing 707... The results of the test, carried out early in 1964, calculated that the towers would handle the impact of a 707 travelling at 600 mph without collapsing.

Even though the two Boeing 767 aircraft used in the 9/11 attacks were slightly larger than the 707, technical comparisons show that the 707 has more destructive force at cruising speed due to its kinetic energy. (3)

Demartini's analysis above was challenged by *Popular Mechanics*, which argued that when the planes hit the buildings and travelled through the building, a large section of the exterior load-bearing columns as well as some crucial core columns were severed and "sliced through the utility shafts in both towers' cores." (4) To put this view in perspective, Thomas Eagar (Professor of Materials Engineering and Engineering Systems at Massachusetts Institute of Technology) noted that the towers withstood the

initial impacts of the planes well and that while several columns on the perimeter walls were destroyed, "the number of columns lost on the initial impact was not large and the loads were shifted to remaining columns in this highly redundant structure." (5) "Redundant" here means the extent of degradation the building could suffer without losing its functionality and collapsing.

PREVIOUS FIRE AT THE WORLD TRADE CENTER

Significantly, there had previously been a considerable fire in the North Tower (WTC1). Its 11th floor suffered a fire from an unknown cause on 13 February 1975. The fire started shortly before midnight in a furnished office on Floor 11 and spread through some 65% of the floor (the core plus half of the office area). By the time fire fighters arrived, flames were also spreading vertically via telephone cable openings in the floor slabs, causing subsidiary fires that "spread through an inner-service core to the 9th and 14th floors." (6). The fire lasted more than three hours and there were no fatalities, due to the fire starting at night. However, of the 150 firefighters at the scene, 28 sustained injuries from the intense heat and smoke. According to Captain Harold Kull of Engine Co. 6, "It was like fighting a blow torch. Flames could be seen pouring out of 11th floor windows on the east side of the building." What is noteworthy about this earlier fire is that WTC 1's undamaged structural steel trusses held out and did not need to be replaced.

FIREFIGHTERS IN SOUTH TOWER HAD FIRES UNDER CONTROL

It is interesting to compare Captain Kull's description of that fire, "like fighting a blow torch" with that of the fire in the South Tower on 9/11. An article in the *New York Times* on 9 November 2002, written by Jim Dwyer and Kevin Flynn and titled "Fire Department Tape Reveals No Awareness of Imminent Doom", disclosed a segment from a radio tape of FDNY firefighters, who had climbed to the 78th floor of the South Tower (WTC2). One fire fighter stated that "we've got two isolated pockets of fire. We should be able to knock it down with two lines." Dwyer and Flynn noted that "the voices, captured on a tape of Fire Department radio transmissions, betray no fear. The words are matter of fact...But nowhere on the tape is there any indication that fire fighters had the slightest indication that the tower had become unstable or that it could fall." As authors David Ray Griffin and Elizabeth Woodworth observed, "the incontrovertible evidence of firefighter teams operating calmly, methodically, and with confidence that they could easily defeat the fires in the South Tower refutes the official claim (made by NIST) that floors in the vicinity of the airplane strike were all "infernos," and that the building was unstable and about to collapse." (7)

"THIS BUILDING WILL STAND FOREVER!"

An earlier attempt to destroy the World Trade Centre in February 1993 by Islamist extremists failed, with "what the FBI later determined was the largest improvised explosive device the bureau had ever encountered." (8) According to Lawrence Wright, "the towers shook and swayed, but the mighty buildings did not fall. When Lewis Schiliro, the head of the FBI office in New York at the time, surveyed the two-hundred-foot-wide crater in the subterranean heart of the mighty complex, he was astonished. He told a structural engineer, "This building will stand forever." (9)

AND YET GUILIANI KNEW IT WAS ABOUT TO COLLAPSE

Indeed, that was the perception of the fire chiefs who organised their teams of firefighters to stabilise the two Towers after the planes hit them. Consider FDNY Chief John Peruggia's account:

"The information we got at that time [from some unknown person in Giuliani's Office of Emergency Management] was that they felt both buildings were significantly damaged, but they felt that the north tower, which was the first one to be struck, was going to be in imminent danger of collapse. Looking up at it, you could see that, you could see through the smoke or whatever, that there was significant structural damage to the exterior of the building. Very noticeable. Now you know, again, this is not a scene where the thought of both buildings collapsing ever entered into my mind. I was there in 1993, 14 minutes after the bomb went off. I operated some 16 hours at the building and with all the post-incident critiques and debriefings with various agencies. We were always told by everyone, the experts, that these buildings could withstand direct hits from airplanes. That's the way they were designed. They went through all of this architectural stuff, way beyond the scope of my knowledge. It was hit by an airplane. That's okay. It's made to be hit by an airplane. I mean I think everyone may have believed that. We were all told years ago it was made to be hit by an airplane." (10)

Significantly, as Griffin and Woodworth note, "only the top sections of the Twin Towers were damaged by the airplane impacts and the resulting fires, whereas their steel structures, much heavier towards the base, were like pyramids in terms of strength." (11)

When Richard Zarrillo (Emergency Medical Technician), carried Peruggia's startling news of imminent collapse to Fire Chief Peter Ganci, his response was, "who the fuck told you that?" Ganci had bet the lives of his firefighters on the stability of the towers. In fact, the lives of hundreds of firefighters had been wagered on the experience of fire chiefs who never suspected collapse. Ganci had almost certainly been told, like Peruggia and others in the FDNY, that planes could not cause the towers to collapse. Ganci is dead—he died in the collapse of the North Tower—but his question remains a good one: Who told you that? (12)

The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) was under the control of Mayor Guiliani and yet he is on record, in a phone conversation with Peter Jennings on *ABC News* on 9/11, as having been told in advance that the towers were going to collapse. As Griffin and Woodworth noted, "it was his own people in his own office who were providing this warning. The only remaining question is: How could people in the OEM have known - given the virtually universal belief that a total collapse of the towers would have been impossible - that the towers were going to collapse?" (13)

The inside knowledge that Guiliani's OEM were privy to appears to have raised the suspicion of Fire Chief Joseph Pfeifer, who was at the command post in the lobby of the North Tower. He is on record saying that "right before the South Tower collapsed, I noticed a lot of people just left the lobby, and I heard we had a crew of all different people, high-level people in government, everybody was gone, almost like they had information that we didn't." (14)

HOW COULD THE TOWERS HAVE FALLEN SO QUICKLY?

Before considering this question, it is interesting to know how the North Tower looked from the sky, just before it collapsed: Otis F-15 pilot, Duff, flew over Manhattan at 10.20 at 1500 feet and reported to NEADS (Northeast Air Defense Sector) that the

building looks structurally really very good. But author and pilot Lynn Spencer described how he then noticed the top of the building falling away: "And it's not just falling - it's imploding." (15)

How could two 110 storey buildings collapse so quickly and so dramatically? A paper presented by Steven Jones et al noted that "to allow for the resistance of lateral loads, high-rises are often designed such that the percentage of their columns' load capacity used for gravity loads is relatively low. The exterior columns of the Twin Towers, for example, used only about 20% of their capacity to withstand gravity loads, leaving a large margin for the additional lateral loads that occur during high-wind and seismic events." (16) As it happened, the winds on 9/11 were very light.

In other words, the exterior columns had an enormous innate capacity to resist any extra pressure that it might be subject to in the event of a collapse from above. Furthermore, as Jones noted, "videos show that the upper section of each tower disintegrated within the first four seconds of collapse. After that point, not a single video shows the upper sections that purportedly descended all the way to the ground." Thus, there was no excessive pressure on the lower parts of the building from the constituent parts above, because they were being completely pulverised into dust as the building collapsed, rather than exerting any pressure on the structure below. Also, what was not being pulverised (such as some of the steel beams) was being ejected outwards horizontally, rather than becoming the increasingly heavy object that could have created a cascading collapse as it "pancaked " from above to below.

David Ray Griffin, (retired professor of Philosophy of Religion and Theology) has noted that *Europhysics News*, in which Jones's article was published, is not peer-reviewed and therefore some people dismissed his article as unimportant. However, "a letter to the editor by Peter Michael Ketcham, a former NIST (National Institute for Science and Technology) mathematician who worked in its Scientific Applications and Visualization Group, made it undoubtedly important." (17) Although Ketcham had not been involved in the NIST WTC investigation, when he studied its report, "I quickly became furious. First, I was furious with myself. How could I have worked at NIST all those years and not have noticed this before? Second, I was furious with NIST...The more I investigated, the more apparent it became that NIST had reached a predetermined conclusion by ignoring, dismissing and denying the evidence." (18)

CONTROLLED DEMOLITION OR FIRE-INDUCED FAILURE?

If the destruction of WTC 1 and WTC 2, (and WTC 7 to be discussed in next chapter) were caused by fire, this would make them the first steel-framed high-rise buildings in history to suffer total fire-induced collapse (combined with structural damage from the airplane impacts in the case of WTC 1 and WTC 2). They would also be the first fire-induced collapses to exhibit nearly all of the features of controlled demolition and none of the features of fire-induced collapse. Edward Munyak, a fire protection engineer, put it this way: "Buildings do not fail from fire related causes in the way that World Trade Centre 1, 2 and 7 failed. Steel frame or composite steel buildings, modern high-rise buildings—they just do not collapse catastrophically like that. It's impossible.

"Only if you sever columns in some other way will those buildings collapse. It takes too much energy, and that energy was not there even with adding in all that jet fuel. It defies all engineering analysis and theory that those buildings collapsed in that manner. It just doesn't make any sense." (19)

Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth (hereafter *A&E*) have formulated the differences between a building that is brought down through controlled demolition and one that is damaged due to fire-induced failure. Controlled demolition includes the following features:

The collapse is total, leaving virtually no parts of the building standing.

The onset of collapse is always sudden. The collapse lasts a matter of seconds.

The collapse typically starts at the base of the building, though it can be engineered as top-down also.

The building descends symmetrically through what was the path of greatest resistance, though asymmetrical collapses are sometimes engineered on purpose.

The building typically descends to the ground at near free-fall acceleration. "Demolition squibs" (isolated explosive ejections) are visible outside the main zone of destruction.

Concrete and other materials are sometimes pulverized, resulting in fine dust clouds. The building's steel structure is totally or mostly dismembered.

Compare the above with damage caused to buildings due to fire:

The collapse is usually partial (always partial in the case of steel-framed buildings), leaving much of the building standing.

The onset of collapse is gradual, with visible building deformations appearing prior to the actual collapse.

The collapse takes place over many minutes or hours.

The collapse occurs randomly anywhere in the building.

Collapse is always asymmetrical.

The descent of falling portions of the building is slowed or stopped by the lower sections of the building.

Explosions only occur at the location of fires, if at all.

Concrete and other materials are not pulverized.

Most of the building's remaining structure is left intact or in large sections.

. The building's steel structure is left mostly intact, even if heavily damaged.

In relation to the above, the stack of 110 four-inch-thick concrete floors in both towers, each an acre in size, are missing from the rubble pile where photos reveal only a two-story pile of metal debris. A gravitational collapse should have left a pile of floors about 20 stories tall, as noted by 9/11 researcher, James Smith.

The reason for the lack of the 20-storey debris pile has been described by New York Governor, George Pataki, who visited the scene following the collapse of the buildings.

In a CNN filmed walkabout interview with journalist, Bill Hemmer, he described how "all over lower Manhattan...from river to river, there was dust powder 2-3 inches thick.

The concrete was just pulverized." (20)

WHAT COULD HAVE PULVERIZED THE CONCRETE?

"It appeared to me that charges had been placed in the building," said Ronald Hamburger, chief structural engineer for ABS Consulting in Oakland, California. Upon learning that no bombs had been detonated, according to the official story, he stated that "I was very surprised." This quote from Hamburger appeared in the *Wall Street Journal* on September 19, 2001. By that time, Hamburger was one of a team of

engineers that had been assembled by the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) and given authority under FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) to investigate the World Trade Centre destruction. He would also be named "Chapter Leader" for the chapter on WTC 1 and WTC 2 in FEMA's final report.

On September 11, Van Romero, an explosives expert at New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology told the *Albuquerque Journal*, "The collapse of the buildings was 'too methodical' to be the chance result of airplanes colliding with the structures.... 'My opinion is, based on the videotapes, that after the airplanes hit the World Trade Centre there were some explosive devices inside the buildings that caused the towers to collapse.' According to the article, "if explosions did cause the towers to collapse, the detonations could have been caused by a small amount of explosive, he said. "It could have been a relatively small amount of explosives placed in strategic points," Romero said. (21)

By 21 September, Romero changed his opinion after "conversations with structural engineers," telling his local newspaper: "Certainly, the fire is what caused the building to fail." David Ray Griffin has queried Romero's change of viewpoint, noting that the December 2003 issue of *Influence* magazine named Romero one of "six lobbyists who made an impact in 2003," adding that a large part of Romero's work was "lobbying for Federal government funding and if the 2003 fiscal year was any indication, Romero was a superstar," having obtained about \$56 million for his company in that year alone. As Griffin notes, "in light of the fact that Romero gave no scientific reasons for his change of stance, it does not seem unwarranted to infer that the real reason was his realization, perhaps forced upon him by government officials, that unless he publicly retracted his initial statements, his effectiveness in lobbying the federal government for funds would be greatly reduced." (22) Romero denied this stating "conspiracy theorists came out saying that the government got to me. That is the furthest thing from the truth." (23) Had Romero provided a persuasive account of how fire caused the almost free-fall destruction of the Twin Towers, it would have been easier to accept his volte-face over the cause of their collapse. If Griffin is right, Romero's change of statements provides a good example of how individuals can be pressurised into complying with the official narrative, or risk having their career and livelihood terminated. For example, Steven Jones, mentioned above, previously Professor of Physics at Brigham Young University, was forced into accepting early retirement because he challenged the official theory of 9/11. Also, chemist Kevin Ryan was fired by Underwriters Laboratories for asking "difficult questions" at his company and to NIST about how the buildings could have failed so quickly. (24)

HOW HOT WERE THE FIRES?

According to the NIST report: "At any given location, the duration and temperatures near 1,000°C, was about 15 to 20 min. The rest of the time, the temperatures were near 500°C or below...The initial jet fuel fires themselves lasted at most a few minutes." Although some experts initially claimed that fires had melted the steel, the hypotheses put forward by FEMA and NIST never involved the fires becoming hot enough to melt steel. According to NIST, the highest air temperatures reached were 1000°C (1832°F), while steel melts at about 1500°C (2732°F).

NIST's calculations have been challenged as being a gross overestimation by *A&E*: "Out of the more than 170 areas that NIST tested on recovered exterior columns, it found only three locations that bore evidence of the steel reaching temperatures above 250°C. NIST also found that the steel "show[ed] no evidence of exposure to

temperatures above 600°C for any significant time.” (25)

It obtained similar results from the two core columns recovered from the fire-affected floors. NIST therefore conceded:

“From the limited number of recovered structural steel elements, no conclusive evidence was found to indicate that pre-collapse fires were severe enough to have a significant effect on the microstructure that would have resulted in weakening of the steel structure.” (26)

However, despite its initial declaration that the collected steel was “adequate for the purposes of the investigation,” NIST’s report downplays the results of its testing, frequently reminding the reader that the exterior columns it tested were only three percent of the exterior columns on the fire floors and thus “cannot be considered representative of other columns on these floors.”

A&E comment that: "from a statistical perspective, though, 170 areas is not an insignificant sample size from which to extrapolate, particularly when [as NIST stated in December 2003 Public Update] “regions of impact and fire damage were emphasized in the selection of steel for the investigation” and it is highly significant that less than two percent of the sample reached temperatures above 250°C - not to mention the temperatures of 600° and higher used in NIST’s computer model." (27)

In 2007, a group of scientists, an architect, and two 9/11 family members filed a “Request for Correction” to the NIST report under the Information Quality Act. They requested that, among other things, NIST’s report “be revised to make its computer simulation conditions actually simulate physical reality.” The Request noted:

“NIST has provided no justification whatsoever for allowing its computer simulations to heat the steel to temperatures well above 600°C when its own physical tests reveal that little, if any, of the steel inside the WTC ever reached 600°C.” (28)

As we saw earlier, firefighters in the vicinity of where the plane crashed into the South Tower believed they had the fires under control, indicating that whatever temperatures had been reached earlier, they were certainly cooling down prior to its collapse. This simple fact can clearly be seen by looking at any of the footage of the towers prior to their collapses. As Edward Muniak, (the fire protection engineer mentioned earlier) observed:

"The media portrayed these fires as being extremely hot, but the fires were not that hot in World Trade Centre 1 and 2. If you look at NIST's own data, you can see this. And to use our own powers of observation, you can tell by seeing these fires, and seeing black smoke come out of the windows: that means that the fires were oxygen-starved." (29)

THE TOWERS "COLLAPSED" AT VIRTUAL FREE FALL SPEED

The main initiating mechanism in NIST’s “Probable Collapse Sequence” involves the sagging of thermally weakened floor trusses pulling exterior columns inward until some of the exterior columns buckled, which then caused instability to spread to the other columns. According to NIST, at this point, global collapse became inevitable as the storeys below the level of collapse provided little resistance. (30)

This brings us to the second critical way in which NIST manipulated its modelling of WTC 1 and WTC 2, which was to artificially induce the inward bowing of exterior columns to the point of buckling (which NIST claimed initiated the collapses). As NIST’s model showed that floor sagging did not cause the exterior columns to bow

inward to the point of failing, NIST applied an artificial lateral load of 5,000 pounds to each column from outside the building in order to make the exterior columns fail. In a feat of circular logic, NIST justified doing so in order to match the observed inward bowing: "minor upward adjustment of the pull-in forces, from the 5 kip [a kip equals 1,000 pounds] used in the analyses, would have produced wall instability by 100 min." (31)

NIST UNABLE TO EXPLAIN THE FREE FALL OF THE TOWERS

NIST's explanation for why WTC 1 and WTC 2 collapsed "essentially in free fall" was limited to a half-page section of its 10,000-page report titled "Events Following Collapse Initiation." In this section, NIST attempted to explain the speed and completeness of the collapses, simply by saying:

"The structure below the level of collapse initiation offered minimal resistance to the falling building mass at and above the impact zone. The potential energy released by the downward movement of the large building mass far exceeded the capacity of the intact structure below to absorb that through energy of deformation. Since the storeys below the level of collapse initiation provided little resistance to the tremendous energy released by the falling building mass, the building section above came down essentially in free fall, as seen in videos." (32)

Extraordinary as it may seem for a scientific report, NIST provided no calculations or modelling to support its claims. Instead it simply cited the videos as evidence. A Request for Correction to NIST's report, as noted above, argued that NIST's explanation was not scientifically valid: "Here, NIST has not offered any explanation as to why (i.e. the technical cause of) the storey below the collapse zone was not able to arrest the downward movement of the upper floors." The statement "as evidenced by the videos from several vantage points" is only an explanation of *what* occurred but gives the reader absolutely no idea *why* it occurred. Basic principles of engineering (for example, the conservation of momentum principle) would dictate that the undamaged steel structure below the collapse zone would, at the very least, resist and slow the downward movement of the stories above." (33)

NIST UNABLE TO ADEQUATELY EXPLAIN THE COLLAPSE

In its reply, NIST stated that it carried its analysis to the initial point of collapse where "It was not stopped by the floors below. So there was no calculation that we did to demonstrate what is clear from the videos. At this point, because of the magnitude of deflections and the number of failures occurring, the computer models are not able to converge on a solution.... [W]e were unable to provide a full explanation of the total collapse."

Of course NIST was unable to "provide a full explanation" because they were clearly aware of Newton's Third Law of Motion, which states that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. For this very good reason, we know that there should have been a deceleration of WTC 1's upper section if it had impacted and crushed the intact structure below it. The absence of significant deceleration is the clearest evidence that another force (i.e., explosives) must have been responsible for destroying the lower structure, before what remained of the pulverized structure of the upper section reached it.

To summarise NIST's theory, the collapse of each tower resulted from the combined effects of the airplane impact damage, widespread fireproofing dislodgment, and the fires that ensued. The sequence of failures that NIST stated to have initiated the collapse of both towers, involved the heat-induced sagging of floor trusses, pulling some of the exterior columns on one side of each tower inward until they buckled, causing instability that rapidly spread with the upper sections then falling onto the floors below. It should be noted that NIST were unable to give any scientific verifiable explanation for the above analysis.

A POSSIBLE EXPLANATION?

An attempt to explain the collapse of the Twin Towers was made by a professor of Civil Engineering at Northwestern University, Zdeněk Bažant, and his graduate student, Yong Zhou. The crux of Bažant and Zhou's published argument (written a mere 2 days after 9/11), published in the *Journal of Engineering Mechanics* in January 2002 was that the impact of the falling upper section applied "enormous vertical dynamic load on the underlying structure, far exceeding its load capacity," thus causing the failure of several floors below. "The part of the building lying beneath," they claimed, "[was] then impacted again by an even larger mass falling with a greater velocity, and the series of impacts and failures then proceed[ed] all the way down."

Bažant and another graduate student, Jia-Liang Le, published a further article in the *Journal of Engineering Mechanics* in 2011 entitled "Why the Observed Motion History of the World Trade Centre Towers Is Smooth." (34) However, their reasoning, as noted in their earlier study, was refuted in an article entitled "Some Misunderstandings Related to the WTC Collapse Analysis", which was published in the *International Journal of Protective Structures* in 2013. (35) The authors, Szuladzinski, Szamboti and Johns, (SSJ) concluded that the fall of the upper section would have been arrested within one or two stories in a natural progressive collapse. Their study found that Bažant and Zhou's 2001 analysis underestimated the ability of the lower section to withstand the fall of the upper section. SSJ's calculations led them to conclude that the energy dissipation capacity of the columns significantly exceeded the gravitational energy of the falling upper section — thus invalidating the progressive collapse hypothesis as an explanation for the total collapse of the Twin Towers.

Perhaps the most extraordinary aspect of Bažant's theory is that he was able to prepare his first paper for publication only 2 days after 9/11 and yet NIST were unable to replicate it with their years of endeavour, large number of qualified staff and the budget to go with it. Why did NIST fail so abysmally in their attempt to confirm Bažant's work? In conclusion, it is worth restating that the idea of the collapsing weight of the top floors of the building causing the collapse of the floors below is challenged by the very absence of those floors. A close study of the towers as they collapse show that there was a process of pulverization and what might be termed "dustification" occurring at the precise moment as the building collapsed. Furthermore, as Griffin and Woodworth point out: "During the destruction of the Twin Towers, huge sections of the perimeter steel columns, weighing many tons, were ejected horizontally as far as 500 to 600 feet, as seen in multiple photographs. These high-speed ejections of heavily structured members cannot be explained by the fires, the pull of gravity, or the airplane impacts." (36) Furthermore, these ejections would also have considerably reduced the weight of what remained of the collapsing floors.

TELL-TALE SQUIBS

One of the clearest indications of controlled demolition in the World Trade Towers (as well as WTC7) are the "squibs" that can be seen in the moments before the buildings collapsed. Kevin Ryan has described them as "high velocity bursts of debris ejected from point-like sources near the exterior facade as each building disintegrated." He noted that "in the videos we can see these bursts being ejected from the sides of the towers nearly 30 floors below the collapse front. The bursts continue throughout the duration of each tower's destruction, and all of them are similar in shape and velocity. Each of these was a sharp emission that appeared to come from a point-like source, ejecting approximately 50 to 100 feet from the side of the building in a fraction of a second. From the extracted frames of the KTLA video we can estimate that one of the bursts was fully ejected in approximately .45 seconds. This gives an average burst velocity of approximately 170 feet per second." (37)



Figure 1: Explosive Features

A&E have observed in their sponsored book *Beyond Misinformation* that "NIST's explanation for these high-velocity bursts of debris is provided not in its final report,

but in its FAQs, where it calls them “puffs of smoke” and says, the "falling mass of the building compressed the air ahead of it - much like the action of a piston - forcing smoke and debris out the windows as the stories below failed sequentially.”

A&E note that "high-velocity bursts of debris clocked at 116 mph were ejected from point-like sources in both of the Twin Towers as many as 60 stories below the collapse front." (38)

In an article in March 2005, *Popular Mechanics* quoted Dr Shyam Sunder of NIST stating that "when you have a significant portion of the floor collapsing, it's going to shoot air and concrete dust out of the window." (39)

The problem with this assertion is that the material contained within the squibs is not merely dust, but also pulverized building material. Dr Crockett Grabbe estimated that “these high-speed squibs shot out material {not just compressed air} up to 1/4 mile or more from the towers" and that this explained much of the damage to the approximately 1400 damaged cars in the near vicinity to the Twin Towers. (40)

Kevin Ryan agreed with Grabbe's analysis that the bursts contained pulverized debris, and not just smoke and dust. Also, that building materials 20 to 30 stories below the collapse zone could not be pulverized and ejected laterally by air pressure.

Furthermore, Ryan also pointed out that the floors in the Twin Towers were not the kind of tightly sealed, highly pressurized containers required to generate the pressure that would be strong enough to burst windows. He describes how "there were eight large air supply and return ventilation shafts located in the core areas of each floor. There were also three stairwells running throughout the building, and over thirty elevator shafts at any given level. Any compressed air would have had to equilibrate with open stairwells and elevator shafts, and with any openings from these shafts to other parts of the building (i.e. vent ducts)." (41) Finally, the falling mass would need to act as a flat plate exerting uniform pressure at all points. That was not the case, because the falling upper sections, were disintegrating (or exploding outwards) as observed in the videos, which means they could not have exerted uniform pressure on the floors below.

David Chandler, the Physics teacher who proved to NIST that there was free fall during the collapse of WTC7 (see next chapter) has described the squibs and the ensuing annihilation of the North Tower:

“Under the canopy of falling debris, do you see the rapid sequence of explosive ejections of material? Some of the jets have been clocked at over 100 mph.... They're continuous and widespread. They move progressively down the faces of the building, keeping pace with the falling debris.... The building is being progressively destroyed from the top down by waves of explosions creating a huge debris field... Notice that embedded in the dust clouds are huge girders and entire sections of steel framing that are being hurled out of the building.... Some landed as much as two football fields away from the base of the tower... Some people have suggested that the weight of the tower crushing down on the girders caused them to flex and they sprung sideways by a spring action. But we are not seeing isolated jumping girders. We are seeing a major fraction of the mass of the building...reduced to small pieces of rubble and fine dust, and being explosively ejected in all directions.” (42)

EVIDENCE OF EXPLOSIONS HEARD BY FIREFIGHTERS AT THE SCENE

The Fire Department of New York (FDNY) oral histories of the emergency first responders at the WTC were “originally gathered on the order of Thomas Von Essen, the city fire commissioner on Sept. 11, who said he wanted to preserve those accounts

before they became reshaped by a collective memory.” The oral histories constitute about 12,000 pages of testimony by 503 FDNY firefighters, emergency medical technicians and paramedics collected from early October 2001 to late January 2002. (43)

Initially, the city of New York (Bloomberg administration) refused to release this material, but after a lawsuit by the *New York Times* and some of the 9/11 victims’ families, the city was ordered to release them.

Here are some of the witness statements from firefighters at the scene. What is particularly significant is that some of the firefighters refer to explosions below the impact and fire zones:

Gregg Brady, FDNY: "I heard 3 loud explosions. I look up and the north tower is coming down now."

Timothy Burke, FDNY: "Then the building popped, lower than the fire, which I learned was I guess, the aviation fuel fell into the pit, and whatever floor it fell on heated up really bad and that’s why it popped at that floor. That’s the rumour I heard. But it seemed like I was going oh, my god, there is a secondary device because the way the building popped I thought it was an explosion."

Edward Cachia, FDNY: "As my officer and I were looking at the south tower, it just gave. It actually gave at a lower floor, not the floor where the plane hit, because we originally had thought there was like an internal detonation explosives because it went in succession, boom, boom, boom, boom, and then the tower came down."

Frank Campagna, FDNY: "That’s when it went. I looked back. You see three explosions and then the whole thing coming down"

Michael Donovan, FDNY "I got up, I got into the parking garages, was knocked down by the percussion. I thought there had been an explosion or a bomb that they had blown up there."

William Reynolds, FDNY: "After a while, and I don’t know how long it was, I was distracted by a large explosion from the south tower and it seemed like fire was shooting out a couple of hundred feet in each direction, then all of a sudden the top of the tower started coming down in a pancake..." Q. "Bill, just one question. The fire that you saw, where was the fire? Like up at the upper levels where it started collapsing?" A. "It appeared somewhere below that. Maybe twenty floors below the impact area of the plane..."

Karin Deshore, FDNY: "Somewhere around the middle of the World Trade Centre, there was this orange and red flash coming out. Initially it was just one flash. Then this flash just kept popping all the way around the building and that building had started to explode. The popping sound, and with each popping sound it was initially an orange and then red flash came out of the building and then it would just go all around the building on both sides as far as I could see. These popping sounds and the explosions were getting bigger, going both up and down and then all around the building."

Stephen Gregory, FDNY: "I thought that when I looked in the direction of the Trade Centre before it came down, before No. 2 came down, that I saw low-level flashes. In my conversation with Lieutenant Evangelista, never mentioning this to him, he questioned me and asked me if I saw low-level flashes in front of the building, and I agreed with him because I thought - at that time I didn’t know what it was. I mean, it could have been as a result of the building collapsing, things exploding, but I saw a flash flash flash and then it looked like the building came down." Q: "Was that on the lower level of the building or up where the fire was?" A. "No, the lower level of the building. You know like when they demolish a building, how when they blow up a building, when it falls down? That’s what I thought I saw. And I didn’t broach the topic

to him, but he asked me. He said I don't know if I'm crazy, but I just wanted to ask you because you were standing right next to me. He said did you see anything by the building? And I said what do you mean by see anything? He said did you see any flashes? I said, yes, well, I thought it was just me. He said no, I saw them, too."

Christopher Fenyo, FDNY: "About a couple minutes after George came back to me is when the south tower from our perspective exploded from about midway up the building. We all turned and ran...At that point a debate began to rage because the perception was that the building looked like it had been taken out with charges."

John Coyle, fire marshal: "I thought it was exploding, actually. That's what I thought for hours afterwards...Everybody I think at that point still thought these things were blown up."

As Graeme MacQueen, (retired Professor of Religious Studies at McMaster University, Ontario) summarised: "We have 118 witnesses out of a pool of 503. Over 23 percent of our group are explosion witnesses. In my judgment, this is a very high percentage of witnesses, especially when we consider...[that interviewees] were typically not asked about explosions, and, in most cases, were not even asked about the collapses of the towers. What testimony we have was volunteered, and it therefore represents not the maximum number of witnesses to explosions but the minimum number." (44)

Contrary to all the eyewitness reports above, CTV (Canadian Television Network) later asserted that, "when eyewitnesses claim to have heard explosions prior to the collapse, those were just the sounds of a massive building contorting and crushing anything inside." (45)

EVIDENCE FROM NEWS REPORTERS AT THE SCENE

Notwithstanding CTV's attempt to explain away the evidence of the firefighters above, Graeme MacQueen and Ted Walter reviewed 70 hours of 9/11 news coverage of networks including *ABC*, *CBS*, *NBC*, *CNN*, *MSNBC*, *CNBC* and *Fox News*. Their study revealed that the hypothesis of explosions bringing down the Twin Towers was "not only prevalent among reporters covering the events in New York City on 9/11 but was, in fact, the dominant hypothesis."

MacQueen and Walter further noted that "the picture that unmistakably emerges is that the great majority of reporters who witnessed the destruction of the Twin Towers either perceived an explosion or perceived the towers as exploding. This hypothesis of the Twin Towers' destruction then continued to be prevalent among reporters covering the event, who essentially viewed the destruction of the towers as an explosion-based attack subsequent to the airplane strikes."

Furthermore, in 21 instances of eyewitness reporting, their descriptions strongly corroborate the overwhelming scientific evidence that explosives were used to destroy the Twin Towers.

As one example of their analysis they quote David Lee Miller, *Fox News*, who reported at 10:01 am that "Suddenly, while talking to an officer who was questioning me about my press credentials, we heard a very loud blast, an explosion. We looked up, and the building literally began to collapse before us. . . . Not clear now is why this explosion took place. Was it because of the planes that, uh, two planes, dual attacks this morning, or was there some other attack, which is - there has been talk of here on the street." (46)

Despite all the eyewitness reports of explosions from firefighters and reporters, NIST was able to proclaim that they "found no corroborating evidence for alternative hypotheses suggesting that the WTC towers were brought down by controlled

demolition using explosives planted prior to September 11, 2001." (47)
Similarly, the 9/11 Commission chose to ignore all the above eyewitness evidence of explosions.

MORE EVIDENCE OF EXPLOSIONS

First of all, the rapid removal of virtually all the steel beams (to be discussed below), without any opportunity given for an independent scientific analysis is a clear indication that a highly co-ordinated and controlled effort was made to prevent this from happening.

However, considerable evidence of explosive material was found at Ground Zero and nearby. An article by Niels Harrit (Associate Professor of Chemistry at Copenhagen University) et al in *The Open Chemical Physics Journal* in 2009 concluded that "based on these observations, we conclude that the red layer of the red / grey chips we have discovered in the WTC dust is active, unreacted thermitic material, incorporating nanotechnology, and is a highly energetic pyrotechnic or explosive material" (48). The research team had been able to carry out their study because a number of people had saved samples of the copious, dense dust, which spread and settled across Manhattan. Several of these people sent portions of their samples to members of this research group.

One such person, as noted by author Mark Gaffney, was Janette MacKinlay, who was away on 9/11 but returned to her flat a week later, situated about 100 metres from the South Tower. "She found her apartment filled with dust from the WTC. During the collapse it had flooded in through broken windows. MacKinlay preserved some of this dust in a plastic bag and, much later, sent the sample to Dr Jones when she learned about his research." (49)

MOLTEN ALUMINIUM OR THERMITIC REACTIONS?



Figure 2: Thermitic reactions

Jones et al noted that "NIST sidesteps the well-documented presence of molten metal throughout the debris field and asserts that the orange molten metal seen pouring out of WTC 2 for the seven minutes before its collapse was aluminium from the aircraft combined with organic materials." Photograph available here: (50)

As NIST described it, "Just over a second [after 9:51:51 am], a bright spot appeared at the top of one window...and a glowing liquid began to pour from this location.... The composition of the flowing material can only be the subject of speculation, but its behaviour suggests it could have been molten aluminium." NIST was grasping at straws here, because experiments have shown that molten aluminium, even when mixed with organic materials, has a silvery appearance, thus suggesting that the orange molten metal was in fact emanating from a thermite reaction being used to weaken the structure. Jones raised the question: "Is the falling molten metal from WTC Tower 2...more likely molten iron from a thermite reaction OR pouring molten aluminium?"

"The yellow colour implies a molten metal temperature of approximately 1,000°C, evidently above that which the dark-smoke hydrocarbon fires in the Towers could produce.... Also, the fact that the liquid metal retains an orange hue as it nears the ground...further rules out aluminium....

"We also noted [in our experiments] that...the falling aluminium displayed a silvery-grey colour, adding significantly to the evidence that the yellow-white molten metal flowing out from the South Tower shortly before its collapse was NOT molten aluminium." (51)

The above critique was challenged by chemist Frank Greening and metallurgist Christian Simensen, (G&S), who argued that the Twin Tower fires melted the aluminium planes, and that this molten aluminium came into contact with the water sprinkler systems in the buildings, thereby setting off explosions that led to their respective collapses. Indeed, they criticised NIST for not taking this into consideration in their final report. Perhaps G&S never read NIST's published FAQ's about their investigation in which it is clearly stated that "both the NIST calculations and interviews with survivors and fire fighters indicated that the aircraft impacts severed the water pipes that carried the water to the sprinkler systems. The sprinklers were not operating on the principal fire floors."

There are further points to be considered here. Firstly, if the G&S theory was right, there would have been an explosion when the plane's molten aluminium dripped through to floors below and reacted with the functioning water sprinklers there, but this would have needed to happen early on, while there were fires blazing hot enough to be melting the aluminium, but there is no such evidence of explosives shortly after impact. Also, one would have expected enormous explosions to have been visible close to the point of impact (where the aluminium in the plane was) as the aluminium and water reacted, but this was also not observed. Finally, as mentioned earlier, fire fighters reported from the 78th floor of the South Tower reported that there were only two small pockets of fire there and they thought they could put them out quite easily.

Niels Harrit, in his analysis of G&S's hypothesis, challenged the notion that all the aluminium from the planes would have become molten: "It is ridiculous to envision that a major part of the airliner aluminium would not burn in the blast after total fragmentation during impact and fuel combustion." He remarked that they then "bring into the argument the drinking water from the water coolers found in the offices...Come on, be serious."

Richard Gage also noted the difficulty of creating an explosive effect from aluminium and water, pointing out "that's why they don't design explosives with aluminium and water." Furthermore, Gage explained that "a couple of aluminium / water explosions, even if the right conditions existed, could only account for a couple of explosions at or below the point of jet plane impacts." Notwithstanding these criticisms, G&S cited the example of an aluminium and water explosion at a factory in Sandong, China. However, although it blew the lightweight roofing and siding off, it didn't damage the supporting columns.

What is clear is that if G&S were right, it would have taken an enormous amount of aluminium to come into contact with an enormous amount of water simultaneously and this would have caused ONE enormous explosion. Suffice to say, this is not what was observed. As the late physicist Frank Legge emphasised, "both towers very obviously came down from the top - not as a result of a single massive explosion, but as a result of a sequence of moderate explosions...which indicates that the explosions were set off with very precise timing." In addition, engineer Ken Jenkins has argued that such an explosion as hypothesized by G&S would not have affected the floors below the impact zone, while their theory is also unable to account for the reported explosions in the lobbies and the sub-basement areas. (52)

Thomas Eagar, despite upholding the idea of fires and structural damage causing the collapse of the towers, stated that he "objects to the notion that the aluminium, if it did melt, would definitely have reacted with the water it encountered. Most of the time when water is sprayed on molten aluminium, "there is no explosion because the water turns to steam and excludes the oxygen, preventing the growth of the combustion." (53) In light of all the above evidence, the flowing yellow / orange metal would appear to be evidence of a thermitic reaction prior to the collapse of WTC 2.

SUMMARY OF THE ABOVE EVIDENCE

The supposedly definitive NIST report on the collapse of the Twin Towers contains no analysis of why the lower sections failed to arrest or even slow down the descent of the upper sections (which NIST acknowledges "came down essentially in free fall") nor does it explain the various other phenomena observed during the collapses. When a group of petitioners filed a formal Request for Correction asking NIST to perform such analysis, NIST replied that it was "unable to provide a full explanation of the total collapse" because "the computer models [were] not able to converge on a solution."

Videos show that the upper section of each tower disintegrated within the first four seconds of collapse. After that point, not a single video showed the upper sections that purportedly descended all the way to the ground before being crushed. Videos and photographs also show numerous high-velocity bursts of debris being ejected from point-like sources. NIST referred to these as "puffs of smoke" but failed to properly analyse them. High-velocity bursts of debris, or "squibs," were ejected from point-like sources in WTC 1 and WTC 2, as many as 20 to 30 stories below the collapse front.

NIST also provided no explanation for the mid-air pulverization of most of the towers' concrete, the near-total dismemberment of their steel frames, or the ejection of those materials up to 150 meters in all directions. NIST ignored the well-documented presence of molten metal throughout the debris field (to be discussed below) and asserted that the orange molten metal seen pouring out of WTC 2 for the seven minutes before its collapse was aluminium from the aircraft combined with organic materials. Yet experiments have shown that molten aluminium, even when mixed with organic

materials, has a silvery appearance - thus suggesting that the orange molten metal was instead emanating from a thermite reaction being used to weaken the structure. Meanwhile, unreacted nano-thermitic material has since been discovered in multiple independent WTC dust samples. (54)

HOW COULD THE BUILDINGS HAVE BEEN RIGGED FOR DEMOLITION?

At any crime scene it is necessary to identify the three factors of motive, means and opportunity, before any element of guilt can be ascertained. Possible motives have already been alluded to in the introduction, so who might have had the means and opportunity?

Kevin Ryan has suggested that "spray-on nano-thermite materials may have been applied to the steel components of the WTC buildings, underneath the upgraded fireproofing... This could have been done in such a way that very few people knew what was happening." (55)

As David Ray Griffin extrapolates, these upgrading's would have enabled the shutdown of affected floors and that "in this way, all the explosive material could have been added beyond the view of ordinary WTC employees." (56)

WERE THERE ALSO EXPLOSIONS IN THE BASEMENT?

WTC janitor William Rodriguez stated that he and fourteen others heard "an explosion so hard that it pushed us upwards... and it came from the basement between the B2 level, and the B3 level. At that moment I thought it was the mechanical room where they have all the pumps and the generators for the building - that I thought maybe a generator had just blown up on the basement. At that moment everyone started screaming - the explosion was so hard that the walls cracked - the ceiling fell on top of us. The sprinkler system got activated. When I was about to say out loud "it was the generator" we hear "BOOM" - the impact of the plane on the top of the building."

Rodriguez's account implies that there was an explosion in the basement of the North Tower BEFORE it was struck by Flight 11. (57)

Another witness, engineer Mike Pecoraro, was part of the crew that serviced the World Trade Centre complex. He was in the mechanical shop in the second sub-basement of the north WTC tower when it was hit. When the room he was in started filling with white smoke he headed upstairs with a co-worker toward a small machine shop on the C level. "There was nothing there but rubble. We're talking about a 50-ton hydraulic press - gone." He then ascended to the B level where he saw a 300-pound steel and concrete fire door, lying on the floor, wrinkled up "like a piece of aluminium foil." When he then arrived at the main lobby, he saw massive damage: "The whole lobby was soot and black, elevator doors were missing...the marble was missing off some of the walls. Twenty-foot section of marble, 20 by 10-foot sections of marble, gone from the walls." (58) These two eyewitness accounts would appear to indicate that there was an explosion in the basement and that it caused instant damage ("a 50-ton hydraulic press-gone") that cannot be explained by jet fuelled fire cascading down an elevator shaft.

WHY WAS ALL THE EVIDENCE REMOVED BEFORE ANY INVESTIGATION?

Why did the FBI allow the steel from the World Trade Center to be shipped out to China and Korea, rather than having it moved to a place where a proper forensic analysis could

be carried out? The rapid disposal of the steel prevented the FEMA team from conducting forensic analysis, and this continued despite requests from the investigators - and outcry among the victims' families and the fire safety community - for the steel to be saved. Although investigators were eventually granted access to the scrap yards, nearly all of the steel, including most of the steel from the upper floors of WTC 1 and WTC 2, was destroyed before it could be inspected.

The US House Committee on Science reported, in March 2002: "In the month that lapsed between the terrorist attacks and the deployment of the [FEMA] BPAT team, a significant amount of steel debris - including most of the steel from the upper floors - was removed from the rubble pile, cut into smaller sections, and either melted at the recycling plant or shipped out of the US. Some of the critical pieces of steel - including the suspension trusses from the top of the towers and the internal support columns - were gone before the first BPAT team member ever reached the site." (59)

An article in the *New York Times* noted that: "In calling for a new investigation, some structural engineers have said that one serious mistake has already been made in the chaotic aftermath of the collapses: the decision to rapidly recycle the steel column beams and trusses that held up the buildings. That may have cost investigators some of their most direct physical evidence with which to try to piece together an answer. Officials in the mayor's office declined to reply to written and oral requests for comment over a three-day period about who decided to recycle the steel and the concern that the decision might be handicapping the investigation... Dr Frederick W Mowrer, an associate professor in the fire protection engineering department at the University of Maryland, said he believed the decision could ultimately compromise any investigation of the collapses. "I find the speed with which potentially important evidence has been removed and recycled to be appalling." (60)

Furthermore, during the five-month clean-up effort, there were unprecedented measures taken to control access to the site. The site was restricted, and photographs were banned, by order of Rudy Giuliani.

The debris removed from Ground Zero was either hauled away on trucks or shipped away on barges. Despite the effort to rapidly dispose of the steel, the WTC debris was considered highly sensitive. At first the trucks were tracked using a paper-based system, but on November 26, the city initiated use of an in-vehicle GPS tracking system to monitor locations of trucks hired to haul the debris to Fresh Kills, the official dump site on Staten Island. As Kevin Ryan noted, "The restrictions on FEMA investigators and on photographers and the extensive site security are all indications that something was being hidden." (61)

Further obstruction of FEMA's investigation was noted by Ronald Hamburger, (mentioned earlier) who said that even three months after 9/11, "he had not even been given access to basic blueprints describing where the steel and other structural elements had been when the World Trade Centre was whole." (62) Can this be explained by anything other than deliberate malfeasance?

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE BLACK BOXES?

Kevin Ryan also noted that the discovery of 3 of the 4 black boxes, and then denial of that discovery, is further evidence of Giuliani's team interfering with what should have been a forensic analysis at the scene of a crime. Indeed, a plane's black boxes are designed to survive impact of 3,400 times the force of gravity as well as intensely hot fires. Ryan stated that "two Ground Zero workers claimed that they helped authorities

find three of the four black boxes in October of 2001. One of them, New York City firefighter Nicholas DeMasi, who was assigned to take some FBI agents around the World Trade Centre site in his all-terrain vehicle to search for the devices, confirmed their recovery." (63)

DeMasi's claims were confirmed by another recovery worker at the site, Mike Bellone. He recalled that when DeMasi finished escorting the FBI agents around the World Trade Centre site, the firefighter told him that they had found two more black boxes. "The FBI looked pretty happy about it," Bellone commented. The FBI agents took the three black boxes with them when they left the site. (64)

Additionally, *Counter Punch* reported in December 2005 that a source within the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), said, "Off the record, we had the boxes... You'd have to get the official word from the FBI as to where they are, but we worked on them here." (65) Another witness was Lieutenant William Keegan of the Port Authority Police Dept, who handed over a black box to two FBI agents. (66) It stretches credibility to the limit to suggest that the virtually indestructible black boxes did not survive, when one of the alleged hijackers passports is said to have fluttered down and then been found by a passing member of the public. 9/11 Commission staff member Susan Ginsberg testified that, "A passer-by picked it up and gave it to a NYPD detective shortly before the World Trade Centre towers collapsed." (67) According to Wikipedia, "Soaked in jet fuel, it was picked up by a passer-by who gave it to a New York City Police Department (NYPD) detective shortly before the South Tower collapsed."(68). How did all that jet fuel, which caused an inferno (as described by NIST) not manage to destroy a flimsy passport when it allegedly facilitated the free-fall disintegration of two skyscrapers?

On the assumption that the black boxes were indeed found, why is the recorded information being kept secret. What is there to hide?

SCIENTIFIC STUDIES SUPPORTING EVIDENCE OF MOLTEN METAL CONSISTENT WITH THERMITE EXPLOSIONS

The R J Lee Report

The RJ Lee Group, (an industrial forensics analytical laboratory and scientific consulting firm) was commissioned by Deutsche Bank, who wanted to prove to their insurance company that their building was "pervasively contaminated with WTC dust unique to the WTC event."(69) Their reports, released in December 2003 and May 2004, titled "WTC Dust Signature" are worth quoting at length, as they prove that the dust from the WTC buildings was far from ordinary dust. The two reports are available online. (70)

From the December 2003 report:

"Various metals (most notably iron and lead) were melted during the WTC event, producing spherical metallic particles. Exposure of phases to high heat results in the formation of spherical particles due to surface tension." (71)

"The amount of energy introduced during the generation of the WTC dust and the ensuing conflagration caused various components to vaporize... Many of the materials, such as lead, cadmium, mercury, and various organic compounds, vaporized and then condensed during the WTC event." (72)

It is very significant that the 2003 version also reported that while iron particles make up only 0.04 percent of normal building dust, they constituted 5.87 percent of the WTC dust. (73) Just to put this into perspective, Jones et al (report to be discussed below) have emphasised that the WTC dust in this sample has nearly 150 times (5.87/0.04) the amount of iron-rich spheres as ordinary dust after a fire.

Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth also noted that "iron does not melt until 1,538°C (2,800°F) and this cannot be reached by diffuse hydrocarbon fires." Furthermore, for lead to have been vaporized, it would need to have been heated to its boiling point of 1,749°C (3,180°F). Bear in mind, NIST acknowledged that fires in the Twin Towers never exceeded 1000C (1800F), so its theory is unable to provide an explanation for the much higher temperatures noted above.

From the May 2004 report:

"An additional characteristic of WTC dust is the presence of coated particles and fibers.... The presence of lead oxide on the surface of mineral wool indicate the existence of extremely high temperatures during the collapse which caused metallic lead to volatilize, oxidize, and finally condense on the surface of the mineral wool." (74)

"WTC dust markers exhibit characteristics of particles that have undergone high stress and high temperature. Asbestos in the WTC dust was reduced to thin bundles and fibrils as opposed to the complex particles found in a building having asbestos-containing surfacing materials. Gypsum in the WTC dust is finely pulverized to a degree not seen in other building debris. Mineral wool fibres have a short and fractured nature that can be attributed to the catastrophic collapse. Lead was present as ultra-fine spherical particles. Some particles show evidence of being exposed to a conflagration such as spherical metals and silicates, and vesicular particles (round open porous structure having a Swiss cheese appearance as a result of boiling and evaporation)." (75) To be discussed below.

The USGS Report

Released in 2005, a report by the US Geological Survey (USGS) titled "Particle Atlas of World Trade Centre Dust" identified "trace to minor amounts" of "metal or metal oxides" in the WTC dust and referred to the discovery that: "The primary metal and metal-oxide phases in WTC dust are Fe-rich and Zn-rich particles...Many other metal and metal oxide phases have been identified including phases rich in Al, Ti, Pb, Bi, Mo."

In addition to observing spherules of iron (Fe-rich) USGS also mentioned Molybdenum (Mo) which is known for its extremely high melting point of 2,623°C (4,754°F). In other words, there was evidence of that temperature having been reached during the events that created the WTC dust. (76)

Professor Steven Jones Group Report

The Jones et al study discussed the presence of molybdenum spherules documented by the USGS study but not included in its report. (This additional data from the USGS study was obtained through a FOIA request.)

Dr Jones and his co-authors also observed, in relation to the final quote above from RJ Lee (May 2004):

"If "the "Swiss-cheese appearance" is indeed the result of "boiling and evaporation" of the material as the [RJ Lee] report suggests, we note the boiling temperature for aluminosilicate is approximately 2,760°C." Jones then stated that "not only is it necessary for the material to have achieved extremely high temperatures to melt and so be able to form small spheres, it is also necessary that some violent physical disturbance occur in order to shatter the molten material into the sizes observed." (77)

What could have caused such phenomenal temperatures in an office fire? Well, a thermite reaction generates yellow-white hot molten iron at well over 2500°C/4000°F and white smoke. This type of material can melt and cut steel beams. Yellow-white hot molten iron accompanied by white smoke is also what was seen streaming out of the South Tower for several minutes before the building disintegrated, as noted previously.

EVIDENCE OF THERMITE AT GROUND ZERO

Kevin Ryan compiled a list of evidence confirming that the reports of R J Lee, USGS, and Jones et al, do indeed confirm the presence of thermite at Ground Zero. It is therefore reasonable to assume that thermite was instrumental in the destruction of the Twin Towers. A full account of his research can be found here: (78)

Here is a summary:

Molten metal: There are numerous photographs and eyewitness testimonies to the presence of molten metal at the WTC, both in the buildings and in the rubble. No legitimate explanation has been provided for this evidence other than the exothermic reaction of thermite, which produces the temperatures required and molten iron as a product.

The fires at Ground Zero could not be put out for several months. Despite the application of millions of gallons of water to the pile, several rainfall events at the site, and the use of a chemical fire suppressant, the fires would not subside. Thermal images produced by satellite showed that the temperatures in the pile were far above that expected in the debris from a typical structure fire. Only thermite, which contains its own oxidant and therefore cannot be extinguished by smothering it, can explain this evidence.

Numerous vehicles were scorched or set on fire in the area. Photographic evidence shows that cars parked within the lower-level garage areas of the WTC complex burned as if impacted by a super-hot wind like that described by eyewitnesses. All non-metallic parts of the cars, including the plastic, rubber, and glass, were completely burned off by a hot blast.

Carbon nanotubes have been found in the WTC dust and in the lungs of 9/11 first responders. One report concluded that "the finding of CNT [carbon nanotubes] in both WTC dust and lung tissues is unexpected and requires further study." (79)

The formation of carbon nanotubes requires extremely high temperatures, specific metal catalysts, and carbon compounds exactly like those found in nanothermite formulations. Researchers have discovered that nanothermite produces the same kinds of carbon nanotubes. That finding has been confirmed by independent analysis in a commercial contract laboratory.

A peer-reviewed scientific publication identified the presence of nanothermite in the WTC dust. One of the critical aspects of that paper has been confirmed by an independent scientist. (80)

EYEWITNESS EVIDENCE OF MOLTEN METAL AT GROUND ZERO

In the weeks and months after 9/11, numerous individuals reported seeing molten metal in the remains of the World Trade Centre. Here are a few witnesses recorded by *History Commons*: New York City Commissioner Kenneth Holden, who was involved with the organizing of demolition, excavation, and debris removal operations at Ground Zero, told the 9/11 Commission: "Underground, it was still so hot that molten metal dripped down the sides of the wall from [WTC] Building 6." (81) Surprisingly, Holden's evidence was not considered to be of sufficient significance to mention in the final report.

William Langewiesche, the only journalist to have unrestricted access to Ground Zero during the clean-up operation, described how, "in the early days, the streams of molten metal that leaked from the hot cores and flowed down broken walls inside the foundation hole." (82) Langewiesche also wrote that as time moved on from the early days described above, "throughout the fall and into the winter some of the debris was so hot that, fanned by harbour breezes, it smoked and burst into flame." (83)

Alison Geyh, who led a team of scientists studying the potential health effects of 9/11, reported: "Fires are still actively burning, and the smoke is very intense. In some pockets now being uncovered, they are finding molten steel." (84)

As late as five months after the attacks, in February 2002, firefighter Joe O'Toole saw a steel beam being lifted from deep underground at Ground Zero, which he said, "was dripping from the molten steel." (85)

Greg Fuchek, vice president for sales for LinksPoint Inc, a company employed to provide technology to enable the Ground Zero workers to log their findings electronically, stated that, "In the first few weeks, sometimes when a worker would pull a steel beam from the wreckage, the end of the beam would be dripping molten steel." (86)

Further confirmation is provided by the following *You Tube* presentations:

Leslie Robertson, a lead engineer in the design of WTC 1 and WTC 2, told an audience: "We were down at the B1 level and one of the firefighters said, "I think you'd be interested in this." And they pulled up a big block of concrete and there was like a little river of steel flowing." (87)

FDNY Captain Philip Ruvolo recalled with other firefighters seated next to him: "You'd get down below and you'd see molten steel, molten steel, running down the channel rails, like you're in a foundry, like lava." Other firefighters chimed in: "Like lava." "Like lava from a volcano." (88)

Steven E. Jones, confirming Ryan's analysis above, claimed this molten metal was "direct evidence for the use of high-temperature explosives, such as thermite," used to deliberately bring down the WTC towers. (89) He stated that without explosives, a falling building would have "insufficient directed energy to result in melting of large quantities of metal."

Not only did the 9/11 Commission ignore all the evidence of molten steel at Ground Zero, but so too did NIST in its report, only referring to it in its FAQ's a year later in which it stated in Question 23:

"NIST ...found no evidence that would support the melting of steel in a jet-fuel ignited fire in the towers prior to collapse. The condition of the steel in the wreckage of the

WTC towers [i.e. whether it was in a molten state or not] was irrelevant to the investigation of the collapse since it does not provide any conclusive information on the condition of the steel when the WTC towers were standing." (90)

NIST then continued: "Under certain circumstances it is conceivable for some of the steel in the wreckage to have melted after the buildings collapsed. Any molten steel in the wreckage was more likely due to the high temperature resulting from long exposure to combustion within the pile than to short exposure to fires or explosions while the buildings were standing."

As we see, NIST were unable to explain what "certain circumstances" could make fires burn with such intensity to cause molten steel to flow for months after the collapse of the buildings at the World Trade Centre. However, there is an obvious explanation, as described in the conclusion of a report by Ryan, Gourmley and Jones:

"The characteristics of these un-extinguishable fires have not been adequately explained as the results of a normal structure fire, even one accelerated by jet fuel. Conversely, such fires are better explained given the presence of chemical energetic materials, which [even underground] provide their own fuel and oxidant [enabling them to continue to burn] and are not deterred by water, dust, or chemical suppressants. The presence of energetic materials, specifically energetic nanocomposites, at GZ [Ground Zero], has the potential to explain much of the unusual environmental data seen at the WTC. Thermite...is such a pyrotechnic mixture that cannot be easily extinguished and is a common component of energetic nanocomposites." (91)

Perhaps the final words of this chapter should be those of the fire commissioners of the Franklin Square and Munson Fire District:

FIRE DEPARTMENT CALLS FOR GRAND JURY INVESTIGATION

On July 24, 2019 - nearly 18 years after the horrific attacks that traumatized a nation and changed the world forever, the Franklin Square and Munson Fire District, which oversees a volunteer fire department serving a hamlet of 30,000 residents just outside of Queens, New York, became the first legislative body in the country to officially support a new investigation into the events of 9/11.

Their petition stated that: "the Board of Fire Commissioners of the Franklin Square and Munson Fire District fully supports a comprehensive federal grand jury investigation and prosecution of every crime related to the attacks of September 11, 2001, as well as any and all efforts by other government entities to investigate and uncover the full truth surrounding the events of that horrible day... the overwhelming evidence presented in said petition demonstrates beyond any doubt that pre-planted explosives and/or incendiaries - not just airplanes and the ensuing fires - caused the destruction of the three World Trade Centre buildings, killing the vast majority of the victims who perished that day." (92)

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CHAPTER 2

WORLD TRADE CENTER 7 - THE 8TH WONDER OF THE WORLD

A third building in the World Trade Complex collapsed on 9/11 and this one was not hit by a plane. It somehow fell into its own footprint entirely due to fire within the building, according to the US government's own investigation conducted by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).

World Trade Building 7 (WTC 7) was a 47 storey steel-structured skyscraper, and its destruction was caught on a number of *You Tube* videos. (1)

The collapse of WTC7 was extraordinary because, prior to 9/11, there had never been a case of a steel-structured high-rise building collapsing due to fire, although there had been a number of partial collapses. One of many examples of the impact of fire on a steel-structured building was the fire in a fifty-storey building fire in Caracas in 2004, which raged for 17 hours and completely gutted the top twenty floors without collapsing. The destruction of WTC 7, because it occurred at free fall for at least 2.25 seconds, defied the laws of physics (in the absence of planned demolition) - hence the title of "the 8th wonder of the world."

Despite this, the 911 Commission did not mention the collapse of WTC 7 in its report. If the hope was that by not mentioning such an unusual event, people might not develop any curiosity as to what might have caused it, then it was successful. Indeed, a Zogby poll in May 2006 found that 48% of Americans did not even know that WTC7 had collapsed.(2)

FEMA (FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY) REPORT, 2002

Prior to the official investigation by NIST, which procrastinated for six years between 2002-2008 in its desperation to justify how the building collapsed due to fire, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), had released a preliminary study in 2002.

In November 2001, James Glanz of the *New York Times* wrote an article in which he highlighted concern among structural engineers, who were unable to explain how WTC7 had collapsed in such a dramatic manner. Following up on this, Glanz co-authored a further article with Eric Lipton, which appeared in the *New York Times* in February 2002. The article discussed the FEMA study and noted that:

“Perhaps the deepest mystery uncovered in the investigation involves extremely thin bits of steel collected...from 7 World Trade Centre.... The steel apparently melted away, but no fire in any of the buildings was believed to be hot enough to melt steel outright.... A preliminary analysis at Worcester Polytechnic Institute [WPI]...suggests that sulphur released during the fires - no one knows from where - may have combined with atoms in the steel to form compounds that melt at lower temperatures.” (3)

The three WPI professors, who were “shocked” by the “Swiss cheese appearance” of the steel, reported their analysis in Appendix C of the FEMA WTC Building Performance Study, and made the following recommendation:

“The severe corrosion and subsequent erosion of Samples 1 and 2 are a very unusual event. No clear explanation for the source of the sulphur has been identified....A detailed study into the mechanisms of this phenomenon is needed.”

In spring 2002, the WPI journal *Transformations*, confirmed what the three professors had observed: "A one-inch column has been reduced to half-inch thickness. Its edges -

which are curled like a paper scroll - have been thinned to almost razor sharpness. Gaping holes - some larger than a silver dollar - let light shine through a formerly solid steel flange. This Swiss cheese appearance shocked all of the fire-wise professors, who expected to see distortion and bending - but not holes." (4)

SULFIDATION OF WTC 7 STEEL

A plausible explanation for the source of sulphur, as well as the high-temperature corrosion and erosion, is "thermate," which is produced when sulphur is added to thermite, a well-known incendiary. Dr Steven Jones (retired professor of Physics at Brigham Young University) explained:

"When you put sulphur into thermite it makes the steel melt at a much lower temperature, so instead of melting at about 1,538°C it melts at approximately 988°C, and you get sulfidation and oxidation in the attacked steel...The thermate reaction proceeds rapidly and is in general faster than basic thermite in cutting through steel due to the presence of sulphur." (5)

Author David Ray Griffin suggested that NIST did not bother to test for sulphur during its six-year investigation, as it considered it could be explained away due to the wallboard in the WTC buildings being made of calcium sulphate (gypsum). However, the WPI professors reported not simply that there was sulphur in the debris but that the steel they examined had been sulphurised, meaning that the "sulphur had entered into the intergranular structure of the steel," which means that the steel had melted. (6)

Civil Engineer, Jonathan Cole, stated that "there is a reason why NIST...never conducted any experiments or found that source of sulphur in order to solve this deepest of mysteries. Perhaps NIST knew the most logical cause of the sulfidation of the steel is from some type of thermite reaction." (7)

According to Steven Jones, it would have been easy for NIST to have refuted the WPI analysis if they believed it possible because, "if NIST claims that sulphur is present in the steel from gypsum, they should do an experiment to heat steel to about 1000C in the presence of gypsum and then test whether sulphur has entered the steel...If they actually do scientific experiments like this, they will find that sulphur does not enter steel under such circumstances." (8) NIST made no reference to the findings of the WPI professors contained in the FEMA report, even though they had concluded, as stated above, that "a detailed study into the mechanisms of this phenomenon is needed."

At a technical briefing on 26 August 2008, Shyam Sunder, who led the NIST investigation, sought to defuse criticism that NIST had not carried out further tests on the steel examined by WPI by saying that Professor Barnett (one of the investigators from WPI) said during a BBC interview on 06/7/06 that "there was no evidence that any of the residue in that...piece of steel had any relationship to an undue fire event in the building or any other kind of incendiary device in the building." Sunder previously denied that any steel had been recovered and examined by his team. Neither he nor Barnett appear to have suggested any alternative plausible explanation for the previously mentioned sulfidation of the steel. Furthermore, although Barnett and his WPI Team had previously stated the need for a more detailed study, Barnett seems to have come to his conclusion without any further detailed study.

It is extraordinary that only one single piece of steel from WTC7 was available for investigation. There should have been rigorous testing of the steel to determine why a robust skyscraper could have collapsed in such an unprecedented manner. As structural engineer Ronald Brookman has noted, "the building had been completely evacuated several hours before its collapse. No one was trapped in the debris pile, so there was no

need to rapidly dismantle and destroy the steel debris. Why was the structural steel disposed of before a proper investigation? Who authorized the disposal of the steel before it could be adequately observed and documented?" (9)

NIST REPORT

NIST followed up on the FEMA study with its own study that investigated the collapse of WTC7. Its final report was not concluded until late 2008. Because NIST is an agency of the US Department of Commerce, it was effectively accountable to the Bush Administration. Political pressure from the government could have compromised the scientific integrity of the investigation. Also, NIST's scientific integrity was undermined because the agency "did not go through any sort of independent peer review process...in relation to its analysis of events with respect to Building 7. Calling for public comments on interim reports that one is free to ignore [and did] is not a process of peer review although...NIST tries to give the impression that something rigorous and scientific is happening when such is not the case." (10)

The lack of transparency led a former NIST employee, Peter Ketcham, to speak out and accuse NIST of reaching "a predetermined conclusion by ignoring, dismissing and denying the evidence" and stating that "among the most egregious examples is the explanation for the collapse of WTC7 as an elaborate sequence of unlikely events culminating in the almost symmetrical total collapse of a steel-frame building into its own footprint at free-fall acceleration [for at least 2.25seconds]." He concluded that, "awareness is growing of the disconnect between the NIST WTC reports and logical reasoning." (11)

In view of Ketcham's comments, one can see why NIST would have been loathe to expose their findings to scientific review. Indeed, as its final report was not peer-reviewed, its integrity as a robust scientific study is questionable.

Furthermore, *Architects and Engineers for 911 Truth* (which now has nearly three and a half thousand professional members) have attempted to gain access to NIST's WTC7 collapse analysis data, to try and make sense of the seemingly inexplicable collapse (other than by controlled demolition). They have been denied this information, as the director of NIST decided that its release "might jeopardise public safety." Is that possible?

FREE FALL

Probably the greatest problem NIST faced was the abundance of video evidence of the collapse of WTC7.

NIST continually denied that the building collapsed at free-fall speed up to its draft report for public comment in August 2008 (almost 7 years after 9/11) stating that this would have been impossible given its framework that it collapsed due to fire. However, NIST was challenged by a scientific analysis from a mathematician / physics teacher, David Chandler, who stated in a NIST organised public forum that free-fall is "a publicly visible and easily measurable quantity." As a result of Chandler's very public debunking of NIST's analysis, Shyam Sunder was forced to concede in NIST's final report that WTC7 collapsed at free-fall speed for at least 30 metres over 2.25 seconds. In other words, a scientific miracle occurred. The fact that NIST's army of experts could be proven wrong by a mere high school physics teacher shows how flimsy their evidence was. I raise this issue because a physicist reviewing this chapter sought to

undermine the case of free-fall on the basis that Chandler is not a recognised expert / professor. A classic ad hominem attack.

Chandler has succinctly explained NIST's problem here:

"Free fall is an embarrassment to the official story, because free fall is impossible for a naturally collapsing building. In a natural collapse there would be an interaction between the falling and the stationary sections of the building. This interaction would cause crushing of both sections and slowing of the falling section."

(12)

Kinematic analysis of videos taken of the global collapse proves that the north face, the east face and the entire building descended at free-fall acceleration for 2.25 seconds spanning a height of eight stories. (13) Also, see note (115).

NIST'S CHANGING STORY

Initially, NIST suggested that WTC7 collapsed due to a combination of structural damage from debris of the North Tower and a fire intensified by diesel fuel stored in the building. However, in its final report in November 2008, NIST conceded that neither debris nor the stored diesel fuel contributed to the collapse and that it was entirely due to fire.

NIST appears to have needed to minimise its reference to the debris from WTC1 damaging WTC7, because it raised the ugly question of how a gravity-induced collapse of WTC1 could cause a debris field more than 370 feet away? We know that multi-ton steel beams were ejected from the imploding towers, which may have crashed into WTC7, but there is no plausible gravity-related theory that can account for this. As author Abe Whitehouse has pointed out, "if Sunder wishes to claim (as he did) that the structural damage to Building 7 was caused by debris from the North Tower, then he is going to have to jettison the idea of a conventional gravity-driven progressive collapse of the North Tower because falling (rather than explosively propelled) multi-ton slab beams are not likely to have reached Building 7." (14) Perhaps this is why Sunder, in the final NIST report, sought to minimise the impact that debris from WTC1 had on the collapse of WTC 7?

In its report, NIST stated that "the structural damage to WTC 7 was primarily located at the southwest corner and adjacent areas of the west and south faces, on Floors 5 through 17. Severed columns were located between Floors 7 and 17 on the south face (six columns) and the west face (one column) near the southwest corner." (15) However, NIST also claimed that "the core columns and girders were assumed to be structurally undamaged." (16)

NIST's conclusion of fire-induced collapse needs further consideration, as lead investigator Shyam Sunder, is on record as having recognised that fire could not have resulted in the free-fall collapse of a steel-structured building. He then had to accept that free-fall occurred, when confronted by David Chandler's irrefutable proof that this is exactly what did happen for at least 2.25 seconds.

Given that NIST had been compelled, albeit at the last minute, to admit free-fall, one might have thought they would then have reconsidered the previously dismissed possibility of planned demolition. Indeed, Griffin has castigated NIST for ignoring the *Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigations* issued by the National Fire Protection Association. Their protocol states that investigators should consider explosives as a cause whenever there is "high-order damage" which is defined as "characterized by shattering of the structure, producing small, pulverized debris. Walls, roofs and

structural members are splintered or shattered, with the building completely demolished. Debris is thrown great distances, possibly hundreds of feet." (17) Griffin notes that "while the last sentence is not applicable to WTC7, it certainly applies to the Twin Towers, while the first two sentences are directly applicable to WTC7." (18)

HOW INTENSE WERE THE FIRES?

In May 2002, FEMA published the *World Trade Centre Building Performance Study*. FEMA had hypothesized that diesel fuel stored in the lower levels of the building was somehow pumped and discharged through severed pipes and this somehow fed fires for several hours. The report noted that its best hypothesis had "only a low probability of occurrence" and that further investigation was needed. NIST later ruled out the diesel fuel hypothesis.

NIST noted in its final report that "the fires in WTC7 were similar to those that have occurred in several tall buildings where the automatic sprinklers did not function or were not present. These other buildings did not collapse, while WTC7 succumbed to its fires." (19)

The report further noted that "other than initiating the fires in WTC7, the damage from the debris from WTC1 had little effect on initiating the collapse of WTC7." (20)

NIST further stated that a contributory factor to its collapse was that there was an automatic water sprinkler system on floors 46-47 that served floor 21 upwards through a water tank, but the lower floors were dependent on the city's main water supply, which had been cut off due to the earlier collapse of the towers. (21)

Now, this NIST assertion has been challenged by PS Kayley, who presented an independent analysis of the collapse of WTC 7 to the Fire Brigade Union in the UK. (22) He referred to a study by Hughes Associates which noted that:

"In spite of the reported fractures at other locations the pressure along Vesey Street outside WTC7 was maintained above a minimum of 22 psi. Hydrants in the vicinity of WTC7 are quoted as having water pressure sufficient to supply FDNY engines, such that they had the capacity to pressurize interior standpipe and sprinkler piping to support manual firefighting." (23)

Kayley further clarified this issue of the water supply: "The official reasons provided for the firefighters' withdrawal included an alleged lack of water and resources. Water was available in ample volume via the city water mains, and from 3 fire boats located nearby on the river Hudson, each capable of providing up to 18,000 gallons of water per minute. Fire-fighting resources in lower Manhattan were at an all-time high. There were more fire-fighting resources, including, in the face of terrible and unprecedented FDNY loss of life, an army of very willing and eager firefighters wanting to work [as we will see later]." (24)

It has been suggested that WTC7 was inherently unstable, having been built on top of an electricity substation. Significantly, NIST discounted this as a possible contributing factor in its destruction, by stating that "in designating the substation, provision was made for a future office tower by including structural capacity to carry the weight of both the substation and the future high-rise building." (25)

What explanation does NIST offer then for this anomalous collapse of WTC7 at free-fall speed - at least for a substantial part of its collapse and ostensibly due to fire? NIST stated in its final report that "the floors below Floor 7, Floor 10, and the floors above Floor 14 did not heat significantly due to the absence of fire activity. The exterior

columns and core columns also did not heat significantly on the fire floors." (26) As such, the fires on floors 7,8,9,11,12, and 13 were considered to be the cause of the building's collapse.

NIST claimed that the first fire in WTC7 was observed on the 7th floor by a security officer at 10:30am, which supported its critical conclusion that WTC7 had been on fire for a considerable period prior to its collapse, triggered by falling debris . However, NIST refused a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to release the details of its interview with this security officer - which makes such testimony questionable. (27)

NIST has acknowledged that no photographic / video evidence of fire was reported until 12:10pm. "Prior to this time, there was no evidence of fire on the upper floors of WTC7. Between 12:10pm and 2:10pm, the only fires directly or indirectly observed were on floors 19, 22, 29 and 30." (28) Fires were then observed at 12:28pm on the south end of the west face on the 29th and 30th floors. However, NIST noted that "after about 1pm, there was no evidence of fires on these floors on the east, north or west faces of the building." (29)

Prior to 2:08pm, NIST admits that fires were photographed on only three of the floors noted above: 22, 29 and 30. It claims there were eyewitness reports of earlier observed fires but, again, the credibility of this statement is undermined as no names are mentioned and, as Griffin notes, "their existence is not even supported by a footnote referring to interviews with any of them." (30)

Even though NIST claimed that fire caused the collapse of the building, NIST admitted that there was "no evidence of floor-to-floor fire spread." (31) Griffin pointed out "this means that the fires on each of the ten floors with fire had to have been ignited separately by debris from the North Tower." (32) What this also means is that the fires were not sufficiently hot and out of control as to be able to spread further than their confined vicinities. For example, although there were fires on 7,8,9,11,12 and 13th floors, there were no reported fires on the 10th floor. This is surprising in view of it being at the epicentre of all the other fire activity that supposedly caused the collapse. Griffin also challenged the veracity of NIST's account by stating that "to accept NIST's theory of the initiation of the fires, therefore, we must believe that fires were burning on ten floors for an hour and forty minutes before we have objective evidence for even one of them." (33) Just to clarify the timing here, we are referring to the period between the time of the collapse of the North Tower at 10:28am and the first photographic evidence of fires at 12:10pm.

The timing of the fires is important , because the official story is that the fires started due to debris from WTC1 falling on to WTC7 and yet it would appear that there is no demonstrable evidence of any fire in WTC7, apart from that arising out of an initial explosion at approximately 9:30am, (see below) until more than one and a half hours after the collapse of WTC1.

NIST argued that the fires in WTC7 were intense and long-lasting enough to cause thermal expansion of the steel beams and this led to the collapse of the building. However, NIST admitted that "there are no images showing flames or other evidence of active fires above the 14th floor after about 1pm." (34) As Griffin noted, "in other words, these fires (the previously mentioned 22, 29 and 30th floors) all died out in less

than an hour," with no evidence having been visible prior to 12.10pm (35)

NIST's claim that there were long-lasting fires was restricted to floors 7, 8, 9, 11, 12 and 13. Contrary to NIST's claim, no fire was observed on floors 11, 12 or 13 until after 2pm (3 hours and 20 minutes before the collapse of the building) while on floor 8 it was 3.40pm, floor 9 was 4pm (but which was extinguished by 4.40pm) with fire being observed on the 7th floor between 2pm and 4.45pm.

Griffin concluded his discussion about the extent and duration of the fires with the following observation: "Although Shyam Sunder, NIST's lead investigator, claimed at his August 2008 press briefing that fires burned out of control on six floors for about seven hours, NIST's report at best provides evidence that fires on these six floors had endured for durations ranging from 40 minutes to a little over three hours." (36)

The duration of the fires is of great importance. As Griffin noted, "whereas the graphics of NIST's simulated fire show a raging, very hot fire in the northeast corner of the 12th floor at 4pm, photographs supplied by NIST show that the actual fire had already left that corner by 3pm, never to return." (37) One of the central elements in NIST's theory, according to Sunder, in a technical briefing he gave on the final draft on 26/8/08, was that "column 79, which is in the northeast corner, is subjected to the heat from this fire on this particular floor for a pretty long time." Griffin then persuasively challenges Sunder's proposition, stating that "NIST's theory clearly hinges, therefore, on a fire that did not exist." (38) In something of an understatement, attorney and chemical engineer, James Gourley, further highlighted this issue in a letter to NIST, in response to its draft final report: "It appears that NIST's computer fire simulations are not representative at all of the fires actually occurring in WTC7." (39)

All these issues have also been considered by PS Kayley (in the report referred to earlier) who suggested that "a person reading their [NIST] report with no understanding of actual fire travel might easily believe that static locations within WTC7 were subjected to seven hours of stress from uncontrolled fires. However, it is impossible for a fire to exist in one location for a period greater than the length of time taken for the fuel in that area to burn away. As NIST rightly points out, the fuel for the fires was ordinary office combustibles at ordinary combustible load levels, with no use of accelerants, and the spread of fire from combustible to combustible was governed by ordinary fire physics. "On a number of occasions within the official report, the described fires do not match with the photographic evidence. For example, the fires on the 12th floor are observed photographically to have extinguished by 3:40pm yet are reported by NIST in their fire simulation graphics to be highly active between 4:00 pm and 5:00 pm." (40)

Kayley also cited another independent study, in which "an independent Fire Protection Engineer, Scott Grainger, studied the fires and reported them to be scattered and travelling, as they searched for new fuel when existing areas burned out. In his opinion, the fires would have only had sufficient fuel to remain in any one area for no longer than an hour." (41)

Kayley's overall conclusion is therefore that, "in agreement with historical evidence of much more aggressive and prolonged fires in similar buildings, the reported and observed extent of the fire at this incident should not have compromised the structural integrity of Building 7, and certainly not to such an extent that the building's complete failure would be realistically anticipated." (42)

A REFUTATION OF NIST'S THEORY OF HOW WTC7 COLLAPSED

NIST's reliance on a computer simulation model to explain the collapse of WTC7 also raises some serious concerns. According to their model, "fire-induced thermal expansion of the floor system surrounding Column 79 led to the collapse of Floor 13, which triggered a cascade of floor failures...This left Column 79 with insufficient lateral support, and as a consequence, the column buckled eastward, becoming the initial local failure for collapse initiation." (43)

Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth have challenged NIST by showing, in the five points below, how it significantly manipulated its computer simulation in order to create the desired outcome (44):

1) NIST ignored the fact that the fire in the northeast section of Floor 12 had burned out over an hour before it supposedly caused the beams under Floor 13 to expand. 9/11 researcher, Chris Sarns, has pointed out that photographs reveal that the fire on Floor 12 had progressed from the south side of the building to the north side via the interior offices by 3:00 pm and had engulfed the northeast corner by about 3:15 pm. This means that the fire in the area in question (around column 79 and under the beams and girder in the northeast corner) had burned out by about 3:50 pm because, due to burning-up of material combustibles, the fires burned for only about 20 to 30 minutes in any given location.

2) NIST appears to have deliberately omitted shear studs on the one critical girder A2001, in its simulation model, which would have prevented the girder from being pushed off its seat. (45) Shear studs are short, unthreaded bolts welded to the top flange of a steel girder. The shear studs become embedded in the above concrete flooring slab to form a composite beam, which then acts structurally as one beam that is stronger than the steel beam. Structural Engineer, Ronald Brookman, criticised NIST's assumptions, stating that "calculations demonstrating the "walk-off" failure mechanism that hypothetically triggered the progressive collapse are unavailable. This information was placed off limits in 2009 when the NIST Director determined that the release of their calculations "might jeopardize public safety." (46) If released, according to NIST, the calculations "would provide instruction to individuals wanting to learn how to simulate building collapses and how to most effectively destroy large buildings." (47) Quite how this could be, was not addressed by NIST.

Notwithstanding NIST's reticence, Brookman noted that "lateral-torsional buckling of beams and girders implies that all interior girders in the building lacked shear studs providing composite action with the concrete floor slab, and that the lack of shear studs contributed to collapse initiation and extensive floor-framing failures throughout the structure." (48) The NIST analysis shows the girder [A2001] spanning between columns 44 and 79 at floor 13 lacking shear studs, referring to an original structural drawing of the building.

However, another publication, described the fabrication and construction aspects of the steel structure, and clearly showed 30 shear studs equally spaced along this girder at typical office floors including floor 13. (49) The author, John J. Salvarinas, was the project manager for Frankel Steel Limited (one of the two steel fabricators) during the construction of WTC 7.

Brookman concluded that there was clear evidence that NIST chose to ignore original building plans that included shear studs on the girder A2001 on floor 13, as NIST's

"collapse-initiation model and its conclusions would be invalid if there were shear studs on these interior girders." Just to clarify this vitally important point, the shear studs in girder A2001, which according to NIST were missing and would have prevented the structural failure leading to the global collapse, were in fact in place - all 30 of them. (50)

3) During its simulation, NIST inexplicably heated the floor beams but not the floor slab above them, thus causing the floor beams, but not the slab, to expand. The girder and beam temperatures were assumed to be 500°C and 600°C respectively, and the slab was assumed to remain unheated. (51) Furthermore, its simulated model heated the beams to a far higher temperature than even NIST admitted to having occurred on 9/11: "The thermal expansion of the WTC7 floor beams that initiated the probable collapse sequence occurred primarily at temperatures below approximately 400°C (750°F)" (52) According to NIST, their simulation model caused the shear studs connecting the floor beams and the slab to fail, which then allowed the floor beams to move independently of the slab. NIST states that "even though steel and concrete have similar coefficients of thermal expansion, differential thermal expansion occurred between the steel floor beams and concrete slab when the composite floor was subjected to fire." (53) So, to clarify, NIST simulated the heating of the steel beams, but not the concrete, even though it expands in a similar manner to steel and would have inevitably heated up along with the steel. Why would NIST disregard the heating up of the concrete floor slab? As Griffin suggests, "it was only through this chicanery, evidently, that the simulation predicted the failure of the shear studs." (54)

4) NIST ignored the fact that the floor beams could expand no more than 5.75 inches - less than the 6.25 inches required to push the girder off its seat - before shortening, caused by sagging, would overtake expansion.

"A girder was considered to have lost vertical support when its web was no longer supported by the bearing seat. The bearing seat at Column 79 was 11 in. wide. Thus, when the girder end at Column 79 had been pushed laterally at least 5.5 in., it was no longer supported by the bearing seat." (55)

Brookman has questioned NIST's analysis:

"Unrestrained thermal expansion of 52-foot-long beams was blamed for pushing a girder off its bearing seat at column 79. This linear expansion is about 3.5 inches at 400°C, but this is a full two inches short of the 5.5-inch lateral displacement required for loss of vertical support. "Walk off" is the term NIST used to describe the failure mode where a beam or girder moved axially or laterally off its bearing seat losing all vertical support. The walk-off failure was assumed to be complete when lateral displacement of the beam or girder end moved past the point at which the beam web was aligned vertically with the edge of the bearing seat. (NCSTAR 1-9, p. 488.) One of the least "state-of-the-art" features of the complex analysis performed by NIST is the means by which they accounted for the lateral walk-off failure of the girder at column 79, and convincing documentation of this triggering failure mode is non-existent."(56)

Chris Sarns has explained that "to get the shear studs on the floor beams to fail, [not to be confused with the aforementioned girder A2001] NIST had to assume high steel temperatures. It applied the heat in 1½ seconds over the entire northeast part of Floor 13. This faulty method of calculating temperatures, though, does not allow for the reality of heat dispersal or for the inevitable beam sagging." NIST was confronted with a further problem when, as late as 2012, it was obliged to concede that it had made a

mistake in its calculations:

"The bearing seat at Column 79 was 12 in. wide. Thus, when the girder end at Column 79 had been pushed laterally at least 6.25 in., it was no longer supported by the bearing seat." Sarns criticized NIST's attempt to rectify its mistake, stating that "by acknowledging that the seat was in fact 12 inches wide, [rather than its earlier premise of 11 inches,] NIST is admitting that thermal expansion could not have caused the girder to fail; therefore, its hypothesis fails." (57)

Furthermore, as noted by Kayley: "This problem is further compounded for NIST by the findings of Korol et al (2015), in their study, 'Performance-based fire protection of office buildings: A case study on the collapse of WTC 7', which concluded that the beams in question "could not have elongated enough to cause a crucial walk-off of its adjoining girder. This conclusion is valid, whether shear connections were present or not." (58)

5) NIST also omitted web/flange stiffeners that would have prevented the bottom flange of the girder from folding (even if the beams had somehow expanded 6.25 inches). NIST public affairs officer Michael Newman confirmed in email correspondence with researcher David Cole on October 25, 2013, that the web/flange stiffeners on girder A2001 were omitted from NIST's computer model of WTC7. (59) Chris Sarns, noted that "their rather puzzling excuse was that since the web did not buckle, it was not necessary to include the web stiffeners in the graphic or finite element analysis (even though they would have prevented the bottom flange from folding and thus preventing the girder from failing)." (60)

A STRUCTURAL RE-EVALUATION OF THE COLLAPSE

As NIST had refused to disclose the means by which they arrived at their conclusions through their computer simulations, (and which they refused to subject to peer review) the organisation *Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth* funded the Civil and Environmental Engineering Dept at Alaska Fairbanks University to undertake their own computer simulation project in order to scrutinise NIST's conclusions. The Alaska Report, which was thoroughly peer-reviewed, was finally released in March 2020. (61) The report's verbatim summary stated that:

"The principal conclusion of our study is that fire did not cause the collapse of WTC 7 on 9/11, contrary to the conclusions of NIST and private engineering firms that studied the collapse. This conclusion is based upon a number of findings from our different analyses. Together, they show that fires could not have caused weakening or displacement of structural members capable of initiating any of the hypothetical local failures alleged to have triggered the total collapse of the building, nor could any local failures, even if they had occurred, have triggered a sequence of failures that would have resulted in the observed total collapse."

"The secondary conclusion of our study is that the collapse of WTC 7 was a global failure involving the near-simultaneous failure of every column in the building. This conclusion is based primarily upon the finding that the simultaneous failure of all core columns over 8 stories followed 1.3 seconds later by the simultaneous failure of all exterior columns over 8 stories produces almost exactly the behaviour observed in videos of the collapse, whereas no other sequence of failures that we simulated produced the observed behaviour. We cannot completely rule out the possibility that an

alternative scenario may have caused the observed collapse; however, the near-simultaneous failure of every column is the only scenario we identified that was capable of producing the observed behaviour." (62)

"Columns 79, 80, and 81 did not fail at the lower floors of the building. Instead, they needed to have failed at the upper floors of the building all the way to the penthouse. Yet there were no documented fires above Floor 30. Therefore, fire did not cause the collapse of Columns 79, 80, and 81 nor the collapse of the east penthouse. The hypothetical failure of Columns 79, 80, and 81 - the three easternmost core columns - would not trigger a horizontal progression of core column failures." (63)

"Even if we assume the failure of Columns 79, 80, and 81 could lead to the failure of the next row of core columns, the hypothetical failure of Columns 76 to 81 would overload the exterior columns around the southeast corner of the building, rather than overloading the next row of core columns to the west, which would result in the building tipping to the southeast and not in a straight-down collapse." (64)

"Despite simulating a number of hypothetical scenarios, we were unable to identify any progressive sequence of failures that could have taken place on September 11, 2001, and caused a total collapse of the building, let alone the observed straight-down collapse with approximately 2.5 seconds of free fall and minimal differential movement of the exterior." (65)

"Whereas NIST asserted that the differential westward displacement of girder A2001 relative to Column 79 was 5.5 inches and later revised its calculation to 6.25 inches, we found that the westward displacement of girder A2001 relative to Column 79 would have been less than 1 inch, under the fire conditions reported by NIST." (66)

"When girder A2001 is heated to the temperatures assumed by NIST, it expands such that it becomes trapped behind the side plate on the western side of Column 79 as it is pushed to the west by thermally expanding floor beams. This prevents the girder's web from travelling beyond the bearing seat, thus preventing the girder from walking off its seat...NIST, by its own admission, did not include the partial height web stiffeners known to be on girder A2001. In addition to stiffening the web, these stiffeners significantly increase the bending resistance of the flange...we found that the stresses in the girder flange and stiffener would not be sufficient to cause the flange to fail, thus preventing the girder from walking off its seat." (67)

The above analysis completely refutes NIST's theory of fire-induced collapse. For a more detailed analysis of these complex civil engineering issues, I refer the reader to the technical articles section on the *Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth* website, 911speakout.org, as well as the full Alaska Fairbanks report. (68)

Perhaps the reason it took NIST so long to come up with its fire-induced collapse theory was that the team realised the basic implausibility of what they eventually proposed. Indeed, in a March 2006 *New York* magazine interview, NIST lead investigator Dr Shyam Sunder provided some possible insight into why the report was so long delayed. When asked about WTC 7, Dr Sunder said that NIST had some "preliminary hypotheses," then added, "but truthfully, I don't really know. We've had trouble getting a handle on building No 7." (69) This was three and a half years into NIST's WTC investigation.

EVIDENCE OF EXPLOSIONS:

NIST chose not to pursue the possibility that WTC7 was brought down by planned demolition, despite the fact that every previous case of a steel-structured building collapse has been the result of planned demolition. One of the arguments used against pursuing this possibility was that no explosions had been heard and that it had found no evidence of a controlled demolition event, as announced by Shyam Sunders in his opening statement at the NIST Press Briefing on 21/8/08. In its final report, it concluded that "blast events did not occur, and found no evidence whose explanation required invocation of a blast event...There were no witness reports of such a large noise, nor was such a noise heard on the audio tracks of video recordings of the WTC7 collapse." (70)

NIST's statement is demonstrably untrue, as is testified by a number of crucial witness reports. For example, at approximately 9am, Barry Jennings (Deputy Director of the Emergency Services Dept of the New York City Housing Authority) was called to an emergency meeting at Mayor Gulliani's Office of Emergency Management on the 23rd floor of WTC7 following the first plane crashing into the North Tower (WTC1). He arrived at the same time as Michael Hess, who was the chief lawyer for the New York City Corporation. However, the 23rd floor was deserted when they got there, with clear evidence that others had left recently and, in a hurry, (including half-drunk cups of coffee with "the smoke still coming off the coffee" as Jennings noted). (71)

Jennings confirmed that he was aware the second plane hit the North Tower, at 9:03am while they were still on the 23rd floor. (72)

Jennings and Hess immediately decided to leave (having been advised to do so immediately through a phone call made by Jennings) but were unable to use the lift system as it had (for some reason) stopped working. They instead went down a staircase until they reached the 6th floor, when Jennings stated "there was an explosion beneath me, and the landing gave way. I was left there hanging". (73)

Michael Hess confirmed Jennings's account when he gave an interview to Frank Ucciardo of *UPN 9 News* at approximately 11:57am on the street, a few blocks away from WTC7. He stated that "when all the power went out in the building, another gentleman and I walked down to the 8th floor (sic) where there was an explosion and we were trapped with smoke, thick smoke, all around us for about an hour and a half." (74)

Assuming they were trapped for an hour and a half and that it took around thirty minutes for Hess to reach the street, seven blocks away from WTC7 where he was interviewed, the explosion probably happened no later than 10am. However, as they left the 23rd floor shortly after 9.03am, we may assume that they reached the 6th floor no later than 9.30am, even allowing for a very slow descent, which is improbable as Jennings stated in a televised BBC interview on *The Conspiracy Files* that "I wanted to get out of that building in a hurry, so I started, instead of taking one step at a time, I'm jumping landings." (75)

Hess talked of being trapped for an hour and a half, although Jennings recalled it differently and referred to being trapped for several hours. Later, New York City Mayor Giuliani and NIST insisted that the two men weren't rescued until after 12 pm, (the time which they needed to establish in order to prove that it wasn't an explosion in the stairway, but rather falling debris from WTC1 following its collapse at 10.28am, which caused them to become trapped). However, this timeline is palpably inaccurate, as

shown by the timing of Hess's interview on UPN.

Even though he was not present, Giuliani's version of what happened deserves closer scrutiny. He stated that Michael Hess "had gone to the 23rd floor to look for us. Everyone else in the building had already evacuated, and the elevators were inoperable, so Mike began walking down the stairs. When he got to the 8th floor, Tower 1 - the North Tower - collapsed, part of it falling on top of the southern part of 7 World Trade Center. Luckily Mike was in the northern section of the building." Giuliani then goes on to say that joking with Hess months later he'd say, "Mike, didn't you suspect something was amiss when you got to the 23rd floor and the only person ...was some guy from Housing? Didn't you and the other guy wonder where the hell everyone was, instead of sitting there for hours?" (76)

The problem with Giuliani's account, is that both stairwells in WTC7 were on the north side of the building, while the debris from WTC1 hit the south side of the building 150 feet away from the stairwell. As Abe Whitehouse observed, "and this must be added to the more than 370 feet that separates the south side of Building 7 from the North Tower? How did the debris that allegedly was falling on the south side of Building 7 trap Jennings and Hess on the north, or back side, at the sixth [or 8th] floor of that building?" (77)

In fact, Jennings and Hess were on the stairway on the north-east end of WTC7, whereas the debris from WTC1 hit the south-west side of the building. Therefore, the story told by Giuliani and later championed by NIST is completely implausible, as is the idea that they were sitting around on the 23rd floor for hours, as Giuliani claimed. His version of events is also directly contradicted by Jennings, who is on record as saying that "No. What happened was, when we made it back to the 8th floor, both buildings were still standing." (78)

While Hess stated that he heard an explosion, after which they were trapped for an hour and a half, (79) Jennings stated that they were trapped for several hours before being rescued at approximately 11:30am. The timing is important as the evidence of both these senior employees of New York City Corporation indicate that they heard a massive explosion before the collapse of the North Tower. Furthermore, as Jennings confirmed, "it was definitely under us...the explosion was beneath me." He also mentioned that the Fire Dept made two separate attempts to rescue them but were thwarted. As Jennings explained it: "Why? Because Building Tower One fell, then Tower Two fell" causing firefighters to flee at those times, before returning to rescue them. (80)

This further indicates that the explosion they experienced on the staircase was *before* the collapse of either of the Twin Towers. Jennings further stated that while trapped in WTC7, "all this time I'm hearing all kinds of explosions...For me to see what I saw was unbelievable". (81)

If NIST and Giuliani's timeline was accurate, then Jennings and Hess would have spent at least an hour on the vacated 23rd floor before descending the stairway (as Giuliani claimed) or would have taken an hour and twenty minutes to descend 17 floors. Such behaviour seems most unlikely, especially as Jennings had stated that when they got to the 23rd floor and realised "only me and Mr Hess was up there. After that I called several individuals, one individual told me to leave and to leave right away." (82) As such, Giuliani's comment above about joking with Hess about them staying on the 23rd floor for hours appears to have little foundation in reality.

Unfortunately, Barry Jennings died under mysterious circumstances in August 2008,

just days before NIST released the draft version of its final report on WTC7, so he was unable to challenge the official story. Two months later, on 26/10/08, the BBC aired a revised version of *The Conspiracy Files*, with Michael Hess now interviewed as a key witness, even though his existence had not even been recognised in the earlier show in July, referred to previously. He strenuously confirmed the NIST and Giuliani narrative, stating that he now knew that there had been no explosions, but rather "my position, and I'm very firm on it, there were no explosions" and that what he thought had been so, he now knew to have been the sound of debris from WTC1 crashing into WTC7. Griffin has challenged Hess's changed story asking, "then why did the debris from the North Tower, which struck the *south* part of WTC7, cause their stairwell on the north side of the building, to become so blocked?" (83)

It is reasonable to ask why it had taken Hess seven years to come to his new startling realisation. Certainly, with the death of Jennings, he no longer had to worry about being challenged over his volte-face. Had he done so while Jennings was alive, it could have created unwanted media interest. Equally, could his volte-face also be in any way related to the fact that in 2002, Hess was a founding partner and vice chairman of former New York Mayor Giuliani's new consulting business, Giuliani Partners LLC? Or was this just coincidental?

Griffin raised another suspicious issue arising out of Jennings' untimely death. When Dylan Avery, producer of the 9/11 documentary, *Loose Change*, hired a private investigator to ascertain the circumstances of his death he received a message the following day, stating:

"Due to some of the information I have uncovered, I have determined that this is a job for the police. I have refunded your credit card. Please do not contact me again about this individual." It should be noted, however, that his family deny any foul play in his death.

One final point in relation to the evidence of Jennings and Hess is that they testified to NIST in 2004, but their testimony was never released and FOIA requests have been declined. "NIST declined one request on the basis of a provision allowing for exemption from FOIA disclosure as the information was considered "not directly related to the building failure." (84) What was NIST's motivation in blocking what seems like a reasonable and legitimate request?

FURTHER EVIDENCE OF EXPLOSIONS

A number of witnesses at the scene of WTC7 reported explosions when it collapsed. One of them was NYPD officer, Craig Bartmer, who walked around the building shortly before it fell. He stated that "I saw a hole. I didn't see a hole bad enough to knock a building down, though...Yeah there was definitely fire in the building, but I didn't hear any creaking or indication that it was going to come down. And all of a sudden...you're hearing boom, boom, boom, boom, boom. I think I know an explosion when I hear it...Yeah it had some damage to it, but nothing like what they're saying...Nothing to account for what we saw...I am shocked at the story we've heard about it to be honest." (85)

Kevin McPadden, a first responder and emergency medical technician, said "and then it was like another two, three seconds, you heard explosions. Like BA-BOOOOOM. And its like a distinct sound - BA-BOOOOOM. And you felt a rumble in the ground like, almost like you wanted to grab onto something. That to me, I knew that was an explosion. There was no doubt in my mind." (86)

Another witness, Peter Demarco, a reporter from the *New York Daily News*, said: "There was a rumble. The building's top row of windows popped out. Then all the windows on the 39th floor popped out. Then the 38th floor. Pop! Pop! Pop! was all you heard until the building sunk into a rising cloud of grey." (87)

These eyewitness accounts are corroborated by *MSNBC* video footage of reporter, Ashleigh Banfield, filmed several blocks north of WTC 7. In the video, she hears a loud sound, turns her attention to WTC 7, and says, "Oh my god.... This is it." About seven seconds after she hears the loud sound, WTC 7 collapsed. (88)

David Chandler has pointed out in the video *Sound Evidence for Explosions* that: "There were two blasts, followed by seven more regularly spaced all in two and a half seconds. Craig Bartmer's testimony may come to mind: "The whole time you're hearing 'thume, thume, thume, thume, thume'.... When we hear the sharp, regular series of sounds in the background, the building has not yet started to fall. When we hear the reporter say, "This is it," the building has not yet started to fall.... The blasts we heard occurred seconds before the building started to fall." (89)

NIST ignored all eyewitness reports and completely discounted the possibility of explosives being responsible for the collapse of WTC7. The report concluded that "the noise level at a distance of 1/2 mile would have been on the order of 130dB to 140dB.... People on the street would have heard 9 lb of RDX go off a mile away."

The report also contended that preparations for a blast scenario would have been almost impossible to carry out on any floor in the building without detection. (To be discussed later in the chapter.)

NIST's assertion concerning the noise that would have been heard from explosives is a classic straw man argument, which is constructed and then refuted to give the impression that an opponent's argument has been defeated, when in fact the refuted argument is not that of the opponent.

Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth have challenged NIST over the issue of RDX, stating that "proponents of the controlled demolition hypothesis have seldom, if ever, argued that a high explosive such as RDX was used to destroy WTC 7. Rather, the leading hypothesis is that an explosive form of thermite called "nano-thermite" - possibly in combination with some form of explosives and other incendiaries - was used to destroy WTC. Using nano-thermite, instead of the more powerful RDX, would allow a perpetrator to demolish a building while concealing the fact that he had planted explosives. Even though NIST was fully aware of nano-thermite technology, and it knew that the leading hypothesis of controlled demolition involved some form of thermite, (as evidenced by its FAQ's), it selected a "straw man" substance - RDX - for its hypothetical blast event. Thus, its analyses of the window breakage and noise associated with RDX are irrelevant. This is not to say that some amount of RDX was not involved, but not the amount that NIST estimated." (90)

Furthermore, the eyewitness evidence noted above, contradicts NIST's claim that explosions were not heard by eyewitnesses, or captured on video. As for a forensic study to disprove the use of explosives, Catherine Fletcher (Freedom of Information Act Officer for NIST) stated that "it found no corroborating evidence to suggest that explosives were used to bring down the building...[However], NIST did not test for the presence of explosive residue." In short, NIST didn't find any evidence because they were not looking for any.

TELL-TALE SQUIBS AGAIN

As we saw in the previous chapter on the collapse of the Twin Towers, there was clear evidence of explosive "squibs," and such phenomena are also clearly visible in the video footage of WTC 7's collapse: (91)

A series of explosions can be seen rippling *up* the right side of the building, just as it is beginning to collapse. We saw in chapter 1 that NIST argued that these squibs (or "puffs of smoke" as Shyam Sunder described them) were caused by compressed air. However, compressed air seeking to find a point of release would cause the squibs to ripple downwards, not upwards. What is also apparent from the video footage is that both the northern and eastern side of the building remained completely undamaged by fire and that, in the absence of a planned demolition, any collapse of the building should therefore have been asymmetrical, which it clearly was not.

FOREKNOWLEDGE OF THE COLLAPSE OF WTC7

By mid-afternoon on September 11, 2001, it was common knowledge in Lower Manhattan that WTC 7 was going to collapse. The degree of foreknowledge of its collapse several hours beforehand is extraordinary, especially as no steel-structured building anywhere in the world had ever before collapsed as a result of fire. How could so many people have been so certain that WTC7 would collapse?

There is no doubt that some observers had foreknowledge. Ashleigh Banfield's "this is it" moment, mentioned above, refers to what she had heard earlier: "I've heard several reports from several different officers now that that is the building that is going to go down next." Some media outlets even announced its collapse while it was still standing. The BBC reporter, Jane Standley, reported its collapse 23 minutes in advance, with viewers able to see the building still standing behind her. (92) Aaron Brown on CNN announced its impending collapse seventy minutes before the event.

As Griffin has observed, "the premature announcements were not insignificant, because they revealed in a dramatic and memorable fashion the fact that someone knew in advance that Building 7 was going to collapse." (93)

The forecast that the building was doomed appears to have come from Mayor Gulliani's Office of Emergency Management. How could such a forecast have been made so far in advance and by whom?

FIREFIGHTER'S EVIDENCE

New York City Fire Chief Frank Fellini is on record as stating that "we were concerned that the fire on several floors and the missing steel would result in the building collapsing" (94), while Fire Captain Ray Goldbach said, "we made a decision to take all of our units out of WTC 7 because there was a potential for collapse." (95)

It is plain that the decision to abandon WTC7 was made a long time before its collapse. For example, Fireman Vincent Masa, stated that, "we were waiting for seven to come down...the whole time while we were waiting - there were hours that went by." (96)

Some firefighters were unable to understand why they were not being allowed to fight the fires. When Fire Commissioner Thomas Van Essen was making his way through hundreds of firefighters who were being held away from the WTC site, he heard complaints like "it could take days for that building to come down" and "why don't they let us in there?" (97) Deputy Fire Chief Nick Visconti recounted one firefighter saying to him, "that building is never coming down, that didn't get hit by a plane, why isn't

someone in there putting the fire out?" (98)

Graeme MacQueen, (retired Professor of Religious Studies at McMaster University, Ontario) conducted a thorough review of the statements made by firefighters in their oral histories (as discussed in Chapter 1). He found that: "In the FDNY oral histories, there are about 60 FDNY members who report hearing warnings of [Building] Seven's collapse. Of these 60 cases, only two have an unknown degree of certainty. Thirty-one cases qualify as "definite" (Seven is thought definitely to be coming down), while 27 qualify as "indefinite" (Seven might come down). In 27 cases, time could not be determined. Of the remaining cases, 17 warnings were received less than two hours before collapse, while ten were received two or more hours before collapse and six appear to have been received four or more hours before collapse." (99)

MacQueen's research refutes the official claim that the FDNY witnesses saw with their own eyes that Seven was severely damaged and on that basis concluded that it was at risk of total collapse. On the contrary, his research shows that "the great majority of witnesses accepted that Seven was going to collapse because they were told that it was going to collapse." (100)

A number of high ranking FDNY individuals, such as Fellini and Goldbach above, suggest in their testimonies in the Oral Histories that they concluded on the basis of their own observation that the building was going to collapse. Why would they have thought this, when no steel-structured building had ever done so before?

MacQueen made a key point in his analysis that, "however unexpected the first collapse may have been, once it occurred, any confidence that the second tower was immune to collapse was naturally destroyed. Through the same process, a collapse of a 47-story steel-framed high-rise, such as normally would have seemed beyond the pale, was by late afternoon no longer surprising." (101)

MacQueen also noted that "many of those FDNY members on the scene who had already experienced the horrors of the earlier part of the day were in shock or otherwise unable to function normally. We perceive a high degree of exhaustion and resignation in their accounts." Included in the testimonies are the following: "At that point we were just I think, everybody, the emotions were fried." (102) They had seen chaos and horrors, and over three hundred of their companions were dead. They felt like a "defeated army;" they felt this was "just one of those wars we were just going to lose." Paramedic Manuel Delgado's response to Seven's collapse is indicative of this mood: "They said it's collapsing, and I didn't even give a shit anymore." (103)

HOW COULD WTC7 HAVE BEEN RIGGED FOR DEMOLITION

As to how saboteurs could have gained such unrestricted access to WTC7 (as well as the Twin Towers), one intriguing piece of circumstantial evidence is that Marvin Bush, brother of the president, was a principal of Stratesec from 1993 to June 2000, a company that provided security for the entire World Trade Centre complex (104). During this period, Statesec installed a new electronic security system. Hard though it may be to imagine, is it conceivable that the President's own brother was complicit in such a conspiracy? It may also be significant that the Secret Service, the CIA and Rumsfeld's Department of Defence all occupied considerable floor space in the building. Covert access to WTC7 would, therefore, have been relatively straightforward for any of these three state security agencies.

Kevin Ryan has provided further insight by tracing the close link that both Vice President Cheney and Defence Secretary Rumsfeld had to WTC7. One company, Salomon Smith Barney (SSB) occupied all but ten of the 47 floors in the building. SSB

even shared the earlier discussed 23rd floor with the New York City OEM. What is interesting is that Donald Rumsfeld was the chairman of the SSB advisory board, and Dick Cheney was a board member. Rumsfeld served as chairman of the SSB advisory board since its inception in 1999, but had to resign in 2001 when he was confirmed as George W Bush's defence secretary. Cheney resigned at the same time when he became vice president. (105) It therefore seems incongruous that when Rumsfeld was later questioned about Building 7, he pleaded ignorance of its existence. (106)

How feasible would it have been to plant explosives inside WTC7? Kevin Ryan is a chemist who was formerly a manager at Underwriters Laboratories until he was sacked for challenging NIST. He has suggested that this would have presented little difficulty, as "spray-on nano-thermite materials may have been applied to the steel components of the WTC buildings, underneath the upgraded fireproofing." (107)

Jim Hoffman has also stated that explosive devices "could have been disguised as or concealed within legitimate equipment.... Numerous such possibilities are afforded by the properties of energetic materials." He further argued that "any such job would have been far simpler than the structural retrofit of the CitiCorp Tower" that the owners had undertaken in 1978 (after learning that the building could be destroyed by a hurricane) without their tenants knowing anything about it. "This was done by carrying out structural reinforcement work at night and at weekends." So, it is quite conceivable that WTC 1,2 and 7 could have been set up for demolition with the occupants being completely unaware that anything untoward was going on. (108)

WHY WOULD ANYONE WANT TO DESTROY WTC7?

Having established the potential opportunity and means for the destruction of WTC7, what about the motive? One may have been the destruction of incriminating evidence relating to the investigation of corporate fraud, being investigated by the Security and Exchange Commission, which had its headquarters in WTC7. With the destruction of this building, a lot of the evidence of corporate crime involving the financial elite was immediately destroyed.

Bearing this in mind, is it possible that Flight 93 had originally been intended to be crashed into WTC7? If so, the plan failed because the departure of Flight 93 was delayed for 42 minutes until 8.42am. As a result of the delay, the Ohio fighters (see chapter 6) had established control over the skies of New York by 9.25am. The hijackers may not have had enough time to take control of the plane and execute their original plan. There is also another possibility...

"WHY DON'T THEY LET US IN THERE," ASKED FIREFIGHTERS?

The lack of any serious effort to tackle the fire at WTC7 adds credence to the theory about the SEC investigation cover-up. As mentioned earlier, some of the firefighters near WTC7 were asking "why don't they let us in there", while another observed comment was "why isn't someone in there putting the fire out?" Such questions were perfectly reasonable given that no steel-structured building had ever collapse before due to fire and there were only relatively small fires reported inside the building.

Let us assume, for the sake of argument, that a decision had been made to orchestrate the collapse of WTC 7 in order to cover up corporate crimes noted above and for this demolition to coincide with the collapse of the twin towers. Barry Jennings and Michael Hess had both described hearing (and seeing the evidence of) explosions at approximately 9:30am. Based on their accounts, is it conceivable that the plan was to

bring down WTC7 at the time of the collapse of the other two buildings, in which case nobody would have been any the wiser as to what caused its collapse. The reason being that had it collapsed around 10-11am, nothing would have been witnessed due to the dust clouds (and ensuing chaos) from the accompanying collapse of the Twin Towers. Unfortunately for the planners, something went wrong with the detonations, which left the building still standing (despite the explosions that Jennings referred to). It then became necessary for the demolition team to re-enter the building to recalibrate the explosive charges that had malfunctioned, so it was obviously necessary to remove all the firefighters, to ensure they did not witness what was taking place. Clearly this is just a theory, but it would certainly explain what happened.

In a further twist, Ryan has observed that, "there was a meeting scheduled at WTC7 the morning of 9/11 that included explosive disposal units from the US military. The Demolition-Ordnance Disposal Team from the Army's Fort Monmouth happened to have a meeting in WTC7 that very morning with the building's owner, Larry Silverstein...to discuss terrorism prevention efforts." (109)

A QUESTION MARK CONCERNING LARRY SILVERSTEIN

Finally, this chapter would not be complete without mentioning the curious words of the leasehold owner of WTC7, Larry Silverstein. In the *PBS* programme, *America Rebuilds*, which aired in September 2002, he recounted that, "I remember getting a call from the fire department commander, telling me that they were not sure they were gonna be able to contain the fire and I said "we've had such terrible loss of life, maybe the smartest thing to do is pull it. And they made that decision to pull and we watched the building collapse." (110) According to the final NIST report "at approximately 2.30pm, FDNY gave the order to forego firefighting activity and for personnel to withdraw to a safe distance from the building." (111) However, when Silverstein was questioned by someone from the "We Are Change" group in March 2008, he said that the decision to "pull" was made "around 3:30 or 4pm." (112)

At issue is Silverstein's choice of words, because the expression to "pull" is considered by some people in the controlled demolition business to be a term for bringing down a building. This discussion with the fire department commander, according to Silverstein's timing, appears to have taken place after the evacuation, rather than before, as his statement on *America Rebuilds* would imply. Silverstein claimed that he was referring to pulling the firefighters from the building, as opposed to pulling the building down. I'm inclined to give Silverstein the benefit of the doubt both in relation to his use of the word "pull" and his apparent mistake in stating that this decision was made (albeit over 6 years after the event) over an hour after the building had been evacuated. Nonetheless, there remains a significant problem with his statement that he remembered getting a call from the fire department commander.

Unfortunately for Silverstein, the NYC Fire Department commander on 9/11 was Chief Daniel Nigro. who has confirmed that he did not speak to Silverstein on that day: "I am well aware of Mr. Silverstein's statement, but to the best of my recollection, I did not speak to him on that day, and I do not recall anyone telling me that they did either. That doesn't mean he could not have spoken to someone from FDNY; it just means that I am not aware of it." (113)

To date, not a single member of the FDNY appears to have corroborated Silverstein's story. However, it should be noted that it would not have been possible to prepare WTC7 for demolition during that day, as it would have taken a considerable period, possibly weeks, to complete such work. Notwithstanding the plausible denial of

Silverstein, his statement remains suspicious because of the favourable insurance settlement following its collapse. As noted on Wikipedia: "he and his insurers became embroiled in a multi-year dispute over whether the attacks had constituted one event or two under the terms of the insurance policy, which provided for a maximum of \$3.55 billion coverage per event. Following the September 11, 2001, attacks, Silverstein sought to collect double the face amount (\$7.1 billion) on the basis that the two separate airplane strikes into two separate buildings constituted two occurrences within the meaning of the policies. A settlement was reached in 2007, with insurers agreeing to pay out \$4.55 billion for the attacks on the twin towers, which was not as much as Silverstein had sought." As for WTC7, "by May of 2002, Industrial Risk Insurers (IRI), the insurance company for the original structure, decided not to contest Silverstein's claim of \$861 million." (114)

Even more fortuitously, he was lucky to survive the attack on the North Tower, as noted on Wikipedia: "Silverstein has said in interviews that he usually spent his mornings in breakfast meetings at Windows on the World on top of the World Trade Centre North Tower, and with new tenants in the building. However, the morning of 9/11, his wife insisted that he attend a medical appointment. Due to the appointment, he escaped almost certain death." However, there is only one problem with Silverstein's story here as he was due to meet at WTC7 at 8am that morning with the Fort Monmouth Army Team mentioned above. Until such time that Silverstein is compelled to give evidence under oath, any part he may have played in the collapse of WTC7 remains conjecture.

To conclude: the above analysis provides powerful evidence that WTC7 was brought down by controlled demolition. Perhaps the final words on the building's collapse should be left with *CBS News* anchor man, Dan Rather, who, shortly after its collapse, stated on air that what he saw was "reminiscent of...when a building was deliberately destroyed by well-placed dynamite to knock it down."

NOTES FOR CHAPTER 2

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- 6) David Ray Griffin, *The Mysterious Collapse of World Trade Center 7*, Arris Books, 2012, p48
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- 9) https://www.ae911truth.org/images/The_NIST_Analyses_-_A_Close_Look_at_WTC_7.pdf (p22)
- 10) Abe Whitehouse, *Framing 9/11, 3rd Edition*, Bilquees Press, 2018, p80

- 11) <https://www.europhysicsnews.org/articles/ePN/pdf/2016/05/ePN2016-47-5-6.pdf> (p45 of pdf)
- 12) <https://www.ae911truth.org/evidence/technical-articles/articles-by-ae911truth/101-free-fall-and-building-7-on-9-11>
- 13) Chandler, "WTC 7 in Freefall—No Longer Controversial" is located at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rVCDpL4Ax7I>. Chandler, "WTC 7: NIST Finally Admits Freefall (Part I)" is located at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eDvNS9iMjzA>. Chandler, "WTC 7: NIST Finally Admits Freefall (Part II)" is located at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iXTlaqXsm4k>. Chandler, "WTC 7: NIST Finally Admits Freefall (Part III)" is located at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v3mudruFzNw>
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- 15) NIST 1A p50
- 16) NCSTAR 1-9, p182
- 17) National Fire Protection Association, *Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigations* 2001 edition, Section 18.3.2
- 18) Griffin, p28
- 19) <https://nvlpubs.nist.gov/nistpubs/Legacy/NCSTAR/ncstar1a.pdf> (pxxxv)
- 20) Ibid, pxxxvii
- 21) Ibid, pxxxvii
- 22) [Copy of SuddenBuildingCollapse-ANewRisk.pdf - Google Drive](#)
- 23) *ibid*, p12 - quoting from report by Hughes Associates (Fire Science and Engineering) - Analysis of the Fire Aspects of the World Trade Centre Terrorist Attacks, July 2002: see p 409 in PDF below: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3tnVLIhCdjSUVI4TjUwUkhDckE/view>
- 24) *Ibid*, p6
- 25) <https://nvlpubs.nist.gov/nistpubs/Legacy/NCSTAR/ncstar1a.pdf> (p1)
- 26) NIST NCSTAR 1-9, p394
- 27) Griffin p166 and 306
- 28) NIST NCSTAR, p194
- 29) <https://nvlpubs.nist.gov/nistpubs/Legacy/NCSTAR/ncstar1a.pdf> (p19)
- 30) Griffin, p167
- 31) NIST NCSTAR 1-9: p341
- 32) Griffin, p151
- 33) *ibid*, p167
- 34) NIST NCSTAR 1-9: p197
- 35) Griffin p170
- 36) *ibid*, p177
- 37) *Ibid*, p188
- 38) *Ibid*, p188
- 39) *Ibid*, p187 and p309
- 40) See note 22 above, p9
- 41) *Ibid*, p9
- 42) *Ibid*, p9
- 43) NIST NCSTAR 1A, page 22
- 44) <https://www.ae911truth.org/evidence/the-official-theory-wtc7>
- 45) NIST public affairs officer Michael Newman confirmed in email correspondence

with researcher David Cole on October 25, 2013, that the web/flange stiffeners on girder A2001 were omitted from NIST's computer model of WTC 7.

46) Gallagher, Patrick (2009), "Findings Regarding Public Safety Information", NIST, July 9.

47) Kollar-Kotelly, Colleen (2011), "Memorandum Opinion, Michael Quick v. U.S. Dept. of Commerce, NIST", Civil Action 09-02064 (CKK), U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, April 7.

48) McAllister et al. 2008 ("Analysis of Structural Response of WTC 7 to Fire and Sequential Failures Leading to Collapse" Therese P. McAllister, Robert MacNeill, Omer Erbay, Andrew Sarawit, Mehdi Zarghamee, Steven Kirkpatrick and John Gross Journal of Structural Engineering, January 2012, Vol. 138, No. 1) shows the girder [A2001] spanning between columns 44 and 79 at floor 13 lacking shear studs, consistent with Cantor's (1985) structural drawing S-8 revision H.

49) Salvarinas, John J. (1986), "Seven World Trade Centre, New York, Fabrication and Construction Aspects", Canadian Structural Engineering Conference Proceedings - 1986, Canadian Steel Construction Council, Willowdale, Ontario, pp. 11-1 to 11-44.

50) <http://www.journalof911studies.com/resources/Brookman-Vol-33-Oct2012.pdf> (p3)

51) NCSTAR 1-9, Vol. 1, page 349, PDF p393

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55) NCSTAR 1-9, Vol. 2, p527

56) Brookman: https://www.ae911truth.org/images/The_NIST_Analyses_-_A_Close_Look_at_WTC_7.pdf (p19)

57) <https://www.ae911truth.org/evidence/technical-articles/articles-by-ae911truth/317-fraud-exposed-in-nist-wtc-7-reports-series>

58) *Challenge Journal of Structural Mechanics July 2015:* file:///C:/Users/JM/Documents/pdf/36-100-1-PB.pdf

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60) See note 57 above

61) <https://files.wtc7report.org/file/public-download/A-Structural-Reevaluation-of-the-Collapse-of-World-Trade-Center-7-March2020.pdf>

62) Ibid, p3 or p16 pdf

63) Ibid, p109 or p122 pdf

64) Ibid, p110 or p123 pdf

65) Ibid

66) Ibid, p4 or p16 pdf

67) ibid

68) <https://ine.uaf.edu/wtc7>

69) <https://nymag.com/news/features/16464/>

70) <https://nvlpubs.nist.gov/nistpubs/Legacy/NCSTAR/ncstar1a.pdf> (pxxxvi-ii) p39 pdf

71) Griffin, p89

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74) Ibid, p84

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76) Rudolph Giuliani, *Leadership*, Thorndike Press, 2002, p53-55 in the large print version

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- 78) Griffin, p89
- 79) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BUfiLbXMa64>
- 80) Griffin, p90
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- 82) Ibid, p88
- 83) Ibid, p103
- 84) David Ray Griffin and Elizabeth Woodworth, *9/11 Unmasked*, Olive Branch Press, 2018, p249 note 219
- 85) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uso9sCOakEQ&list=PLT6H-ZDVDppjxRX_zEGY3sXvcgeIdRM5Q&index=5&t=0s
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- 87) Chris Bull and Sam Erman : *At Ground Zero: Young Reporters Who Were There Tell Their Stories*, Thunder's Mouth Press, 2002, p97
- 88) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ERhoNYj9_fg&feature=youtu.be&t=2m6s
- 89) Ibid
- 90) <https://www.ae911truth.org/evidence/the-official-theory-wtc7>
- 91) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zRpCwKRnL1M&feature=emb_title
- 92) <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/xe414e>
- 93) Griffin, p116
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https://static01.nyt.com/packages/pdf/nyregion/20050812_WTC_GRAPHIC/9110217.PDF
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- 96) Ibid
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- 99) Graeme MacQueen, *Waiting for Seven: WTC Collapse Warnings in the FDNY Oral Histories*, 11 January 2008.
<http://www.journalof911studies.com/volume/200701/MacQueenWaitingforSeven.pdf> (p4)
- 100) Ibid, p5
- 101) Ibid, p8
- 102) Zachary Goldfarb, FDNY oral history 9110145, p46.
- 103)
https://static01.nyt.com/packages/pdf/nyregion/20050812_WTC_GRAPHIC/9110004.PDF (p24)
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- 105) Kevin Ryan, *Another Nineteen*, Microbloom, 2013
- 106) <https://www.collective-evolution.com/2016/03/24/this-is-nuts-donald-rumsfeld-on-911-building-7-how-is-this-possible/>
- 107) Griffin, p59
- 108) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Citigroup_Center#Engineering_crisis_of_1978
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- 110) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ZlmHvd_RZU
- 111) NIST NCSTAR 1-9, p303
- 112) <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2p24kr>
- 113) <http://forums.randi.org/showpost.php?p=3440364&postcount=1>
- 114) <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/145016763.pdf>: page 9
- 115) "NIST's 2.25 sec figure is part of a deceptive manipulation of the data to claim a

gradual transition into freefall. I did a very clear measurement: instantaneous transition from complete support to complete freefall which lasted for 2.5 seconds." Email from David Chandler

CHAPTER 3

THE PENTAGON

WHAT WERE CHENEY AND RUMSFELD UP TO?

Before trying to make sense of what happened at the Pentagon on 9/11, let's look at what Donald Rumsfeld and Dick Cheney were doing that morning. According to the 9/11 Commission, Cheney didn't reach the White House Presidential Emergency Operating Centre (PEOC) underground bunker until nearly 10am, stating that "there is conflicting evidence about when the Vice President arrived in the shelter conference room (PEOC). We have concluded, from the available evidence, that the Vice President arrived in the room shortly before 10:00, perhaps at 9:58." (1) David Ray Griffin, a prominent 9/11 researcher and author, has described this as "clearly false and cannot be considered anything other than an outright lie." (2) Why is it so important one might ask? Simply this, that according to Norman Mineta, Secretary of Transportation, he joined Cheney and others in the bunker at about 9:20am. In his videoed evidence to the Commission, which they chose to ignore in their final report, he testified under oath that "during the time that the airplane was coming into the Pentagon, there was a young man who would come in and say to the Vice President, "the plane is 50 miles out...the plane is 30 miles out. And when it got down to "the plane is 10 miles out", the young man also said to the Vice President, "do the orders still stand?" And the Vice President turned and whipped his neck around and said, "of course the orders still stand. Have you heard anything to the contrary?" (3)

As no attempt was made to shoot down this approaching plane, there is no plausible alternative to the view that Cheney knew a plane was approaching and made no attempt to change the "stand down" order that would appear to have been in place. Similarly, it seems clear that the Commission disregarded Mineta's evidence as it indicated complicity on Cheney's behalf in this regard. The young man Mineta referred to was Naval Aide, Douglas Cochrane, who gave evidence to the Commission on 16/4/04, but all details of that interview are classified. (4) Could it be that Cochrane's evidence confirmed that of Mineta and was classified for the very same reason that Mineta's evidence was not included in the final report? What is not clear is if it was the air force that was being stood down, **or the Pentagon's anti-missile batteries, which are believed to be programmed to destroy any aircraft entering the Pentagon's airspace, except for any aircraft with a US military transponder.**

A further nail in the coffin of the 9/11 Commission's desperate attempt to clear Cheney of a stand down order was inadvertently provided by the BBC in its documentary *Clear the Skies*, shown in September 2002. During this interview, Mineta confirmed the evidence he would later give to the Commission, but also most significantly added (at 17 min 40 secs), "so then, someone came in and said, Mister Vice-President, there's been an explosion at the Pentagon."

Mineta's evidence here confirms that he had not been referring to Flight 93 as the Commission tried to justify, but that his previous statement had been in relation to Flight 77, thereby providing seemingly indisputable evidence of Cheney having issued, or at least being complicit with, a stand down order. Mineta stated very clearly when questioned by Lee Hamilton (9/11 Commission Vice Chairman) that there was no information about Flight 93 in the PEOC, until after it had crashed and so he couldn't have been referring to that plane:

MR. HAMILTON: With respect to Flight 93, what type of information were you and

the vice president receiving about that flight?

MR. MINETA: The only information we had at that point was when it crashed. (5)

It is important to confirm Cheney's time of arrival in the PEOC in view of the 9/11 Commission timeline. Richard Clarke described at the beginning of *Against All Enemies* how, when he arrived at the White House, "I looked at the clock on the dashboard. It was 9:03am." (6) He then described "bursting in on the Vice President and Condoleezza Rice, [who told him that the] Secret Service wants us to go to the bomb shelter." Clarke then added that "Cheney began to gather up his papers. In his outer office the normal secret service presence was two agents. As I left, I counted eight, ready to move to the PEOC." (7)

Rice then joined Clarke in the White House Situation Room for a short time before she told Clarke that "I'm going to the PEOC to be with the Vice-President." (8) Clarke then described having video conference calls with Jane Garvey from the FAA and then General Richard Myers before noting that "it was now 9:28." (9) From the above, it would seem that Cheney was in the PEOC in plenty of time for the conversations noted by Mineta to have taken place.

Interestingly, there is a photograph of Cheney in his office, where he appears to be on his own, sitting on a chair watching *ABC News* on TV, with 9:36am on the screen and with one of his feet up on his desk. One thing we can be sure of is that the photo was not taken by official White House photographer, David Bohrer, who was quoted by the *New York Times* and the *Telegraph* as saying that Cheney left his office "just after nine", although Bohrer certainly took many photos of him later on in the PEOC. If the photo was genuine, one would have to ask what he was doing, sat in a chair with a foot up on the desk in a seemingly relaxed posture at the critical time of a national emergency?

However, there are four pieces of further evidence that indicate this photo is not genuine and created at a later date. After all, it would have been simple enough for him to have had a photo taken some time after the event with him watching a recorded version of the day's events.

Firstly, we have the evidence of Eric Edelman (Principal Deputy Assistant to the Vice President for National Security Affairs, February 2001–July 2003) who gave an interview with Evan Thomas of *Newsweek* on 25/10/01 and said that Richard Clarke sent him over to the PEOC:

"So I made my way down to the PEOC. It took me a few minutes to get there, security was extremely tight. The Secret Service is posted at various way stations. And got in there, the Vice President was there, Scooter [Libby] was there, Condi was down there. [Note above that, according to Clarke, Rice had left the Situation Room before 9.28 to join Cheney in the PEOC.] A lot of other staff were there. A small number, but (inaudible) numbers varied during the course of the day.

"But I went to the Vice President, and spoke with him, explained that counterterrorism types were concerned about his safety. We knew we were dealing with -- and Secretary Mineta was down there, by the way -- concerned about his safety and raising the issue of relocation to an alternate site. He didn't even hesitate for one second -- and Condi was there — he said, "no;" he said, "I don't want to leave, we've got a lot of connectivity here with the President." And I'm not sure, he may have already spoken to the President by that point, I'm not sure...I was already down in the PEOC with the Vice President when we got word that there had been an explosion at the Pentagon." (10)

Secondly, on 11/9/2002, Karl Rove told *MSNBC* that immediately after President Bush

left the Florida classroom (no later than 9:16am) he attempted to reach Cheney by telephone but could not because Cheney was at that moment being hustled to safety. Thirdly, confirmation is provided by one of the least likely of sources, Randi's international skeptics, which showed on its website a photocopy of notes from a Secret Service log done for the 9/11 Commission and released by NARA (National Archives and Records Administration). The notes confirm Mineta's testimony to the 9/11 Commission, showing that the distance of the incoming airplane was recorded as 30 miles out at 9:31am, then ten miles out at 9:34, whereupon it performed a 330 degree turn as it descended over the next three minutes. (11)

As the provider of this stunning evidence noted, "I hate to say it, but at first glance this seems to confirm Mineta's account that the plane in question was AA77." (12)

Author Mark Gaffney has confirmed that he "received confirmation that the handwriting is actually that of 9/11 Commission staffer Miles Kara, who was granted access to the original Secret Service documents during the commission's official investigation. Kara was not allowed to remove the SS document, however, so he copied it long-hand. Notice, this means that the 9/11 Commission had this information but chose to bury it, Why? Maybe to cover up for VP Dick Cheney? If someone has a better explanation, I'd like to hear it." (13)

Finally, we have the words of Dick Cheney himself. He was interviewed by *NBC's* Tim Russert on Meet the Press on 16/9/11, five days after 9/11. At 31 minutes 20 seconds into the interview, Cheney stated that "when I arrived there [in the PEOC] within short order we had word the Pentagon's been hit." (14)

RUMSFELD'S DIRECTIVE

Having thus established that Cheney knew that the hijacked AA77 was approaching Washington, he should have made immediate contact with either Rumsfeld or President Bush to seek authorisation for a shoot-down order, but he appears to have not done so.

To put this into context, prior to a change in directive on 1 June 2001 made by Rumsfeld, local commanders in a given area were able to respond to any air emergency pending later approval by the Secretary of Defence, but after this date, they were stripped of this authority.

Major General Larry Arnold, commander of the Continental United States NORAD Region on September 11, confirmed the crucial role of the Secretary of Defence when he described the procedure for responding to hijackings: He told the Commission that the FAA [Federal Aviation Administration] would contact the National Military Command Centre (NMCC) whenever there was a problem. They, in turn, would then contact NORAD (the North American Aerospace Defence Command) to see if fighter planes were available. Then the Secretary of Defence would be asked to approve the interception of a hijacked airplane. (15) As noted by the Commission, "prior to 9/11, it was understood that an order to shoot down a commercial aircraft would have to be issued by the National Command Authority, a phrase used to describe the president and secretary of defence." (16)

We know that President Bush was effectively out of the picture, as he continued reading a story about a goat with school children rather than act appropriately to the threat facing his country. It is also known that he had no contact with Cheney until 9:45am and none with Rumsfeld until 10am.

RUMSFELD GOES ON WALKABOUTS...

Why didn't Donald Rumsfeld authorise a shoot down order following the second plane attack at the World Trade Centre, when it was obvious that America was under attack? Furthermore, why didn't Cheney contact Rumsfeld to discuss the issue of the shoot down order, rather than assume authority for it himself - which he didn't have. As a former Secretary of Defense between 1989-93, Cheney would have been well aware of the chain of command for such an order. Rumsfeld was in his office until the explosion at the Pentagon, so why didn't he simply call him? According to Assistant Secretary of Defence for Public Affairs, Victoria Clarke, it was she who first told Rumsfeld about the World Trade Centre attacks and urged him to move to the National Military Command Centre (NMCC) to co-ordinate a response from there. However, he rejected her advice, choosing to remain in his office until after the Pentagon was hit, stating that "I have to make some phone calls." However, those calls were not to the president, or Cheney, or the FAA or NORAD, so one has to wonder who those calls were made to. Even when he knew the second tower had been struck by a plane, he chose to continue with his daily CIA briefing, despite Denny Watson, his CIA briefer, urging him to cancel it and respond to the terrorist attacks. (17)

As recorded by *History Commons*, "Watson then sits down and tells Rumsfeld what she learned from the CIA's operations center, but the secretary of defence simply nods his head and starts flipping through the PDB (Presidential Daily Briefing). In the absence of President Bush, he was the only person with the authority to lead the military response to the developing crisis and to authorise a shoot down policy for any further hijacked planes.

Rumsfeld rejected the advice to attend the NMCC, choosing to make non-urgent calls instead. Not only did he reject the advice of his CIA briefer that the day's events had made her briefing report utterly irrelevant, but he then became uncontactable at a critical time. He chose to go the scene of the plane crash, rather than attending NMCC and organising a response to the crisis. He effectively went on walkabouts in what was clearly a dereliction of duty. By any standards, his behaviour was absolutely extraordinary and no less so than that of President Bush. As journalist James Corbett has observed, Rumsfeld "made no attempt to engage his shoot down authority or even make himself available for a decision on the exercise of that authority."

Mindy Kleinberg, one of the 9/11 widows known as the "Jersey Girls", has also expressed her sense of shock about Rumsfeld's inexplicable behaviour: "Two planes hitting the twin towers did not rise to the level of Rumsfeld's leaving his office and going to the War Room? How can that be?" (18)

Rumsfeld's directive in June 2001 required that requests for a military response to any hijacking went through him "and then, in just such a moment of crisis, [he] remained intentionally unreachable for a key hour and a half." (19)

Did President Bush delegate his position in the National Command Authority to Cheney on 9/11 and is this why he was being asked if the stand down order still applied? Also, is this why Rumsfeld felt under no pressure or obligation to fulfil his duty under NCA? Unfortunately, we are unlikely to find out because Cheney insisted that when he and Bush were questioned by the 9/11 Commission, it was with them both interviewed together, with the meeting held in private and, significantly, not under oath, thereby setting the ground rules for their own interrogation. Why were these conditions necessary unless they both believed that the truth needed to be kept hidden?

WOLFOWITZ'S EQUALLY BIZARRE BEHAVIOUR

As if Rumsfeld's actions on the morning of 9/11 were not enough to make you scratch your head, his deputy, Paul Wolfowitz, sought to outdo him for incompetence. He had breakfast with Rumsfeld, when they had both heard of the first plane crash in New York. Following their breakfast meeting, Wolfowitz then went to another meeting in the Pentagon, before hearing of the second crashed plane at the World Trade Centre, whereupon it was then clear that America was under attack. However, Wolfowitz still did nothing in response to the crisis: "I sat here thinking that something terrible was going on in New York, but it was up there, not here. We went on with our meeting and suddenly the whole building [the Pentagon] shook. It felt like an earthquake." Wolfowitz then stated that "it was clear that something had happened, but it still wasn't clear that there was anything to do. I didn't put two and two together even then." (20) As the *9/11blogger* Shoestring has said, "we need to determine why Paul Wolfowitz failed to take action to protect his country on September 11. Surely the Pentagon's second in command should have been actively involved in the military's response from the outset of the crisis. Why then did he do nothing to help for the entire time the nation was under attack?"

"It might be argued that Wolfowitz's inaction was simply due to incompetence. This possibility seems unlikely, though, since Wolfowitz had years of experience working for the government, which included serving in senior Pentagon positions, before 9/11. He was deputy assistant secretary of defence for regional programs from 1977 to 1980 and undersecretary of defence for policy from 1989 to 1993," so he would have been well aware of his responsibilities and duties." (21)

Shoestring also referred to award-winning journalist Eric Boehlert who commented on Wolfowitz's striking lack of response to the attacks on September 11: "One peculiarity I've always wondered about is why Paul Wolfowitz ... was so completely clueless the morning of the deadly attacks," he wrote. "As the events unfolded live on television and senior administration officials scrambled to make sense of the horrific events, Wolfowitz appeared to be in a haze," he added. (22) Surely, Wolfowitz, along with his boss Rumsfeld, should both have been immediately dismissed for gross incompetence as well as their respective dereliction of duties. Or perhaps they were dilly-dallying deliberately, in order to ensure there was no coordinated response to the attacks the US was clearly experiencing?

WHAT HAPPENED WITH FLIGHT 77?

Moving on from the issue of who was in command at the time of the Pentagon attack, there has been considerable contention as to what actually caused the explosion there. The initial confusion was due to there appearing to be little airplane debris at the scene, based on misleading photographs with fire hose spray obscuring most of the actual damage to the wall.

According to official sources such as the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), American Airlines Flight 77, a Boeing 757-200, took off from Washington Dulles airport at 8:20am on 9/11 carrying 58 passengers en route to Los Angeles. Hani Hanjour, the alleged hijack pilot and two of the other 4 hijackers, Nawaf and Salem al-Hazami, travelled first class according to the 9/11 Commission, with Nawaf apparently setting off a metal detector before boarding. Flight 77 appears to have been hijacked at 8:54am and turned back towards Washington two minutes later. The transponder was turned off, but it was tracked by radar on its journey, culminating in a final 330-degree spiral descent over the last 7000 feet, taking approximately two and a half minutes to complete

this manoeuvre before the final dive into the Pentagon. The final spiral move was watched in astonishment on radar by Danielle O'Brien, an air traffic controller at Dulles airport, who stated that she and her colleagues had observed Flight 77 and that, "the speed, the manoeuvrability, the way he turned, we all thought in the radar room, all of us experienced air traffic controllers, that this was a military plane." (23)

HOW DID THE HIJACKERS OVERPOWER THE PILOTS?

As reported by *History Commons*, "people who knew Charles Burlingame, the pilot of Flight 77, will later contend that it would have required a difficult struggle for the hijackers to gain control of the plane from him. (24) Burlingame was a military man who'd flown Navy jets for eight years, served several tours at the Navy's elite Top Gun school, and been in the Naval Reserve for 17 years. (25)

Admiral Timothy Keating, who knew him well, said that he "was really tough, and the terrorists had to perform some inhumane act to get him out of that cockpit, I guarantee you." (26)

Yet the 9/11 Commission noted that the "so-called muscle hijackers actually were not physically imposing," with the majority of them being between 5 feet 5 and 5 feet 7 in height, "and slender in build." (27)

COULD HANI HANJOUR HAVE SUCCESSFULLY FLOWN A 757?

There are three issues to consider:

1) How could Hani Hanjour, who was considered to be an incompetent pilot (even the 9/11 Commission report refers to this) be able to fly a 757 that he had never flown before with such consummate skill? For example, Jim Yardley wrote an article in the *New York Times* on 4th May 2002 in which he stated that Hanjour "was reported to aviation agency in February 2001 after instructors at his flight school in Phoenix had found his piloting skills so shoddy and his grasp of English so inadequate that they questioned whether his pilot's license was genuine." Furthermore, in the second week of August 2001, just one month before 9/11, Hanjour had attempted to rent a small plane from an airport in Bowie, MD. Flight instructors Sheri Baxter and Ben Conner declined his request after taking Hanjour on three test runs, noting he had trouble controlling and landing the Cessna 172. (28)

Finally, Philip Marshall (now deceased), who was licensed to fly Boeing 727s, 737s, 747s, as well as 757s and 767s, wrote a book, *False Flag 9/11*, in which he stated categorically that the alleged 9/11 hijacker pilots, including Hani Hanjour, could never have flown 767s and 757s into buildings at high speed without advanced training and practice flights in that same aircraft over a period of months. As Marshall put it: "Hitting a 90-foot target [i.e., the Pentagon] with a 757 at 500 mph is extremely difficult -- absolutely impossible for first-time fliers of a heavy airliner. It's like seeing Tiger Woods hit a 300-yard one-iron and someone telling you he never practiced the shot." In another book, *The Big Bamboozle*, Marshall wrote that, in relation to Hanjour's skilful descent and crash: "As a twenty-year Boeing pilot and captain on the 757, I would be challenged to duplicate this performance without several practice flights." In other words, how could such an incompetent pilot have flown and crashed the 757 into the Pentagon, when it clearly required the skill of an expert pilot to carry this out? (29)

Marshall suggested that the hijack pilots could have had secret training in the US and that this may have taken place at Pinal Airpark in Arizona, which "had a curious history as a training airport for the intelligence community dating back to the 1960s." He

claimed to have found "evidence that over a period of eighteen months, the hijackers were led to basic flight training, some simulator time and multiple practice runs in an actual Boeing 757...at least three simulator sessions were arranged by Saudi intelligence agents." (30) The difficulty with Marshall's theory is how Saudi agents could have carried out this intensive training without the US intelligence agencies being aware of it. As we will see below, there is another explanation as to how the planes hit their targets.

2) Why didn't Hanjour simply fly the plane into the roof of the Pentagon, which would have been the easiest approach to take (especially as he was an incompetent pilot) and likely to lead to the greatest amount of damage. As it happened, the final course took it into the front of Wedge 1, which was being renovated at that time and therefore not fully occupied.

To address this question, consider a press conference given by Donald Rumsfeld the day before 9/11, and reported on *CBS News*, in which he stated that "according to some estimates, we cannot track 2.3 TRILLION (my capitals) dollars in transactions (in fiscal year 1999)...the money wasted by the military poses a serious threat. In fact, it could be said it's a matter of life and death." It certainly turned out to be a matter of death for the team investigating this loss. As investigative journalist Jim Marrs noted, "Resource Services Washington, an office of the Army that had only recently reoccupied the west wing of the Pentagon, lost 34 out of its 45 employees on 9/11. Most were civilian accountants, bookkeepers and budget analysts, the very people who would have been responsible for tracking the missing trillions." (31)

Was it simply a coincidence that much of the information relating to the missing 2.3 trillion dollars was destroyed by the attack on the Pentagon, and was that particular wedge deliberately targeted?

3) Why did Hanjour execute such a complex manoeuvre, adding an extra two and a half minutes to the descent, which could have resulted in the opportunity being lost, by giving the air force time to respond and shoot down the plane? One answer, suggested by Kevin Ryan, is that Hani Hanjour was not flying the plane, which was remotely hijacked and controlled by the autopilot through WAAS (Wide Area Augmentation System) guidance until it reached a point near the Pentagon. WAAS and its complementary system, JPALS, were capable of guiding the aircraft in the way that it was flown. As Ryan explained it: "Remote control of a large airliner using WAAS, which operates using satellites and a system of 20 ground-based reference stations spread across North America, was successfully tested in the 1990s along with ancillary landing systems.

"One landing system developed just before 9/11, by Raytheon, was the military's all weather, anti-jam Joint Precision Approach and Landing System (JPALS). [68] To operate, JPALS needs ground-based GPS receivers which send signals to a central location at the landing site. This data is then sent to the approaching aircraft via a VHF data link so that flight path adjustments can be made." (32) Ryan also suggested that "the 330-degree spiral descent might have been a manoeuvre used to better align the aircraft and reduce altitude prior to the "landing" approach. Alternatively, it might have been needed due to transfer of control of the aircraft between the WAAS and the JPALS system."

HOW DID THE HIJACKERS MANAGE TO HIT THEIR TARGETS?

According to the 9/11 Commission, "the Flight Management Computer could be programmed in such a manner that it would navigate the aircraft automatically to a location of the hijackers' choosing, not merely a commercial airport, at a speed and altitude they desired, provided the hijackers possessed the precise positioning data necessary. By using sequenced waypoints dialled into the computer, the hijackers could also approach the target from the direction they wanted...the Commission believe it quite credible that, given the certificates held by the hijackers, the training and educational opportunities available to them through publicly available flight operations manuals and computer-based flight training software, the hijackers—particularly Atta, Hanjour, and al Shehhi—had the know-how to complete the mission." (33)

The Flight Data Recorders for the two planes that crashed into the Twin Towers were allegedly never found (although this was challenged in Chapter One), but there is no doubting the high level of skill required by the pilots to hit their targets, with American Airlines Flight 11 hitting the North Tower at an estimated 466 mph and United Airlines Flight 175 striking the South Tower at approximately 545 mph. (34) Aidan Monaghan, a researcher well-known for his tenacity in pursuing Freedom of Information requests noted that "these high speeds are problematic from the standpoint of pilot control because they significantly reduce the response time for making hands-on course corrections." (35) Although the wind was only moderate that day, in view of the high speeds, it would still have presented a considerable challenge for a pilot to hit their target.

The Flight Data Recorders were recovered for American Airlines Flight 77, which hit the Pentagon and United Airlines Flight 93, which crashed at Shanksville. In both cases, the information recorded indicated that the pilots made a number of complex changes to the autopilot systems. Aidan Monaghan has described how:

"This has puzzled experts. Recently declassified 9/11 Commission records (36) include interviews with United Airlines personnel, who express scepticism that the accused hijack pilots could have performed flight operations involving this level of expertise. One said, "Entering changes to the autopilot is something that terrorist pilots probably would not have been trained or able to do. Even the United senior pilot who instructs on how to do that said that he always has to pause before he makes such corrections to make sure he remembered how to enter the change." (37)

It would therefore seem that the Commission's view on the likelihood of the hijackers being able to comprehend and control the airplanes' computer systems is one that is open to question.

There is an alternative explanation for how the hijackers were so successful, which is that the planes were controlled remotely. One curious feature of all four hijacks is that none of the pilots pressed the recognised hijack code of "7500" which would only have taken a couple of seconds. In the case of Flight 93, an Air Traffic Controller heard the pilot shouting out, "hey get out of here," but not a word from any of the pilots on the other three flights.

Remote control (automated navigation) of airplanes in conjunction with a Global Positioning System (GPS), a space-based radio-navigation system was available in 2000, when it was further improved by a Wide Area Augmentation System (WAAS), mentioned above. WAAS improved GPS accuracy, enabling aircraft to be directly controlled to between 1 and 3 meters, when landing for example. As Monaghan confirmed, "by 1999, Boeing 757 and 767 aircraft like those involved in the 9/11 terrorist attacks contained digital flight control systems that could automatically fly the airplanes on pre-selected routes" and change the speed and altitude as well as initiate manoeuvres when required. (38) The question is who controlled the computer systems

- the hijackers or others? It hardly seems credible that Hani Hanjour, the alleged pilot of Flight 77 that crashed into the Pentagon, would have had the competence to perform the complicated computer calculations necessary to account for the extraordinary final descent.

Could it be that the hijackers were themselves hijacked by what may be termed deep state operatives in order to ensure the success of their plans? Perhaps these operatives, knowing the plans of the hijackers, "piggy-backed" on to them through the remote-control systems described above?

WAS IT A PLANE, A MISSILE OR BOMBS?

There has been an enormous amount of debate concerning what caused the damage at the Pentagon, but the evidence indicates it was Flight 77 that flew into the building. How this could have happened is another question. It is quite clear from the earlier study of Hanjour's flying skills that he was not capable of the extraordinary skill needed to execute the flight path, which was confirmed by both the radar record, details from the flight recorder, as well as the majority of eyewitness accounts.

The idea that the damage was caused by a missile was encouraged by the early absence of detailed photographic evidence, as much of the damage on the first floor (which was the point of entry) was hidden by foam used by the Fire Service in attempting to put out the fires. There were also a few witnesses who mentioned hearing a missile-like sound prior to the explosion. This theory became even more popular after some very hazy video footage at the Pentagon was released in 2002 which was inconclusive, but which appeared to look more like a missile than a large commercial airplane. Thierry Meyssan was the earliest and most influential advocate of this theory in his book, *The Frightening Fraud*, 2002. A further interesting analysis was provided by Major-General Albert Stubblebine, former commander of the Army's Intelligence and Security Command. He said: "I was so ingrained in my belief system that I could not believe – literally could not believe – that anybody but an Arab terrorist could do something like that.

"And then one day I saw a picture – it was a photograph of the Pentagon and the hole in the Pentagon.

"And I looked at it again and I said, 'something's wrong, something's wrong with this picture.'" As he later said, "the plane does not fit the hole." It would seem that Stubblebine also saw only the early photos in which the 20 foot hole on the second floor was visible, but not the 90 foot gash along the first floor. (39) See Photo below:

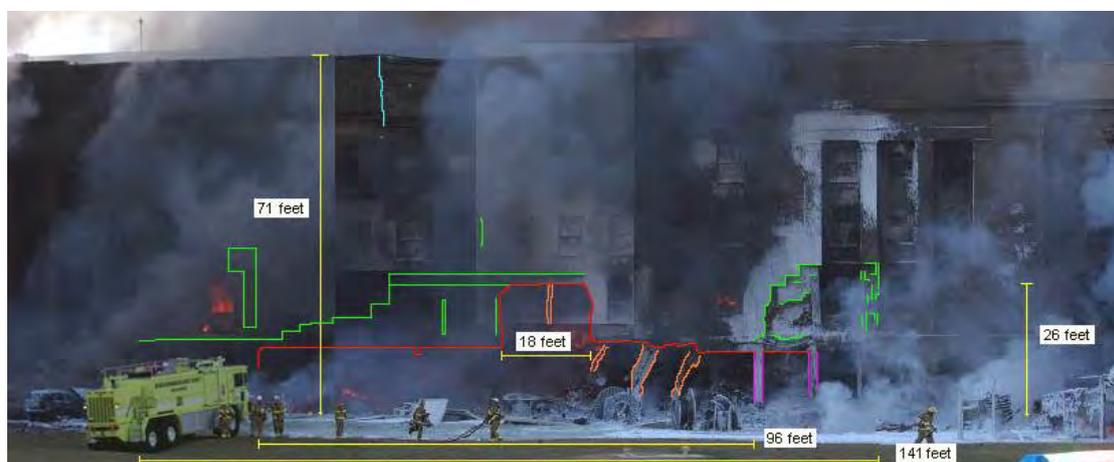


Figure 3: gash along first floor.

One suspicious circumstance was the apparent lack of evidence of plane damage outside the building, as might have been expected. For example, Fire Chief Ed Plaughter told a Pentagon press conference that "there are some small pieces of aircraft visible from the interior during this fire-fighting operation...but not large sections. In other words, there's no fuselage sections and that sort of thing." (40) Plaughter apparently stated the following day that he had since seen sufficient debris etc to change his mind about his earlier statement.

Another eyewitness was CNN's senior Pentagon correspondent, Jamie McIntyre, who reported soon after the explosion that "from my close up inspection there's no evidence of a plane having crashed anywhere near the Pentagon...The only pieces left that you can see are small enough that you could pick up in your hand. There are no large tail sections, wing sections, fuselage, nothing like that anywhere around which would indicate that the entire plane crashed into the side of the Pentagon." (41) However, as we will see in the following paragraph, the main reason there was so little debris was because the bulk of the plane shattered through the facade and into the building. The significant thing about the Jamie McIntyre quote is how his words have often been misquoted to make him out to be denying plane impact. He was not denying plane impact. He was saying in response to a question that the plane did not crash in front of the Pentagon, it went directly into the Pentagon.

What shattered on impact (most likely the rear tail section as this was the most fragile part of the plane) was then hurled a considerable distance to the north, as would be expected by one object hitting another at approximately 540mph coming from a southerly direction. It is possible that McIntyre, when making his report, was surveying the damage immediately in front of the impact hole, without appreciating how much debris damage there was to the north around the Heliport area.

WHAT COULD HAVE CAUSED THE DAMAGE?

Research in recent years, initially pioneered by Jim Hoffman and then further elaborated by Wayne Coste, David Chandler and John Wyndham among others, (see *911SpeakOut.org* for their articles and photographic evidence to support the narrative below) has shown beyond any reasonable doubt that the damage caused at the Pentagon is consistent with a large plane with the dimensions of a 757 having smashed through the facade of the building. Furthermore, this view is supported by the majority of eyewitnesses to the event. For example, consider the description by Daryl Donley, who took some of the best photographs of the scene a few minutes after impact and so was obviously there with a clear view. He was the Assistant Director of Operations for the National Symphony Orchestra and could not therefore be considered a Pentagon insider. He stated that "I saw the plane fly into the Pentagon and turn into a huge fireball...[later adding]...it just was amazingly precise; it completely disappeared into the Pentagon." (42)

The following analysis is a synthesis of the work of Hoffman, Coste, Chandler and Wyndham.

As the plane approached the Pentagon, it performed a 330 degree spiral while dropping 7000 feet. The final few hundred metres of the flight path resulted in the right engine clipping a tree (leaving a clear indentation at its top where some of the upper foliage was sheared off) before then knocking down five light poles on its approach to the Pentagon. (43)



Figure 4: Tree damage.

These poles were between 100-130 feet apart in width, while the wingspan of a 757 is 125 feet, so the damage to the poles was consistent with being hit by a 757, but not by a missile. Finally, in the last 100 metres, the plane hit a generator trailer with its right engine while damaging a low concrete retaining wall with its left engine, immediately before hitting the Pentagon itself. The impulse of the blow caused the generator to rotate towards the Pentagon about its south end and lose its front supports. Staging this damage in real time by applying an external force to move the heavy trailer unobserved is not credible. Combined with the evidence of the notched tree, damaged light poles and retaining wall, the damaged trailer provides very compelling and irrefutable evidence that a large plane travelled on a trajectory to hit the Pentagon wall at the impact hole.

The circular damage to the retaining wall is consistent with being hit by the lower part of the left engine. The distance between where the plane hit the trailer and the wall is approximately 43 feet, which conforms with the distance between the two engines of a 757. This entire damage path aligns with the plane hitting the Pentagon west wall facade at a 52 degrees angle. On hitting the facade, most of the plane entered the building, but some parts shattered on impact, flying off in a continuing northerly 52 degrees direction before landing around the heliport area, in accordance with the laws of physics. (see appendix 1) Although the newly-constructed facade had blast-resistant windows with steel frames (which were bolted floor to ceiling but not contiguous between floors) the walls were not blast-resistant, having no steel reinforcement in the concrete. It is almost certainly for this reason that the plane was able to break through the facade and enter the building rather than being obliterated into a million pieces on impact, as was the case in the well-known experimental crash of a F8 phantom jet that was flown into a 10 foot concrete wall. (44)

Once inside the building, the trail of damage continued in the same northerly direction resulting in a small exit hole in the C Ring in Wedge 2. Many people have suggested that the plane could not possibly have passed through all the retaining walls between the E Ring facade and the C Ring (which would have been four walls in total), but there are no D Ring walls on the first two floors of Wedge 1 as that area was open-plan, so that the plane and its debris only had to destroy the facade wall and the C Ring wall. This wall also had no steel reinforced concrete in its wall, but was merely 2 bricks thick

with wire mesh and plaster. The journey of the plane through the building was described in the Pentagon Building Performance Report in 2003 with its impact "represented as a violent flow through the structure of a "fluid" consisting of aviation fuel and solid fragments", and the debris remaining concentrated enough to break through the C Ring wall. (45)

David Chandler has described the term "fluid" as being slightly misleading, as "the term "fluid" is not saying anything was dissolved or turned to a liquid. It is describing the interaction of parts in a flow of material fragments past the array of columns. Wayne Coste has reasoned that in order to break through the C-ring wall, (two layers of unreinforced brick) it would require an impact of a relatively massive object. Wayne has traced three paths from entrance hole to the C-ring exit hole that could allow heavy parts, such as landing gears, wheels, etc. to pass through the maze unobstructed." (46) Another researcher, Jim Hoffman, observed that, "photographs of debris in the courtyard between B and C Rings show a damaged wheel hub surrounded by other apparent aircraft debris." (47)

There were a number of support columns in the flight path within the building and most were either destroyed, bowed or abraded in a pattern consistent with the flow of the disintegrating plane as it passed through the building. Major column damage ended about 160 feet in from impact, but as the plane would have been completely fragmented at this point, the broken-up debris was able to pass the remaining columns. As noted by the authors of the Honegger Hypothesis, "major column failure ends 158 feet in from the impact point. However, since the plane was fragmented, it could pass between columns...it does not seem surprising at all that a sufficient quantity of debris, including relatively large parts, could reach the C Ring wall and break through it." (48) John Wyndham has described how many columns showed shredded or wrecked pieces of metal around them. He noted how in one photo there is a massive amount of debris below an intact ceiling. As this debris could not have occurred due to a cave-in of the floor above, it indicates plane impact rather than a bomb. (49) Wyndham also referred to the remaining bowed columns as further evidence of a plane, as they were bent in the direction of motion of the plane as it was breaking up on its journey through the building. (50)

Further evidence of the northerly direction of the debris was that there was a tree at Column 16, just to the south of the point of impact at column 14, which was severed at approximately 5 feet above the ground, with branches seen at the north end of the impact area about 100 feet away.

In relation to the apparent lack of plane debris at the scene, it should be noted that there was considerable damage around the Heliport area to the north of the impact point, consistent with the northward journey of the broken airplane parts.

It has also been argued that the plane should have started to fall apart after hitting the light poles. There are two points that need to be made here: firstly, the light poles were on stands that were designed to collapse easily on impact, in case they were hit by cars. Secondly, Wayne Coste has shown that a part of a wing did shear off when it hit one of the poles, with a wing slat found on the Pentagon lawn between light poles 1 and 3 and this photographic evidence is available. (51)



Figure 5: Wing part.

Furthermore, critics of the official story have suggested that some of the engine parts seen at the crash scene are not from a 757 and were planted there. However, as one team of independent aerospace experts have noted, "in summary, we have studied two key pieces of wreckage photographed at the Pentagon shortly after September 11 and found them to be entirely consistent with the Rolls-Royce RB211-535 turbofan engine found on a Boeing 757 operated by American Airlines." (52)

GROUND EFFECT?

The low trajectory of the plane as it approached impact, has been challenged on the Pilots for Truth (PFT) website, where it is argued that the g-forces would have prevented the descent as described. Chandler has challenged their calculations, but Pilots for Truth have so far ignored the criticisms he raised: "PFT asserts that the only feasible path would subject the plane to a g-force of 10.14g. Dr. Legge and I have shown that a number of feasible paths exist with much lower g-force implications, so g-force cannot be used to rule out the impact of a large plane at the Pentagon." (53)

Another website, *Aerospaceweb*, founded in 1997 and currently staffed by nine engineers and scientists working in the aerospace field, have written an article, which explains that, because of the high speed and low angle of attack, the ground effect is not a problem, especially with an aircraft that is under automatic control. The article relates the experience of two commercial airline pilots who tried this kind of approach in a flight training simulator and had no problems. The article even suggested that Hanjour might have been capable of this manoeuvre. They conclude, "that brings us to the question of whether an essentially untrained pilot like terrorist Hani Hanjour could have made these adjustments to fly the Boeing 757 into the Pentagon. While such fine corrections do require some degree of finesse and familiarity with an aircraft's flight characteristics, the level of expertise required is not excessive. We have shown that any influence of ground effect would have been quite small on Flight 77 given its high rate

of speed and small angle of attack. The 757 was apparently in a shallow dive as well, further reducing its angle of attack such that any impact of ground effect would have been extremely small." (54)

However, even if Hanjour had been capable of handling the plane in the final moments, when the plane was travelling at approximately 560 mph according to the FDR, (which would hardly seem feasible as he was the man "who made instructors nervous in a single-engine plane") (55) and described by the 9/11 Commission as having "poor piloting skills", (56) it would still not account for the skill needed for the preceding spiral descent. Furthermore, the VNE (velocity never to be exceeded) for a 757 at sea level is 414mph, which means it was so much beyond the recommended maximum speed that it would have been exceedingly difficult for an amateur pilot to execute such a precision descent. As it was only in excess of VNE for the last 34 seconds, there was not enough time for the plane to experience the structural failure that might have been anticipated. The general consensus is that, notwithstanding the view expressed by *aerospaceweb.org*, the final descent and approach to the Pentagon could not have been accomplished by a novice pilot and that experienced pilots attempting the final manoeuvres had to make several attempts on a simulator before they were able to achieve the same success that we are asked to believe Hanjour achieved. (57)

Chemist Frank Legge and computer scientist, Warren Stutt, examined the flight path of AA77 using radar and FDR data recovered from the plane's black box. They referred to research by John Farmer and Tom Lusch, who thoroughly examined the recorded radar data and were able to trace the flight from take-off to a point just south of the Sheraton Hotel near the Pentagon. There were seven radar stations tracing the plane, three of which continued to record its position even after the transponder was turned off. Legge and Stutt concluded that the FDR file was legitimate, after it needed some special treatment to decode the final data frame. (58) In view of this evidence, it would seem apparent that Flight 77 did indeed crash into the Pentagon.

VIDEO FOOTAGE APPEARS TO CONFIRM 757 CRASHED INTO PENTAGON

One action that fed into many people's suspicion about what happened at the Pentagon was the immediate confiscation of all 84 relevant CCTV videos in the vicinity of the Pentagon. Why wasn't footage released that could have put all doubters to rest? Five frames from one security camera at the Pentagon were leaked in 2002 and then the more complete video spanning the event, along with a similar video from a second nearby camera, was released through a FOIA request in 2006. These frames were inconclusive and showed, if anything, what appeared to be a missile rather than a plane. However, Ken Jenkins and David Chandler used a process of "blink comparison" between the two cameras and which appear to show a large plane with AA colours and a tail matching that of a 757. (59) As Chandler described the process, they "used a "blink comparator" process, alternating the frame containing the plane with the immediately prior frame, for each video. This process makes the changes in the image stand out from the background. Using this process, and zoomed-in views, the plane becomes visible. Also blinking from one video to the other shows the amount of motion of the plane corresponding to the offset time between the two videos. The two videos were recorded on the same recording device and based on the motion of a truck that is visible in both videos, Wayne Coste has shown that the offset time between the two videos was 4/30 sec. From this measurement he was able to get an estimate of the speed of the plane: about 542 mi/hr, which is consistent with other estimates of the plane's speed,

within measurement error." (email from Chandler)

A noticeable smoke trail was initially thought by some to be evidence of a missile, but Chandler has suggested that it was "probably caused by tree branches [as referred to earlier] clipped and ingested by the plane's right engine."

EVIDENCE OF BARBARA OLSON?

One of the troubling features of the official story of what happened to Flight 77 is the evidence presented by Ted Olson, US Solicitor General, who stated that his wife Barbara called him at least twice from the plane, telling him that all the passengers and flight personnel had been herded to the back of the plane by hijackers armed with box-cutters and knives. We saw earlier that Captain Burlingame was unlikely to have relinquished control of his plane without a fight, so Olson's story is already contentious. He stated that the first call lasted "a minute or two" while the second lasted between 2-4 minutes. He changed his mind about whether the calls had been made on her cell phone or an onboard phone

Griffin and Wordworth (60) have raised several points about Olson's evidence :

- 1) The FBI ruled out Barbara Olson having made any call from her own cell phone in a statement in 2004, saying "all of the calls from Flight 77 were made via the onboard airphone system." However...
- 2) The passenger phone system for the entire American Airlines 757 fleet had been deactivated in early 2001 so no onboard phone call could have been made by Barbara Olson.
- 3) No evidence has ever been forthcoming eg from her cell phone record, that she made any call on the plane which were picked up by her husband.
- 4) Olson's changeable story was contradicted in the FBI 2006 report presented at the trial of Zacarias Moussaoui, in which it was stated that there was only one call from Barbara Olson, not two, and that it was not connected and lasted exactly zero seconds.

One cannot simply dismiss Olson's evidence because, not only was this given by one of the most senior legal figures in the country, but also there does not seem any reason for him to have deliberately sought to mislead the entire nation. The most reasonable explanation for any deliberate attempt to change his account is that he sought to create a narrative that confirmed the official story of the plane being taken over by the hijackers. However, there are problems with his account, as noted above. One can only hope that he will be compelled to testify under oath at some point in time to explain his contradictory account.

One final issue for consideration is that if the plane was not AA77, we would have to assume that all those involved in the identification of the bodies were lying.

A number of theories have arisen out of the confusion of events at the Pentagon. We will now assess two of the most prevalent ones:

The 'Flyover' Theory of the Citizen Investigation Team (CIT)

CIT is comprised of two individuals who interviewed 13 eyewitnesses at the Pentagon who believe they saw a plane flying north of the Citgo gas station, as opposed to the majority of eyewitnesses who saw it fly south of the station. (61) CIT conclude from these 13 statements that "their independent and unanimous placement of the plane on

the north side amounts to proof beyond a reasonable doubt that it did fly away without hitting the building...although the witnesses presented so far did not see the plane flying away we know that some did." CIT hereby claim that their theory is beyond reasonable doubt, despite ignoring the majority of eyewitnesses who give a completely different version of events. Furthermore, it has been noted that all of CIT's witnesses who were in a position to see the impact testify to actual impact with the Pentagon. Furthermore the testimony, as interpreted by CIT, contradicts all of the physical evidence. David Chandler has severely criticized the interviewing techniques used by Craig Ranke of CIT. The interviews employed techniques that pressured the witness to agree with conclusions supposedly agreed to by other witnesses. Chandler concluded that the interviews have no value as scientific evidence and should be discounted. Using this kind of questionable interview evidence to dismiss the physical evidence is completely unscientific. (62)

A north flight path is unable to account for the trail of damage inside and outside the Pentagon, so CIT assume that that this damage was elaborately faked. Furthermore, as the north path is incompatible with the damage at the scene, they conclude that the plane never hit it, as 12 of their witnesses suggest happened, but that it flew over the Pentagon just as the explosion went off. One might ask where the plane went to from there and what happened to all the passengers and why none of the CIT witnesses were able to confirm seeing the plane fly away. As Chandler observed, "think about it just for a moment. The Pentagon is completely ringed by major highways, including Interstate 395 which had stand-still traffic that morning. Any flyover of the Pentagon would have been witnessed by hundreds of people from all directions. If a plane flew over the Pentagon at low altitude leaving a major explosion in its wake, anyone who saw it would certainly think they were witnessing a plane bombing the Pentagon. Yet there were no such reports, and some who were questioned later, who were in a good position to see any flyover, said they did not see any such thing."

If the plane had come from the north direction, where did it come from? Frank Legge and David Chandler wrote two papers analyzing the possible flight path of a plane from the last radar sighting near the Sheraton Hotel, diverting to the north side of the CITGO gas station, and then flying over the hole in the Pentagon. They concluded that "any such diversion would involve impossibly high g-forces and impossibly high banking angles, compared to all eyewitness accounts that the plane was flying essentially straight, with little or no banking." (63)

Furthermore, as Frank Legge wrote, "It has been alleged that many of the witnesses to impact were employees of the government and would have been influenced to produce reports which supported the official position. This may be true in a few cases but with 93 reporting impact, or too low to miss, and none reporting flyover or a steep bank angle, it is a weak argument. Far stronger is the argument that the authorities would not have been able to control the very many other people in the area, as they would not have known who was going to be present. It is not logical to suggest that the authorities could force all these unknown people to remain silent about a steep bank or flyover." (64)

A further piece of CIT'S theory is based on light pole damage to a taxi driven by Lloyd England. The CIT premise is that the light poles were dismantled and broken, presumably the night before to avoid detection. There is photographic evidence of damage to England's car's windscreen and a puncture tear on the back seat. According to England, he was driving his taxi close to the Pentagon when a segment of a light pole smashed through his windscreen after the plane had severed this particular pole as it

approached the Pentagon. CIT have argued that a lack of damage to the hood of the car is evidence that this incident was staged using a broken pole, stating that it was "beyond implausible" that the front hood of the car would not have been damaged. However, it is quite feasible that one end was held in place by the torn area on the back seat while the dashboard provided a stable fulcrum for the rest of the pole. Furthermore, to have staged this damage in real time in broad daylight with many other cars and witnesses present is not plausible. As Wyndham has commented, "CIT's theory is unbelievable and borders on the farcical." (See Chandler's added analysis in appendix 2)

Also, there were 22 witnesses who saw a plane hitting the light poles prior to the explosion at the Pentagon. (65) As such, no aspect of CIT's theory can be considered credible. Although they have interviewed 13 eyewitnesses to a plane direction north of the Citgo gas station, there are many more eyewitnesses who confirm the southern path, as is consistent with the damage to a tree and the five light poles on its approach to the Pentagon.

Their theory of the North route makes no sense: where did that plane go (after supposedly flying over the Pentagon) and what happened to the passengers are issues that would need to be investigated. Added to this, why are there not a considerable number of witnesses to what would have been an extraordinary spectacle, as the plane steeply banked to fly over the Pentagon? Their theory is also dependent on there being an even more elaborate conspiracy to cause an explosion at the same time as the plane flyover. Finally, the CIT theory rests on the assumption that all the damage at the Pentagon, both inside and outside, was staged, thereby risking the possibility that this would be witnessed. Why not simply fly the plane into the Pentagon and avoid all such unnecessary complications?

Barbara Honegger's Hypothesis

Please note that the following is a synthesis of the work of Victoria Ashley, Wayne Coste, David Chandler, Jonathan Cole, Jim Hoffman, Ken Jenkins, Frank Legge and John Wyndham. (66)

Barbara Honegger, was a political analyst in the White House under President Reagan before becoming Senior Military Affairs Journalist at the prestigious Naval Postgraduate School. She has argued in an article (The Pentagon Attack Papers) and in public talks (Behind the Smoke Curtain) that "the real story at the Pentagon is pre-placed explosives." (67) She postulated that there was a plane crash at the Pentagon, but that this happened at 9:32, five minutes before the generally accepted time of 9:37 for a plane crashing into the Pentagon. She claimed that a white plane was destroyed by a helicopter ("to prevent the plane going into the Pentagon") at the Heliport, 120 feet north of the impact hole and that this plane debris did not damage the facade of the Pentagon. Part of her evidence for this supposition is that clocks in the vicinity of the crash zone fell from their wall hangings, (including one at the Heliport) showing 9:32 on their faces. However, as Wyndham has shown, "the minute hand can easily move back because of the abrupt deceleration that occurs when the clock hits the ground." Also, there were two other clocks that fell and stopped, with one reading 9:36 and the other 9:37, so this evidence is inconclusive. The only evidence for a white plane is four eyewitnesses and a piece of white plane debris. Opposing this evidence are the 16 eyewitnesses who claim that the plane approaching the Pentagon was silver (as was AA77) and the large amount of silver plane debris. There are no eyewitness reports of a white plane being shot down by a missile from a helicopter. Had this happened, it is

unrealistic to believe there would not have been numerous witnesses confirming the incident.

Honegger maintained that there was an internal explosion two minutes before the above related event, basing this time on the stopped watch of April Gallop, (who she interviewed under oath) who worked in Wedge 2, which was approximately 150 feet to the north of the official impact hole. Her office was not in the path of the plane's journey through the building, although her office was severely damaged, with collapsing walls and thick smoke as a result of the impact. She didn't see any plane parts, which may not be that surprising in view of the smoke, nor did she smell any jet fuel. Her baby was with her and they managed to leave the building through a window near the Heliport area, before she collapsed and was taken to hospital. In one interview she had stated that she left through the impact hole, although this is obviously impossible as it was an inferno for several minutes following the initial explosion. Her evidence would therefore appear inconclusive.

Honegger reported the evidence of Lt Col Victor Correa, who noticed windows bowing out and then in again, inferring that this must have been due to a bomb, but the authors of the *Honegger Hypothesis* note that this could also be attributed to "a sudden pressure build-up as plane material thrust into the building followed by a pressure release perhaps connected with the fuel explosion."

Honegger also interviewed Robert Andrews, who was Acting Assistant Secretary of Defence for Special Operations on 9/11. He told her that while he was in the Counterterrorism Centre "a violent event caused the ceiling tiles to fall from the ceiling and smoke to pour into the room. Andrews immediately looked at his watch, which read approximately 9:35am but which was set fast to ensure timely arrival at meetings so the actual time was closer to 9:32." He then told Honegger that while walking through the inside ring of the west section, deeper into the centre of the building complex than the C Ring (which was the final point of the plane debris) "we had to walk over dead bodies." It is possible that Andrew was describing a bomb explosion and its after effects, but there are problems with his account, apart from it not being confirmed by anybody else.

It is difficult to see what would have been gained from a bomb beyond the C Ring as this would have been beyond the area of the Naval Command Centre and Resource Services Washington, the team investigating the missing \$2.3 trillion. Also, if there were identifiable bomb explosions at the Pentagon, as suggested by Andrews, it would prove that it was an inside job (how could al-Qaeda operatives have gained access) and would be irrefutable evidence of that. It doesn't seem credible that friends, family and colleagues of the deceased would not be aware of the time difference of these supposed events and would hardly sit on their silence in view of their anger and grief. One final point here is that the Pentagon Building Performance Report in 2003 makes no mention of damage or dead bodies in the inner rings, A and B. As such, I'm inclined to disregard the evidence provided by Andrews.

The authors of "The Honegger Hypothesis" argue that the case for pre-planted explosives is not as strong as she asserts and that "unlike for large plane impact, where plane parts and jet fuel were found, there is NO actual physical evidence, such as unreacted material or explosive residues, that would indicate pre-planted explosives such as cordite and thermite. All evidence for pre-planted explosives comes in the form of witness interpretations of odour and sound, and in Honegger's own interpretations

of physical events and photographs that might indicate pre-planted explosives." In terms of odour, there are four witnesses who stated that they could smell cordite, while twenty said they could smell jet fuel. Some of them were later treated for jet fuel ingested into their lungs.

Honegger referred to an upward breach on the second floor, arguing that this was caused by a massive explosion, while the authors of *Honegger's Hypothesis* suggest this is "more likely a local anomaly caused by high-speed plane debris."

As far as the damage to the facade of Wedge 1 is concerned, for the damage to have been done by explosives, one would have to explain the 90 feet damage on the first floor between columns 9-17, as well as the circular damage to the retaining wall just before the facade and also how the generator trailer, weighing many tons, could have the indentations it received and be blown off its base. Furthermore, one also has to assume that the light poles were deliberately sheared before the event, as would the top to the tree, slightly further out than the poles. It would also have been necessary to shower the area with plane debris, although there are no witnesses to such an event.

Honegger stated that there were a number of explosions that she believes were bombs. While there remains the possibility that this is true, those explosions could also have been a number of secondary explosions following the plane's impact. For example, one witness, Ted Anderson, stated that "tanks full of propane and aviation fuel ...soon began exploding one by one... (then) a fire department car exploding." (68)

Honegger has also stated that a plane could not have penetrated the newly reinforced west wing wall, which comprised 6 inches of limestone, 8 inches of brick and 10 inches of concrete with steel and Kevlar mesh. However, if it was plane-proof then surely it would have been bomb-proof as well. Wyndham has estimated that there was "a tremendous amount of kinetic energy in the impacting plane, equivalent to 706 ten ton trucks travelling at 60mph or more than half a ton of TNT." (69)

Honegger also suggests that the C Ring was breached using explosives rather than being pierced by the final flow of plane debris, but Chandler has pointed out that this is unrealistic, as it would necessarily have damaged a pipe/cable that can be seen at this hole, whereas it is seen to be intact. The bomb theory is also inconsistent with the bowed damage to the internal columns.

An explosion in the facade area would disperse debris more or less equally in all directions and cannot explain the trail northwards to the Heliport area, nor the absence of debris to the south of the impact area. The most coherent explanation is that debris continued in the direction of the plane hitting the building and the accompanying air mass (the following wind flow). Honegger noted in her Seattle public talk that "there is wreckage - and lots of it - further to the left/north at and around the Heliport." She considered this to be wreckage of a plane destroyed by a helicopter, stating that the White House sent the helicopter to prevent the plane going into the Pentagon (although there was no damage to the wall of the Pentagon resulting from this?) As previously noted, the debris trail Honegger referred to is consistent with parts of the plane shattering on impact and then flying off at a northerly tangent.

Both Barbara Honegger and CIT argue that what appear to be the broken but remaining columns 15-17 are evidence that no plane passed through these columns. However, as Hoffman has shown, close inspection of the relevant photos suggest that these are not columns at all, but are far more likely to be portions of the second floor slab that collapsed after impact, but which had not yet completely fallen away from the rest of the floor structure. (see photo below)



Figure 6: Floor slab.

One further pointer against a bomb explosion at the facade is the presence of some wire spools which one would have expected to be blown back and over, but which remained standing upright. These same spools have been used as an argument to prove that the plane would have had to knock them over prior to hitting the building. However, as we know that the left engine damaged the low retaining wall immediately before impact, while the right engine hit the higher standing generator, the evidence suggests that the plane missed the spools (and hence did not gauge the lawn) by a few feet on its descent. Adding further confirmation to this, the ground slopes up from the lawn to the retaining wall before then sloping down to the west wall of the Pentagon. As Hoffman estimated, "the four standing spools appear to lie between the paths of the two engines. Assuming that the larger spools were 6 feet in diameter, the flight path would have taken the bottom of the wings and fuselage about 2 or 3 feet over the tops of the larger spools." (70)

In conclusion, the elaborate theories of CIT and Barbara Honegger appear to have insufficient plausible evidence to suggest that they provide a coherent and satisfactory account of what happened at the Pentagon. However, the crashing of AA 77 into the building answers all the questions about what happened to the plane and its passengers as well as having been clearly demonstrated by all the evidence. The path of the plane was measured by both radar and the FDR and this is consistent with the vast majority of the approximately 100 eyewitnesses (notwithstanding the 13 CIT witnesses who, one has to say, must presumably have been deceived by their senses). The sheared damage to a tree, which was before the light poles, but aligned with them, as well as the damage to the generator trailer and the retaining wall are all indicative of a plane the size of a 757 smashing into the west wall of the Pentagon. The theories of CIT and Honegger fail hopelessly in this respect and are not therefore worthy of further consideration. Furthermore, in the words of the late Frank Legge, "what is the probability that the perpetrators of this attack would choose the extremely difficult deception involved in creating the appearance of a plane impact when they could have simply flown the plane into the building?" Also, it was the attack on the Pentagon that provided the US with the *casus belli* for war without (seemingly any) end through the Islamic world, as this

was a military target rather a criminal action as in the case of the World Trade Centre buildings. To summarise with the words of David Chandler, "the evidence required to show government complicity is at the World Trade Centre. All that needed to be done at the Pentagon was to hit it with something...anything. Ramming a plane into the Pentagon did not require any kind of fancy deception. The more blatant the act the better."

The Pentagon has confused almost everyone who has studied the events of 9/11, but it would appear that the account given in this chapter approximates to the truth of what happened there.

That is not to say that explosives definitely played no part. Honegger has noted a number of people who stated that they could smell cordite following the explosion. Researcher and writer, Kevin Ryan, has suggested a possibility that would blend aspects of Honegger's theory with that as presented by Wayne Coste and David Chandler and described earlier.

Ryan suggests that: "The use of well-timed explosives at the moment of aircraft impact could explain why so few parts of the aircraft were visible outside the building. Some eyewitnesses testified that the aircraft "seemed to simply melt into the building," or that it "sort of disappeared." One witness said that the plane went into the building like a "toy into a birthday cake," and another said "it was in the air one moment and in the building the next." (71)

According to Ryan, "these witness accounts suggest that explosives were placed in the building in such a way that, when triggered, they created an opening to absorb and destroy the body of the aircraft. The renovation project would have been perfect cover for placing the explosives in such an exact configuration."

Ryan further adds that "the use of explosives could explain the damage done to the building, as well as the limited amount of recognizable aircraft debris at the site. It might also explain the FBI's desire to limit photography of the aircraft parts, which would otherwise have provided evidence for explosive effects. Explosives could have been planted under cover of the renovation project in such a way as to be triggered as the aircraft approached or impacted and create an opening that absorbed the majority of the aircraft." (72) Contrary to Ryan's explanation, one could ask why there would have been any need to create such an extra spectacle of the plane entering the building rather than just smashing into the facade - although, as we saw, it did result in the deaths of many of those investigating the missing \$2.3 trillion.

Notwithstanding this final muddying of the water by Ryan, (or perhaps the possible unification he has brought to seemingly contradictory theories) there will undoubtedly be those who are still scratching their heads in wonder about this anomaly or that, so I will conclude with the wise words of John Wyndham, who wrote that "while critics may demur that the scene was not what they would have expected, it is advisable to ask oneself just how many buildings have been impacted by large planes at very high speed, and what basis is there for presuming to know just how such impacts should look?"

WHY DID "DOOMSDAY" PLANES FLY OVER WASHINGTON ON 9/11?

One final mystery concerning the attack on the Pentagon is that two US Air Force E-4B command and control planes took off from Andrews Air Force Base on the morning of 9/11, with one taking off at 9.26am, eleven or twelve minutes before the Pentagon explosion and another one taking off at 9.44am, six or seven minutes after this event. The first of the two planes was seen flying over the White House

at 9.41am. (73)

For some unknown reason, the US Air Force has constantly denied any knowledge of the earlier flight. As has the Secret Service, which responded to an FOIA stating that they had "no records or documents of any kind relating to any aircraft whatsoever flying near or circling above the White House. (74) However, as author Mark Gaffney has noted, "this dramatic CNN footage erases any shreds of doubt and proves that a US Air Force plane, to be precise, an E-4B, circled over Washington at approximately the time of the Pentagon attack." (75) Gaffney describes the E-4B as "a state of the art communications platform and can serve as an airborne command center for all US military forces in a national or world crisis." (76)

According to the *Omata World-Herald*, (on 27/02/02) these two E-4Bs and another one, were participating in a war game known as Global Guardian, (see Chapter 6) although no mention of this exercise was made by the 9/11 Commission. It should be noted that CNN's footage of the E-4B was not actually shown on television on 9/11 and only surfaced due to the diligence of a 9/11 researcher, who managed to apply successfully for a copy of it from CNN archives.

Gaffney has raised some very serious questions about the Air Force denial of the E-4B over Washington. He referred to the failed attempt by Rep Adam Schiff to seek information about this plane on 9/11, after being requested to pursue it by one of his constituents. He was advised that "Air Force officials have no knowledge of the aircraft in question." (77). Gaffney noted that Schiff had security clearance to view classified material and that "if the E-4B fly-over on 9/11 was indeed classified, the US Air Force, at a minimum, was obligated to inform the congressman of this fact...Why then did they lie? Since when do US national security interests require the Pentagon to deceive the nation's duly-elected representatives?" (78)

Gaffney raised another fundamental question: "If 9/11 was a surprise, why was the E-4B over Washington?...as according to the official timeline, the US military did not learn about the approach of Flight 77, until barely two minutes before the Pentagon attack... The E-4B's presence constitutes a serious problem for this now-standard version of events." (79)

Gaffney concluded his research into the 9/11 "mystery plane" by asking if it can be "mere coincidence that the Pentagon strike was book-ended by E-4B departures from Andrews - one shortly before and one just after...but I will not speculate further about the E-4B's possible role. This is a question for a new 9/11 investigation. I believe that I have presented more than enough evidence to warrant such an inquiry." (80) Gaffney's fundamental question remains unanswered to this day - why was a Doomsday plane circling low in the sky over Washington just after the Pentagon was attacked?

One thing is clear and that is the determination of the military to deny any knowledge of the E-4B. However, evidence given to 9/11 Commission staffer, Miles Kara, by Lt Col Steven O'Brien on 6 May 2004 supports the evidence of Mark Gaffney above.(81) O'Brien was the pilot of a C-130 National Guard cargo plane that took off by 9:31am and was then asked by Air Traffic Control to monitor AA77 as it approached Washington en route to crashing into the Pentagon. It is important to bear in mind that an E-4B is a modified Boeing 747 before considering O'Brien's statement to Kara:

"O'Brien believes his take-off was delayed for three minutes [until 9:30am] at Andrews because a 747 took off right before him. Controller held O'Brien because of weight turbulence issues. There is a separation criteria between aircrafts at take off. O'Brien remembers watching the 747 "cranking up" at the same time as him. It got going and departed in an unusual short amount of time."

In other words, the 747 (E-4B) was in the air some minutes before O'Brien's C-130 (by

9.31am), thereby confirming the departure at approximately 9:26am - despite the denial by the military. Why have they felt the need to lie about this? Could it be because "given the astonishing capabilities of E-4Bs [as a flying radar / communications platform] to see for many hundreds of miles, it seems unlikely that military radar could not have spotted both incoming airlines [Flights 77 and 93]. Perhaps that E-4B was the source of the information being fed to Cheney prior to the plane crash at the Pentagon?"

Appendix 1: David Chandler: "The wing tips hit outside of the opening, causing visible damage to the exterior facade of the building. The wingtips appear to have been dragged into the hole. On the right we see Column 18 pushed to the south in reaction to being used as a fulcrum for the wing. On the left we see a vertical 4"x4" square steel tube, part of the new window reinforcement system, with steel plates originally oriented outward toward the lawn twisted as the left wing tip was dragged past it into the building." (email correspondence)

Appendix 2: David Chandler's critique of CIT's allegation of Lloyd England's taxi lamp pole damage being "staged."

"A major piece of evidence that tends to discredit the CIT theory is the light pole that hit a taxi driven by Lloyd England. This event testifies to the plane flyover and light pole impacts as real-time events. CIT responds to this counter-evidence by trying to discredit Mr. England. They go so far as to label him as a co-conspirator in the event. CIT bases its claim that the taxi incident was somehow faked by trying to catch Lloyd England in a lie. They go to elaborate lengths to convince Lloyd England that the pole he is describing was the 30 ft. long base from the first light pole, which would have been impossible for two men to lift and pull out without damaging the hood of the car. Craig Ranke literally tells Lloyd England that that is the pole he described, to which Lloyd responds with silence. Craig then goes on to argue that Lloyd's supposed claim that it was the long pole was a lie, that somehow shows the whole incident to have been faked. Several factors contradict the CIT account of Lloyd England's testimony. Lloyd early on made a sketch of the pole sticking out of the windshield which is not consistent with the 30 ft pole claim. When Lloyd England takes the CIT group to see the taxi his hand motions indicate a length of pole that is consistent with his sketch, not the 30 ft pole. Furthermore, whether or not Lloyd England may have misidentified the long pole as the one he removed, it could not possibly be the correct pole because once the taxi was hit it would take at least 164 ft for the taxi to come to a stop. The taxi stopped by light pole #1, which means it would have had to have been hit near light pole #2. There is in fact a piece missing from the debris from light pole #2, an 11 ft long brace, that is consistent with the pole in Lloyd England's drawing. The high pressure interviewing tactics used with Lloyd England, together with the illogical conclusion that a possible misidentification of which pole hit his taxi means he was not simply mistaken, but that he is lying and therefore the entire event was staged, is completely illogical, and the personal accusations CIT makes against Lloyd England are highly unethical, if not slanderous."(email correspondence with David Chandler)

NOTES FOR CHAPTER 3

- 1) 9/11 Commission Report, p40
- 2) David Ray Griffin, *Debunking 911 Debunking*, Arris, 2007, p32

- 3) https://govinfo.library.unt.edu/911/archive/hearing2/9-11Commission_Hearing_2003-05-23.htm
- 4) <https://www.scribd.com/document/14274489/DH-B3-White-House-Timelines-Fdr-Entire-Contents-Doug-Cochrane-and-14-Withdrawal-Notice-for-Draft-Time-Lines-089>
- 5) See note 3 above
- 6) Richard Clarke, *Against all Enemies*, Free Press, 2004, p1
- 7) Ibid, p2
- 8) Ibid, p4
- 9) Ibid, p5
- 10) http://www.911myths.com/images/a/a6/NYC_Box10_FarmerMisc-EricEdelmanInterview.pdf
- 11) <http://www.internationalskeptics.com/forums/showpost.php?p=6959886&postcount=131>
- 12) see note 11
- 13) <http://911blogger.com/news/2011-03-11/new-document-supports-norman-minetas-testimony-about-vp-dick-cheney>
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CHAPTER 4

FLIGHT 93

There are a number of serious problems with the official story of what happened to the fourth hijacked airplane, United Airlines Flight 93. The plane crashed at Shanksville, Pennsylvania, shortly after 10am and nearly half an hour after Flight 77 smashed into the Pentagon. The problems are as follows:

1) The amount of debris at the crash site did not appear consistent with the size of a 757 airplane.

For example, Scott Spangler, a photographer with a local newspaper, later recalled that "I didn't think I was in the right place. I was looking for a wing or a tail. There was nothing, just this pit...I was looking for anything that said tail, wing, plane, metal. There was nothing." (1)

Frank Monaco of the Pennsylvania State Police observed that "if you would go down there, it would look like a trash heap. There's nothing but tiny pieces of debris. It's just littered with small parts." (2)

Paula Pluta, a local resident, went to the crash scene shortly after the event and described seeing "just a big crater that looked...like something had gone in it, and rolled the dirt up around and buried itself...I'm looking around for plane wreckage and there's nothing...I just stood there in amazement. Where did this thing go?" (3)

Ron Delano was another local resident who rushed to the scene and said that "if they hadn't told us a plane had wrecked, you wouldn't have known. It looked like it hit and disintegrated." (4)

Assistant Fire Chief Rick King, who drove the first fire truck to reach the site, recalled thinking when he arrived: "Where is this plane? And where are the people?" King saw "thousands of tiny pieces scattered around - bits of metal, insulation, wiring - but no fuselage, no wings, only a smoking crater and charred earth." He further stated that "never in my wildest dreams did I think half the plane was down there under the ground." (5)

Jon Meyer, the first reporter on the scene, described being "able to get right up to the edge of the crater...All I saw was a crater filled with small, charred plane parts. Nothing that would even tell you that it was the plane. ... There were no suitcases, no recognizable plane parts, no body parts." (6)

As author Rowland Morgan observed, "it's hard to believe that an airliner up to 155 feet long, with two engines each weighing more than six tonnes, wings 125 feet wide, and a maximum total overall weight of 115 tonnes could have penetrated the ground so completely as to utterly disappear." (7)

Curiously, evidence of the hijackers was reportedly found at the scene, including a red bandana and the slightly burned passport of alleged pilot, Ziad Jarrah.(8)

2) Was the plane swallowed up by the ground?

It has been suggested that Flight 93 disappeared into the ground due to the softness of the soil at the crash scene. The area was a reclaimed coal mine and, following its closure, earth had been placed over the area where coal had been extracted. The ground was therefore relatively soft, thereby enabling the plane to burrow deeply down into the soil. This is a plausible explanation for how a plane could have burrowed into the ground,

except that it doesn't explain how the plane burrowed into the ground and then covered up almost every trace of itself?

The *Pittsburgh Post Gazette* described what was effectively a self-sealing hole in which "the Boeing 757's fuselage disintegrated in a crater that collapsed on itself." (9) However, as we will see below, it appears quite clear that a considerable number of the plane parts did not end up inside that hole.

3) Plane debris was found over an eight mile radius, as far away as New Baltimore, indicating that the plane was breaking up before it crashed.

As a result of this, the FBI cordoned off an area of several miles around the crash site. Moments after the crash, Carol Delasko initially thought someone had blown up a boat on Indian Lake: "It just looked like confetti [which could have been from the dispersed mail bags] raining down all over the air above the lake." (10)

Investigators stated that far-off wreckage "probably was spread by the cloud created when the plane crashed and dispersed by a ten mph south-easterly wind." (11) However, much of the wreckage was found sooner than that wind could have carried it, and not always southeast. As noted in a local newspaper, the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* two days later on 13/9/01, "Residents and workers at businesses outside Shanksville, Somerset County, reported discovering clothing, books, papers and what appeared to be human remains. Some residents said they collected bags-full of items to be turned over to investigators. Others reported what appeared to be crash debris floating in Indian Lake, nearly six miles from the immediate crash scene. Workers at Indian Lake Marina said that they saw a cloud of confetti-like debris descend on the lake and nearby farms minutes after hearing the explosion" that signalled the crash. John Fleegle, who managed the marina, reported "a piece of fuselage the size of a table dropped into the lake, about three miles from the crater." (12)

In a morning briefing, state police Major Lyle Szupinka confirmed that debris from the plane had turned up in relatively far-flung sites, including the residential area of Indian Lake. (13)

One eyewitness to the trail of debris, Tom Spinelli, said that, "it was mainly mail, bits of in-flight magazine and scraps of seat cloth...The authorities say it was blown here by the wind." When Tom was prompted: "But there was only a 10mph breeze and you were a mile and a half away?" Tom raised his eyebrows, rolled his eyes and said: "Yeah, that's what they reckon." (14)

Challenging the official narrative, Rowland Morgan has shown a photograph of metallic debris presented as evidence in the 2006 Moussaoui trial, which was found a mile from the impact crater. "This did not resemble the "very light material, such as paper and thin nylon the wind would easily blow" that the FBI at the site referred to in a CNN report of 13 September 2001. Indeed, "according to the NTSB, it is not only possible that the debris is from the crash, it is probable," FBI Agent Crowley reportedly said. (15)

Part of one of the plane's engine, weighing about 1,000 pounds, was found some distance away from the crash scene. John Marshall, a state police fire marshal and criminal investigator who found this piece of wreckage, said it was "600 yards from the crash site." However, *The Independent* reported on 13/8/02 that it was found 2,000 yards away and "this was the single heaviest piece recovered from the crash, and the biggest, apart from a piece of fuselage the size of a dining-room table." (16) Although there are contradictory accounts of how far the engine part was from the crash scene, the FBI reportedly acknowledged that

this piece was found "a considerable distance" from the crash site. (17)

Why would that engine part have been found so far away? Did Flight 93 break up in the air before impact. One report calls what happened to this engine "intriguing, because the heat-seeking, air-to-air Sidewinder missiles aboard an F-16 would likely target one of the Boeing 757's two large engines." (18)

Other wreckage was found near a pond by firefighter Mike Sube and a colleague, included "a portion of the landing gear and the fuselage." Sube said that "one of the tires was still intact with the bracket, and probably about three to five windows of the fuselage were actually in one piece lying there." (19)

Jim Hoffman has considered the issue of wind causing the debris trail and referred to an article in *Popular Mechanics* in March 2005. The article attempted to explain the far-flung debris by suggesting that the engine tumbled across the ground and the light debris was "blasted skyward by the heat of the explosion from the crash." However, Hoffman dismisses this theory, suggesting that: "Such scenarios are impossible given the nature of the crash, wherein the plane dove into the soft ground from a nearly vertical trajectory. This is evident in the deep impact crater whose shape mimics the cross-section of the aircraft, and by the agreement among eyewitnesses that the plane dropped from the sky in a vertical fashion." The vertical dive would have created a heap of debris around the site rather than disperse it over a wide area. (20)

Hoffman's analysis is supported by Rowland Morgan, who noted that "such a pattern [of far-flung debris] did not accord with a near-vertical nose-dive into the ground of an intact airliner, according to the experience of air-crash experts, who would have expected a plane in a vertical dive to create heaps of debris around the crash site." (21)

4) What happened to Barry Hoover's cottage?

Barry Hoover lived in a cottage, approximately 100 metres away from the crash site, set in a thick woodland area that should, ostensibly, have protected it from any significant fall-out, even allowing for a sound blast from the crashed plane. However, as described in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* on 14/9/01, "while it was still standing, every window and door had been blown off and obliterated, its ceilings and floor tiles had been blasted loose and much of the interior was wrecked." Hoover was even more graphic, "it looked like what you see after a tornado or hurricane goes through - a total ruin." Hoover also stated, poignantly, that he saw debris scattered at least a mile wide. "There was stuff everywhere back there. It made you want to drop to your knees and cry for those people," Hoover said. (22) One can only assume here that Hoover is referring to parts of the plane debris and that the trail led back into the deep woodland, rather than the entire plane being consumed in the small crater (described as 10 feet deep and 20 feet wide) as the official story states.

5) A number of witnesses saw a jet plane in the vicinity of the crash site before and after the crash. What was it doing there?

Here is the list of witnesses collated on the *History Commons* website:

Susan McElwain: Less than a minute BEFORE the Flight 93 crash rocked the countryside, she saw a small white jet with rear engines and no discernible markings swoop low over her minivan near an intersection and disappear over a hilltop, nearly clipping the tops of trees lining the ridge. (23) She later added, "There's no way I imagined this plane - it was so low it was virtually on top of me. It was white with no markings but it was definitely military, it just had that look. It had two rear engines, a

big fin on the back like a spoiler on the back of a car and with two upright fins at the side. I haven't found one like it on the Internet. It definitely wasn't one of those executive jets. The FBI came and talked to me and said there was no plane around.... But I saw it and it was there before the crash and it was 40 feet above my head. They did not want my story - nobody here did." (24)

A second plane was seen by at least ten witnesses flying low and in erratic patterns, not much above treetop level, over the crash site within minutes of United Flight 93 crashing. (25) Lee Purbaugh: "I didn't get a good look but it was white and it circled the area about twice and then it flew off over the horizon." (26)

John Fleegle and two work colleagues arrived at the crash site "before any fireman or paramedics or anybody." According to Fleegle, "When we got there, there was a plane flying up above and he was smart, he flew straight for the sun so you couldn't look at it and see exactly what type of plane, if it was a fighter or what it was." However, Fleegle claims the plane "was decent sized. It wasn't just a little private jet or something like that, from what we could see." (27)

Dennis Decker and /or Rick Chaney, said: "As soon as we looked up [after hearing the Flight 93 crash], we saw a mid-sized jet flying low and fast. It appeared to make a loop or part of a circle, and then it turned fast and headed out." Decker and Chaney described the plane as a Learjet type, with engines mounted near the tail and painted white with no identifying markings. "It was a jet plane, and it had to be flying real close when that 757 went down. If I was the FBI, I'd find out who was driving that plane." (28) Kathy Blades, who was staying about a quarter of a mile from the impact site, ran outside after the crash and saw a jet, "with sleek back wings and an angled cockpit," race overhead. (29)

Anna Ruth Fisher said: "After the crash, another jet went near over to look." Her mother, Anna B. Fisher, added, "We were looking at the smoke cloud when we saw the jets circling up there." (30) Bob Page saw a large plane circling the crash site for about two or three minutes, before climbing almost vertically into the sky. He could not see what kind of plane it was or if there were any markings on it, but said, "It sure wasn't no puddle jumper." (31)

Tom Spinelli: "I saw the white plane. It was flying around all over the place like it was looking for something. I saw it before and after the crash." (32) The FBI later claimed this was a Fairchild Falcon 20 business jet, directed after the crash to fly from 37,000 feet to 5,000 feet and obtain the coordinates for the crash site to help rescuers. However the FBI also noted that this jet was 20 miles away at the moment of the crash, so obviously couldn't have been the plane noted prior to the crash in the witness statements above. (33)

The business jet belonged to VF Corp, a Greensboro, North Carolina clothing firm. (34) According to David Newell, VF Corp's director of aviation and travel, Cleveland Centre contacted the plane's co-pilot Yates Gladwell when it was at an altitude "in the neighbourhood of 3,000 to 4,000 ft," rather than 37,000 feet, as claimed by the FBI. He added: "They got down within 1,500 ft of the ground when they circled. They saw a hole in the ground with smoke coming out of it. They pinpointed the location and then continued on." (35) This incident occurred approximately 40 minutes after the FAA initiated a nationwide ground stop, which required planes in the air to land as soon as reasonable. (36) The FBI claimed the VF Corp business jet was probably the plane some witnesses on the ground saw up above, shortly after the crash of Flight 93. (37)

However, as we have seen, at least two witnesses said they saw a plane overhead even before the time of the Flight 93 crash, and one of them described it as "definitely military," rather than a business jet. (38)

Unfortunately for the FBI, their explanation for the mystery of this white jet was undermined by no less an authority than the 9/11 Commission, which reported that "the aircraft that spotted the black smoke was the same unarmed Air National Guard cargo plane that had seen American 77 crash into the Pentagon 27 minutes earlier. It had resumed its flight to Minnesota and saw the smoke from the crash of United 93, less than 2 minutes after the plane went down." (39)

According to the FBI, this was a C-130 military cargo aircraft flying at 24,000 feet about 17 miles away, but that plane wasn't armed and had no role in the crash, although it would certainly have been able to give a reasonable description of the position of the crash. (40)

Indeed it did, as noted in the following dialogue, which was obtained through an FOIA obtained by John Farmer (not the Commission counsel) and shared with researcher/author Mark Gaffney: There was a recorded radio conversation between Steven O'Brien (GOF06 or gopher 06 in the transcript of the ATC tape) and Cleveland ATC, George Keaton (IRL-R in the transcript) with key passages in bold:

"10:05:15 GOF06 ah ok gopher zero six copies and ah sir if you'd like **we've got ah black smoke in sight at our nine o'clock now and like about thirty miles down low, probably rising up to about five thousand feet or so.** Over.

10:05:25 ORL-R you say black smoke in sight

10:05:31 GOF06 That's affirmative. **Black smoke. It's not a cloud, it's black smoke sir.**

10:05:41 IRL-R Ah, ok, is that smokes on the ground you say, coming off the ground.

10:05:46 GOF06 **Well, it looks like it's suspended in the air sir. Ah, it looks like it's at the same level as the scattered clouds. I guess it to be about ah three to five thousand feet in the air.** I can't tell if it's coming up off the plume right now, but there is a, ah, round cloud of black smoke at our nine o'clock.

10:06:00 IRL-R Ok, that would be just about right from what I was shown before it be at your nine o'clock and I'm gonna guess about, ah, seventeen or eighteen miles.

10:06:10 GOF06 Ok that, ah, that checks with gopher zero six sir, ah, **it's hard to tell if that smoke is originating on the ground or if it just happened in midair."**

As Mark Gaffney has noted, the above dialogue "rules out the possibility that United 93 crashed at 10:06 am, and indicates that the seismic signal must have been created by a separate event. The question then arises: What then, happened at 10:06 am?" (41) To be discussed later.

As we see from the above dialogue between Cleveland ATC and Steven O'Brien, pilot of the military cargo C-130, the crash co-ordinates would have been readily available to all concerned parties and there would have been no need to enlist the help of a civilian plane (which should have landed some time before the crash in response to the FAA's demand that all civilian planes land at the nearest airport.)

Furthermore, as the Commission was accurate in stating that the plane crashed at 10.03am, then the information from the National Guard plane would have been available 2 minutes before the Commission claims the military first became aware that Flight 93 had been hijacked, let alone crashed. The reason being that, according to the 9/11 Commission, "NEADS first received a call about United 93 from the military liaison at Cleveland Centre at 10:07" (42) As we can see above, with O'Brien confirming the crash at 10:05am, the military would have already been aware that Flight 93 had crashed.

Returning to the statements of these eyewitnesses above, they raise a number of

questions. Firstly, if the implausible story of the FBI was true, why was this Fairchild jet in the air after 10:05am when at 9:42am the FAA had ordered all aircraft to land immediately? The assumption appears to be that the FAA or NORAD or the Secret Service were in direct communication with this plane. If that wasn't the case, why hadn't the plane responded to the earlier order to land, given approximately twenty minutes beforehand by Ben Sliney at the FAA? As noted in the 9/11 Commission Report, "this was an unprecedented event. The air traffic control system handled it with great skill, as about 4,500 commercial and general aviation aircraft soon landed without incident." (43) Also, in view of the order to land, why did this aircraft (if it was indeed the one witnessed) disappear "vertically" from the crash scene when it should still have been under the FAA order to land at the earliest opportunity and thus remain as close to the ground as possible? After all, Somerset County Airport was only a few short miles away, so there would have been no sense in a vertical climb? As such, there is good reason to consider the possibility that the observed plane was acting under military instructions - despite the reported fact that (according to the 9/11 Commission) NEADS knew nothing about United 93 until after it crashed.

The FBI story has also been challenged by no less an authority than *The Independent*, which wrote: "The reason, as numerous people have observed, why this seems so implausible is that, first, by 10:06am on 11 September, all non-military aircraft in US airspace had received loud and clear orders more than half an hour earlier to land at the nearest airport; second, such was the density of 9/11 phone calls from people on the ground in the Shanksville area, as to the location of the crash site, that aerial co-ordinates would have been completely unnecessary; and, third, with F-16s supposedly in the vicinity, it seems extraordinarily unlikely that, at a time of tremendous national uncertainty when no one knew for sure whether there might be any more hijacked aircraft still in the sky, the military would ask a civilian aircraft that just happened to be in the area for help." (44) *The Independent* might be wrong in stating it was the military rather than an FAA air controller, who made this request, but even if that is the case, they should certainly have sought the assistance of the military rather than a civilian aircraft that should not have been in the air at this time.

6) Can it really be true that the FAA failed to notify the military during the 35 minutes between when it was aware of the hijack and its eventual crash?

According to the 9/11 Commission Report, Flight 93 left Newark at 8:42am, running more than 40 minutes late. At 9:07am, FAA controllers at the Boston Centre requested Herndon Command Centre to send out messages to all airborne planes to be vigilant about cockpit security although this was not followed through. (45) The FAA apparently thought that this was the sole responsibility of the airlines.

Eventually, Ed Ballinger of United Airlines sent a warning message to Flight 93 at 9:23am. The last normal transmission from this flight was heard four minutes later at 9:27am. One minute prior to this at 9:26am, pilot Jason Dahl asked Ballinger to confirm his warning, which he had received at 9:24am. One might have thought that, following Ballinger's warning, that Dahl would have endeavoured to secure the cockpit, but this was not to be the case. Soon after, at 9:28am, an FAA controller in Cleveland heard "unintelligible sounds of possible screaming" (46) and noticed the plane had descended 700 feet. The shout of "mayday" was heard from the flight deck followed by "hey, get out of here." A few minutes later at 9:32am the controller heard a voice saying "keep remain sitting, we have a bomb onboard." The controller informed his supervisor and FAA HQ were made aware by 9:34am. At 9:36am, the Cleveland Centre manager

discussed calling the military with Herndon Command Centre and volunteered to contact the nearby military base at Toledo. (47) The offer was declined by Herndon as, apparently, the decision had to go through a chain of command and they were "working on the issue." Incredibly, at 9:49am, 13 minutes later, the following conversation between Herndon and FAA HQ occurred:

HERNDON: Uh, do we want to think, uh, about scrambling aircraft?

FAA HQ: Oh God, I don't know.

HERNDON: Uh, that's a decision somebody's gonna have to make probably in the next ten minutes.

FAA HQ: Uh, ya know everybody just left the room. (48)

Just to put this stilted and almost unbelievable conversation into context, it should be noted that it took place 46 minutes after the second plane crashed into the WTC and 11 minutes after Flight 77 smashed into the Pentagon - and these senior FAA officials are pondering on whether to contact the military about Flight 93.

David Ray Griffin has suggested that: "To accept this account, we must believe that the decision to call the military is a momentous, extraordinary one, not a routine one, made over a hundred times a year. We must also believe that, on a day on which hijacked airliners had already caused much death and destruction, officials at FAA headquarters had to debate whether a hijacked airliner with a bomb on board was important enough to disturb the military." (49)

At 9:53am, the 9/11 Commission report states that, "FAA headquarters informed the [Hendon] Command Centre that the deputy director for air traffic services [Peter Challan] was talking to Monte Belger [Acting Deputy Administrator at FAA HQ] about scrambling aircraft. Then the Command Centre informed headquarters that controllers had lost track of Flight 93 over the Pittsburgh area" (50) before another aircraft was able to confirm its position. Neither of these senior figures were able to recall their recorded conversation but, suffice to say, neither made a call to request military involvement. According to the Commission, "NORAD did not even know the plane was hijacked until after it had crashed." (51)

Senior officials in the FAA challenged the blame apportioned to them by the 9/11 Commission: Ben Sliney, Operations Manager at Herndon, stated in his testimony to the 9/11 Commission that "available to us at the Command Centre is the military cell, which was our liaison with the military services. They were present at all of the events that occurred on 9/11...I was given to understand, were made promptly, the notifications on each hijack...If you tell the military, you've told the military. They have their own communication web...In my mind, everyone who needed to be notified about the events transpiring was notified, including the military... I was given to understand that all such notifications were made. I had no reason to believe they were not." (52)

Sliney's testimony was supported by Monte Belger, the FAA's acting deputy administrator, who stated in his testimony that "there were military people on duty at the FAA Command Centre, as Mr Sliney said...They were participating in what was going on." (53) Inexplicably, the evidence of these two senior FAA officials was eliminated from the final report. So too was General Arnold's statement to the Commission on 23b May 2003, in which he said that "our focus...was on United 93, which was being pointed out to us very aggressively I might say by the FAA."

THE FBI MAY ALSO BE CULPABLE?

As we know, the 9/11 Commission fully blamed the FAA for not notifying NORAD.

Even if this were true, the FBI would appear equally culpable. Rowland Morgan asked why the FBI did not immediately alert the military after they were called between 9:28am and 9:34am by passenger Tom Burnett's wife, Deena, who promptly alerted them after his call to her at the beginning of the hijack. As Morgan points out, there is a need "for the FBI to explain why it did not alert the US Air Force, which claimed that it heard about Flight 93 a full [33] minutes later at 10:07am." (54)

Morgan also stated that, "the general knowledge at the Bureau of Flight 93 being another hijack was confirmed by a Newark, New Jersey, flight controller named Greg Callaghan, who remembered talking about Flight 93 on the phone to an FBI agent (unnamed) at 9:41am. The agent reportedly told him: "We suspect that this aircraft has now been taken over by hostile forces." But still no call apparently went to the US Air Force." (55)

7) Was the 9/11 Commission Report correct in claiming that the military had no knowledge of the hijacking of Flight 93 before it crashed?

There is considerable evidence to suggest that the military were well aware of Flight 93. However, before considering this, there is a fundamental question to address: is it conceivable, given that both the Twin Towers and the Pentagon had been attacked by 9:37am, that nobody in the military over the next 26 minutes thought to ask the FAA about any other hijacked planes? The failure to do so would surely have been gross negligence, and yet that is precisely what the 9/11 Commission Report would have us believe - but without suggesting that anyone in a position of authority should be held responsible.

According to *History Commons*, and contrary to what the Commission would have us believe, the FAA set up a hijacking teleconference with several agencies at 9:20 am, including the Defence Department. This is almost one hour after the FAA's Boston flight control began notifying the chain of command and other flight control centers about the first hijacking at 8:25 a.m

According to the Acting FAA Deputy Administrator Monte Belger, this teleconference (called the "hijack net") is "the fundamental primary source of information between the FAA, [Defence Department], FBI, Secret Service, and... other agencies." Yet even after the delay in setting it up, FAA and Defence Department participants later claim it played no role in co-ordinating the response to the hijackings. The 9/11 Commission Report stated that, "the NMCC [National Military Command Centre inside the Pentagon] officer who participated told us that the call was monitored only periodically because the information was sporadic, it was of little value, and there were other important tasks. The FAA manager of the teleconference also remembered that the military participated only briefly before the Pentagon was hit." (56)

One might wonder why the military was not liaising directly with the FAA following the crash of the second plane into the Twin Towers? Also, what were the "other important tasks" that justified not contacting the FAA? This issue will be considered further in chapter 6.

At 9:33am, FAA Administrator Jane Garvey notified the video conference chaired by counterterrorism "tsar" Richard Clarke that all aircraft had been ordered to land at the nearest field and noted a list of potential hijacks including Delta 1989 (discussed in chapter 6) and United 93. (57) Clarke then wrote that Brian Stafford, Director of the Secret Service, passed him a note, "radar shows aircraft headed this way." Clarke stated that the Secret Service, in the White House, had a system that allowed them to see what

FAA's radar was seeing. At the same time that Stafford stated his intention to evacuate the White House, they were informed of the explosion at the Pentagon. So, the question here is if Stafford was referring to Flight 77 (in which case he was way too late to order evacuation of the White House), or was he referring to Flight 93, which had changed direction and was then moving towards Washington? If the latter is the case, then the Secret Service are also complicit in failing to notify the military.

According to Clarke's account, both General Richard Myers and Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld were present at the conference at this point, although the 9/11 Commission later claimed that the military was not notified about the hijacking of United 93 until over half an hour later. However, there is an additional problem with Clarke's account, because, (as we saw in Chapter 3) Rumsfeld was in a CIA briefing from the time of the second crash at the World Trade Centre (which he should have abandoned in view of what was happening at that time) and he then spent approximately half an hour at the scene of the Pentagon crash (where he should also not have been due to the need to be involved in responding to the breach in America's defences - after all he was the Secretary of Defence!) What is one to make of Clarke's account?

8) Evidence that the Military were aware of Flight 93

According to the 9/11 Commission, NORAD was oblivious to the fate of Flight 93 until 10:07, four minutes after it claims that it crashed. However, there are some anomalies here that need to be considered, apart from the press reports that F-16s were in hot pursuit before the plane crashed. (58) No less an authority than Deputy Defence Secretary Paul Wolfowitz stated a few days after 9/11 that "the Air Force was tracking the plane that crashed in Pennsylvania...and had been in a position to bring it down if necessary." (59)

The Mayor of Shanksville, Ernie Stuhl, was reported as saying that based on what he knew about that morning, that military F-16 fighter jets were "very, very close." (60)

Colonel Robert Marr, the commanding officer of NEADS (NORAD'S north-eastern sector), when interviewed by the 9/11 Commission, stated that he had been monitoring Flight 93 after it was hijacked. As researcher Kevin Ryan noted, "NEADS intelligence officer Lt Col Mark Stuart, who was standing right next to Marr during the crisis, reported the same thing. Both of them said that they were tracking Flight 93." (61) Were these two experienced officers experiencing a *follie a deux* moment or did they genuinely track the hijacked plane. Their evidence strongly challenges the 9/11 Commission, which was determined to whitewash any evidence that the military failed to defend the nation.

General Larry Arnold, who was the commanding general of NORAD's Continental Region on 9/11, told a similar story in his testimony to the Commission's Hearing on 23 May 2003, saying "it was our intent to intercept United Flight 93...But we decided to stay over Washington DC, because there was not that urgency. So we elected to stay over DC until that aircraft was definitely coming towards us." He further added that the Air Force had not been given a "shoot down" order prior to its crash, stating that "we were informed of presidential authority some five minutes after that aircraft hit the ground, according to our records." So, it would appear that the military were very aware of Flight 93, but did not have authorisation to shoot it down. One might ask why such authorisation was not sought in view of what had happened to the Twin Towers and the Pentagon? Or was the decision already in the hands of other operatives - perhaps the

secret service?

Major Daniel Nash, an F-15 pilot sent to New York City that morning, reported that when he returned to base he was told that a military F-16 had shot down an airliner in Pennsylvania. (62) It has been suggested that Nash was given this information erroneously, arising out of the confusion abounding that morning. However, it does seem unlikely that confusion could have led to such a story, if there was no basis for it. Furthermore, during an interview with Peter Jennings on *ABC News* a year later, Brigadier General Winfield Montague, Deputy Director for Operations at the Pentagon's NMCC, made this twofold point while adding that the military had received shoot-down authorization: "We received the report from the FAA that Flight 93 had turned off its transponder ... and was now heading towards Washington, DC... The decision was made to try to go intercept Flight 93... The Vice President [said] that the President had given us permission to shoot down innocent civilian aircraft that threatened Washington, DC. We started receiving reports from the fighters that were heading to ... intercept. The FAA kept us informed with their time estimates as the aircraft got closer and closer ... At some point, the closure time came and went, and nothing had happened, so you can imagine everything was very tense in the NMCC... It was about, you know, 10:03 that the fighters reported that Flight 93 had crashed. (63) More evidence that the military were aware of Flight 93 is provided through *History Commons*, which reported the following disclosure:

"In April 2002, Anthony Kuczynski told the University of St. Thomas's weekly newspaper that he had flown toward Pittsburgh alongside two F-16s on 9/11. He said he was piloting an E-3 Sentry AWACS plane, which has advanced radar and surveillance equipment that can be used to direct fighter jets to their targets. He was just about to intercept Flight 93 when it crashed. He said, "I was given direct orders to shoot down an airliner." E-3s are unarmed, so, if this account is accurate, the order presumably applied to the fighters Kuczynski was accompanying." (64)

Finally, could it be that confirmation of Flight 93's fate was provided by an apparent slip-up by Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld in an interview with Brigadier General James Marks aired on December 24, 2004 when he inadvertently (or was it a Freudian slip?) referred to the plane "shot down" over Pennsylvania?

9) Was Flight 93 shot down or was there a bomb on board that exploded?

Passengers on three flights reported hijackers claiming to have a bomb but, according to the 9/11 Commission, "the FBI told us they found no trace of explosives at the crash sites...lacking any evidence that the hijackers attempted to smuggle such illegal items past the security screening checkpoints, we believe the bombs were probably fake." (65)

Let's assume that the 9/11 Commission was right on this point and move on to consider the possibility that Flight 93 was shot down.

The following reports were compiled by *History Commons*:

"Several local people believe they heard a missile overhead just before Flight 93 goes down. Barry Lichty, a US Navy veteran and mayor of Indian Lake Borough (just to the east of where Flight 93 crashes), is watching television with his wife. He says he hears "a loud roar above the house that sounded like a missile.... Shortly thereafter, we heard an explosion and a tremor. My first reaction, as a former utility employee, was that maybe someone shot a missile into the substation." (66)

Joe Wilt, who lives a quarter-mile from the crash site, hears a "whistling like a missile, then a loud boom." He says, "The first thing I thought it was, was a missile."(67)

Ernie Stuhl, the mayor of Shanksville, later said, "I know of two people - I will not

mention names - that heard a missile. They both live very close, within a couple of hundred yards.... This one fellow's served in Vietnam and he says he's heard them, and he heard one that day." (68) Mark Gaffney has suggested that "a missile impact and explosion might account for the otherwise unexplained seismic signal at 10:06am." (69)

It is worth noting that some passenger planes hit by missiles have continued to fly erratically for several minutes before crashing. For instance, a Korean Airline 747 was hit by two Russian missiles in 1983, yet continued to fly for two more minutes. (70)

If the official story is true then people jumping from the plane is the only way human remains could have been found miles from Flight 93's crash site. A more logical explanation is that one or more people inside the plane were sucked out because of a sudden depressurisation, but what could have caused that if not a missile?

Further evidence of depressurisation is provided by comments of relatives of Flight 93 passengers who heard the cockpit tape on 18 April 2002 and later reported they heard sounds of an on-board struggle beginning at 9:58 a.m, but there was a final "rushing sound" at 10:03, and the tape fell silent. (71) The "rushing sound" could well indicate that a depressurisation occurred.

John Farmer, senior legal counsel on the 9/11 Commission, has challenged the idea that Flight 93 was shot down, stating that the National Transportation Safety Board synchronised the voices on the cockpit voice recorder with the flight data recorder, which showed that the plane was not shot down. Farmer further argued that it did not crash due to a struggle in the cockpit but, rather, "as the final, clearly heard cries of *Allah Akhbar* made clear, it was the last desperate act of a failed mission, taken because the hijackers feared that the passengers and crew would retake the plane and land it safely." (72)

However, Farmer's argument would appear to be refuted by more evidence of a missile attack, provided by Edward Felt. He made an emergency call at 9:58am: "Eight minutes before the crash, he had called 911 from an airplane lavatory and reached a dispatcher in Westmoreland County. In a conversation with the dispatcher lasting about one minute, he spoke in a quivering voice saying, "We are being hijacked. We are being hijacked." He went on to describe an "explosion" that he heard, and then white smoke on the plane from an undetermined location. Then the line went dead." (73)

Felt repeatedly told Westmoreland dispatch supervisor, Glenn Cramer, that his call was not a hoax and said the plane was going down. One can but surmise, but it would seem probable that the explosion that Felt mentioned was caused by the plane being hit by a missile, which caused the white smoke and the ensuing depressurisation that led to the plane going down.

It is noteworthy that "neither the FBI nor anyone else in authority has explained the reported 911 phone call from the plane toilet, even though it appears to be the last of the phone calls made from the plane and even though it conveys the far from insignificant claim that there was an explosion on board. The FBI has confiscated the tape of the conversation and the operator Glen Cramer has received orders not to speak to the media any more." (74) It would appear that the FBI took these actions because Felt's phone call challenges the official narrative of what happened.

WHY NO JET FUEL AT THE CRASH SITE?

More evidence of an explosion on Flight 93 is provided by the investigation carried out by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, which found no evidence of jet fuel contamination at the crash site, despite the plane having been nearly fully loaded with fuel. (75)

Six days after 9/11, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) began taking soil samples around the Flight 93 crash site, to test for jet fuel and other hazardous materials.

According to the National Transportation Safety Board, Flight 93 had about 37,500 pounds of fuel remaining when it crashed, which was around 77 percent of its fuel load on takeoff. (76) Yet the DEP tests found no evidence of this huge volume of jet fuel at the crash site. (77) Two weeks after the tests began, DEP spokeswoman Betsy Mallison reported that "no contamination has been discovered." She said that, "whether it burned away or evaporated," much of the jet fuel assumed to have spilled at the site "seems to have dissipated." (78)

David E. Hess from DEP suggested the absence of jet fuel was because most of the fuel had been consumed by the crash's fire. However, some of the first witnesses to arrive at the scene noticed only very small fires there, so his theory would not appear plausible.

For example, Faye Hahn was a local emergency medical technician whose company was quickly dispatched to the crash site. However, she has recalled, "Arriving on the scene" there was "no smoke, no fire." (79)

Similarly, Lee Purbaugh, who worked at a nearby scrap yard, was also one of the first to arrive. Reportedly, he "scrambled down the bluff from the scrap metal company and ran 300 yards to the place where the plane had crashed." He found "a smoking hole in the ground. But why wasn't there more fire?" (80)

ELECTRONIC INTERFERENCE?

An alternative theory to a missile strike is that Flight 93 could have been brought down using "electromagnetic interference". According to one report, "the US Air Force and Pentagon have in fact "conducted extensive research on 'electronic warfare applications' with the possible capacity intentionally to disrupt the mechanisms of an airplane in such a way as to provoke, for example, an uncontrollable dive." (81) This article referred to the research of Elaine Scarry who explored such a possibility in a series of articles in the *New York Review of Books*. (82) She reported that "US Customs aircraft are already equipped with such weaponry; as are some C-130 Air Force transport planes. The FBI has stated that, apart from the enigmatic Falcon business jet, there was a C-130 military cargo plane within 25 miles of the passenger jet when it crashed. According to the Scarry findings, in 1995 the Air Force installed "electronic suites" in at least 28 of its C-130s – capable, among other things, of emitting lethal jamming signals." (83)

According to *History Commons*, a series of strange, and so far unexplained electrical events, occurred in tandem with the crash of Flight 93:

"John Fleegle, a manager at the Indian Lake Marina about 1.5 miles from where Flight 93 crashed, was indoors with some colleagues, watching the televised coverage of the World Trade Centre attack. Then, as he later described, "all of a sudden the lights flickered and we joked that maybe they were coming for us. Then we heard engines screaming close overhead. The building shook. We ran out, heard the explosion and saw a fireball mushroom," following the crash. When he later described this incident while on a training course in Atlanta, Fleegle was told that what happened meant Flight 93 "was shot down." A man there who said he was a retired Air Force officer told Fleegle, "[W]hen your lights flickered, [it was because] they zap the radar frequency on everything before they shoot. Your lights didn't flicker from the impact - your lights

flickered because they zapped the radar system before they shot it.” However, William “Buck” Kernan, a retired four-star Army general, has disputed this claim, saying: “Regarding an aircraft engaging an airborne target having an electrical disruption on the ground, no, this would not be a result of lock on or any electromagnetic pulsing.” He suggested it was “possible that overpressure from explosions could momentarily disrupt microwave connections or cause sensations on ground relays, wiring, etc.” that might result in the lights having flickered. (84) Moreover, consistent with Fleegle’s allegation, a number of local residents - including military veterans - said they heard the sound of a missile overhead just before the time of the crash. Another local resident, Val McClatchey, recalled that her lights and phone went out around the time of the crash. (85) Barry Lichty, mayor of Indian Lake Borough, reported that the town’s electricity went off around this time. He later learned that the plane crash had disrupted service to the borough. (86) It would therefore seem credible that Flight 93 could have been attacked electronically, although the evidence for a missile attack seems far more convincing.

WHY WOULD THE MILITARY HAVE SHOT DOWN FLIGHT 93?

One might reasonably ask why the US military would have shot Flight 93 down? Given the plane's general course, the conventional wisdom is that Flight 93 was headed toward Washington and therefore threatened a strike on the White House or Capitol Building, though it was approximately 130 miles away at the time of the crash. However, *The Times* of London, quoting U.S. intelligence sources and noting the plane's low altitude and erratic course, suggested the real target might have been one of the state's nuclear power plants. With Flight 93 travelling at the speed of 500 mph, the Three Mile Island plant, near Harrisburg, was only ten or fifteen minutes away.

One possible explanation is that if the passengers had seized the cockpit, they may have discovered that the plane was under remote control, as discussed in chapter 3. They could then have told their loved ones on their mobile phones, which would certainly have had reception when the plane was flying at low altitude. In such a scenario, the entire false flag attack would have unravelled. If this was the case, it may well be that there was a fighter jet in the area and that, as Mark Gaffney surmised, "it had to be an unauthorized aircraft, because NORAD fighters are equipped with military transponders and doubtless would have shown up on radar at some point in their flight. Yet, a summary of the 9/11 radar data from NORAD's Northeastern Air Defence Sector (NEADS) shows that no NORAD fighters were anywhere near Shanksville during the relevant time frame...If an unauthorized plane *was* in the area it probably had its military transponder turned off and may also have been utilizing stealth technology." (87)

Rowland Morgan supports Gaffney's hypothesis above, suggesting that "NORAD denials might have been the truth. There were plenty of resources within the secret state [remember Rumsfeld's statement the day before 9/11 that the Pentagon were unable to account for \$2.3 trillion] that could have intervened. The US Secret Service, the CIA, and the military corporations all had access to jet fighters, missiles and pilots." (88)

WHAT TIME DID FLIGHT 93 CRASH AND WHY IS THE EXACT TIME IMPORTANT?

The 9/11 Commission stated definitively that the plane crashed at 10:03 am and that

the military was unaware of it having been hijacked until four minutes later at 10:07 am. However, this timeline is problematical because of the conclusion of earth scientists Won-Young Kim and G.R.Baum who, in the spring of 2002, published "Seismic Observations during September 11, 2001 Terrorist Attack" in a report to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. In their paper, they concluded that the time of Flight 93's crash was 10:06:05, plus or minus five seconds. They reached their conclusion by analysing the seismic records of four seismic recording stations.

According to the 9/11 Commission, Won-Young Kim later retracted his conclusion that Flight 93 crashed at 10:06. The Commission Report states that Flight 93 crashed at 10:03, (89) and provided the following footnote: "The seismic data on which they based this estimate are far too weak in signal-to-noise ratio and far too speculative in terms of signal source to be used as a means of contradicting the impact time established by the very accurate combination of FDR, CVR, ATC, radar, and impact site data sets. These data sets constrain United 93's impact time to within one second, are airplane- and crash-site specific, and are based on time codes automatically recorded in the ATC audiotapes for the FAA centers and correlated with each data set in a process internationally accepted within the aviation accident investigation community. Furthermore, one of the study's principal authors now concedes that "seismic data is not definitive for the impact of UA 93." (90)

As we will see below, it would seem that Won-Young Kim is right about the seismic data not being definitive for the impact of Flight 93, but this simply raises another problem.

SO WHAT HAPPENED AT SHANKSVILLE? MORE QUESTIONS THAN ANSWERS.

One of the mysteries about Flight 93 is why it took the hijackers so long to take over the plane and change direction. The flight had been delayed for 40 minutes and they should have acted quickly in order to achieve whatever their plan was, whether it was to crash into the White House or World Trade Centre 7. How could it be that "although the US Air Force had known for 40 minutes that a second plane had hit Manhattan, hijackers nevertheless felt confident enough of the air force's unreadiness to U-turn and commence a 30 minute flight towards America's most heavily defended buildings." (91) Could it be that the hijackers had to improvise due to the unforeseen delay at Newark airport? They would surely have realised that there was a very real risk of the US Air Force intercepting the flight, following the attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon?

Another mysterious issue, as described by Mark Gaffney, is that "although the commercial plane supposedly disintegrated when it impacted the ground nose down at a velocity of around 500 mph, surprisingly, the black box in the tail of the aircraft failed to register a sudden longitudinal deceleration at the moment of impact...Nor did United 93's Cockpit Voice Recorder (CVR) record the loud sound of impact, as might be expected as the nose of the plane hit the ground." (92) This strange anomaly was confirmed by family members who were allowed to listen to the CVR in 2002, who reported that they heard sounds of a struggle before hearing a "rushing sound" at 10:03am and then nothing further.

Then there is also the evidence of Lt Col O'Brien, pilot of the C-130 cargo plane, who (as noted earlier) described how "it's hard to tell if that smoke is originating on the

ground or if it just happened in midair...it looks like its suspended in the air, sir. Ah, it looks like it's at the same level as the scattered clouds. I guess it to be about ah three to five thousand feet in the air." What possible explanation for his description of "Black smoke. It's not a cloud, it's black smoke sir" can there be other than that Flight 93 experienced some form of explosion, while O'Brien confirms that the black smoke plume was suspended in the air. His evidence clearly supports what now appears to be quite obvious - that the evidence of the debris trail for miles around, as well as the fragmented and small amount of evidence at the crash scene would appear to indicate that the plane had started to break up in the air before it finally crashed.

We also know from the transcription of O'Brien's communications with Cleveland Air Traffic Controller that there was a crash / explosion before 10:05am, consistent with the Commission's time of 10:03am. However, there is still an unexplained seismic signal at 10:06am, notwithstanding Won-Young Kim's retraction. Another leading seismologist, Terry Wallace, who led the Southern Arizona Seismic Laboratory, confirmed that "the seismic signals are consistent with an impact of 10:06:05, plus or minus two seconds." (93) It should be noted that there was no seismic signal for 10:03am, so what could have caused one at 10:06am?

Consider this report described by *History Commons*: "Bill Wright is piloting a small plane when an air traffic controller asks him to look around outside his window, according to his later claims. Wright sees Flight 93 three miles away—close enough that he can see the United Airlines colors. Air traffic control asks him the plane's altitude, and then commands him to get away from the plane and land immediately. Wright sees the plane rock back and forth three or four times before he flies from the area. He will later say, "That's one of the first things that went through my mind when they told us to get as far away from it as fast as we could—that either they were expecting it to blow up or they were going to shoot it down, but that's pure speculation." (94)

Morgan has suggested another possibility here: "The obvious way to explain this intervention was if the air traffic controllers were military or secret-state personnel, who knew that the plane had been hit by a missile, by cannon fire, by chemical laser, or even some electronics-busting sound-ray, one of which had disabled the aircraft, causing it to wobble and veer, losing debris through an impact hole and, finally, crash. These controllers would have needed to confirm that the plane was losing altitude and about to go down. Cases of airliners being hit by missiles showed that they could limp on for a couple of minutes before crashing. The wings might well rock as they struggled to keep the disabled plane airborne." (95)

According to the 9/11 Commission, the FAA Command Centre told FAA headquarters that a nearby plane has seen Flight 93 "waving his wings." The Commission concluded that, "the aircraft had witnessed the radical gyrations in what we believe was the hijackers' effort to defeat the passenger assault," (96) which presumably is a reference to Bill Wright's description above.

While the Commission explained the plane's rocking movements as being due to the onboard fight between the passengers and the terrorists, Morgan's explanation seems equally plausible. If that is the case, there would also be a good explanation for the seismic signal at 10:06am, because a further missile may have been fired to destroy the damaged plane as it crashed, in order to eradicate all evidence at the scene. Could a cruise missile, as Gaffney hypothesised, account for the flying object reported by Susan

McElwain, which she described as travelling about 40 feet above the ground and skimming the tree tops? This could also explain the widely dispersed tiny pieces of debris at the crash site. As was noted at the beginning of this chapter, the plane had simply disintegrated. According to one eyewitness, Ron Delano, "if they hadn't told us a plane had wrecked, you wouldn't have known. It looked like it hit and disintegrated." (97)

The idea of a missile impact at the crash site is admittedly speculative, but it would account for the 10:06 seismic signal, as well as Lt Col O'Brien's conversation with the Cleveland air controller, indicating that the plane had either crashed or exploded in the air before 10.05am. Given that survivors would pose a serious threat of exposure, if indeed a nefarious cabal of insiders was behind the attacks, it would have to be ready to resort to whatever means necessary to destroy the hijacked plane and silence all possible witnesses.

However far-fetched the above speculation may seem, there is no doubt that many eyewitnesses do not believe the official story, as noted by this newspaper report two months after the event: "Go to Shanksville and the surrounding farm fields where people actually saw or heard the jetliner go down at roughly 10:06 that morning and there are a number of people -- including witnesses -- who also think that Flight 93 was shot down, or at least aren't ruling it out." (98)

I will conclude with the observations of James Sander, a former police officer turned investigative reporter:

"What if, when the Cockpit Voice Recorder was first played back, the missing three minutes were not missing? What if the CVR recorded the heroic passengers succeeding in taking over the cockpit? They were definitely on the offense when the CVR allegedly stopped. They had penetrated into the cockpit."

What if, in the cruelest of fates, just as these Americans win the fight and begin to fly the plane, a heat-seeking missile slams into an engine?

What if that is what the missing three minutes actually revealed? No president, no administration, would willingly destroy itself by releasing that CVR transcript." (99)

NOTES

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- 8) Athens Banner-Herald, 10/9/04
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 - 18) Ibid - same date
 - 19) Glenn J. Kashurba, *Courage After the Crash*, pp. 36-37
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 - 21) Morgan, p137, referring to a quote from David King, a Principal Inspector in Air Accident Investigation in England, interviewed on PBS-TV's Nova programme - "If the aircraft has come down vertically with relatively low energy, the wreckage will be contained in a relatively small area, dependent on the size of the aircraft, of course."
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 - 23) Bergen Record, 14/9/2001
 - 24) *Daily Mirror*, 12/9/2002
 - 25) *Independent*, 13/8/2002
 - 26) *Daily Mirror*, 12/9/2002
 - 27) Lappe and Marshall, 2004, p35-36
 - 28) *Bergen Record*, 14/9/2001
 - 29) *Philadelphia Daily News*, 18/11/2001
 - 30) Kashurba, 2002, p27
 - 31) *Pittsburgh Tribune Review*, 12/9/2001
 - 32) *Daily Mirror*, 12/9/2002
 - 33) Pittsburgh Channel, 15/9/2001, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 16/9/2001
 - 34) Ibid, *Gazette*, 16/9/2001
 - 35) *Popular Mechanics*, March 2005
 - 36) 9/11 Commission Report, p25
 - 37) Pittsburgh Channel, 15/9/2001
 - 38) *Bergen Record*, 14/9/2001, *Daily Mirror*, 12/9/2002
 - 39) 9/11 Commission Report, p30
 - 40) Pittsburgh Channel, 15/9/2001. *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 16/9/2001
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 - 43) Ibid, p29
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 - 46) Ibid, p28
 - 47) Lynne Spencer, *Touching History*, Free Press, 2008, p159
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 - 49) <https://911truth.org/norad-tapes-verify-911-commission-report/>
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CHAPTER 5

SHENANIGANS AT THE CIA, FBI AND NSA

There are many different possible points in time to start this story of the US intelligence agencies in relation to 9/11. I will start with the co-ordinated bombing of the American embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania on 7th August 1998. Al-Qaeda's communications were being intercepted by the National Security Agency (NSA) prior to these terrorist attacks. The al-Qaeda phone switchboard, the "Yemen hub" was run from 1996 onwards by Ahmed al-Hada, an old fighting colleague of Osama bin Laden. Around this time, the NSA began monitoring calls to the hub, probably due to the number of calls bin Laden had made to it using his satellite phone. Interestingly, it was not until June 1998, that bin Laden was charged by the US with being the leader of a terrorist organisation and with planning, and taking part in, terrorist activities. On 4 November, the indictment was updated to include the East African embassy bombings, although he was never indicted for 9/11, strangely enough. (1)

The NSA didn't want to share their full intelligence with the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency), but agreed to provide summaries of their information. The CIA were not satisfied with this offer, as they wanted the actual transcripts in order to fully comprehend what was going on. They therefore set up their own intercept facility in the Indian Ocean, but as their technology was inferior to that of the NSA, they were still unable to eavesdrop with any great success. The failure of these two intelligence agencies to co-operate enabled the attacks on the two embassies to proceed without interference.

The Yemen hub became the strategic centre for al-Qaeda activity, both for handling calls and as a safe house for operatives. Bin Laden and his top aides made 221 calls to the hub between 1996 and 1998 and it was here that the planning for the African embassy bombings in August 1998 and the attack on the *USS Cole* in October 2000 were carried out. (2)

Following the embassy bombings, the CIA was given the opportunity it had previously been denied, as noted in the CIA Inspector General report in 2005:

"In the late 1990s...NSA managers offered to allow a CTC (Counterterrorist Centre) officer to be detailed to the NSA to cull the transcripts for useful information. CTC sent one officer to NSA for a brief period of time in 2000, but failed to send others, citing resource constraints." (3)

Quite rightly, the CIA Inspector General considered this decision to have been negligent, recommending that "an Accountability Board review the performance of the Chiefs of the CTC for their failure to detail officers to NSA on a consistent full-time basis to exploit this material in the years before 9/11." (4) Perhaps, the only reasonable explanation for this otherwise inexplicable decision by the CIA was that it had improved its own satellite capacity to intercept the calls to and from the hub, or that it had engaged the Yemeni security services to do the bugging on its behalf?

THE WHOLE WORLD SOON KNEW ABOUT THE HUB!

One of the most bizarre intelligence blunders in relation to 9/11 is how, during the embassy bombings trial in New York on 7 March 2001 as Kevin Fenton, (author of *"Disconnecting the Dots - How CIA and FBI officials helped enable 9/11 and evaded government investigations"*) described it, "the US revealed to the world, and to al-Qaeda, that it was aware of the Yemen hub" (5) with FBI agent Stephen Gaudin actually

disclosing the phone number of Ahmed al-Hada, who had been called by embassy bomber, Al-Owhali, on a number of occasions. At a further court hearing, the phone number of the Yemen hub, which was still the active al-Qaeda logistics center was read out in open court a total of thirteen times. What possible explanation can there be for this apparent oversight? (6)

Equally bizarrely, Jason Burke wrote an article in *The Observer* on 5 August 2001, just five weeks before 9/11, in which he mentioned the number of the Yemen hub, phoned by al-Owhali. As Kevin Fenton remarked, "this is almost surreal...Any of the Observer's readers could have called the number and asked for a message to be forwarded to Osama bin Laden...What is even more absurd is that al-Qaeda continued to use the communications center after it was revealed at the trial...Why would al-Qaeda use a communications center it must have known the US was monitoring? (7) More to the point is why, at this point, the US did not simply arrest al-Hada and his associates. They would surely have recognised that al-Hada would know that he had been rumbled and liable to rendition or assassination? If the assumption within the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) was that they didn't want to close down the hub as a source of useful information then why, in the words of Kevin Ryan, "did the Bureau not work to intercept the calls made in the months and weeks before 9/11 and use them to help stop the attacks?" (8)

AL-QAEDA INCOMPETENCE

Things didn't go quite to plan with the embassy bombings. Lawrence Wright, author of *The Looming Tower*, described how one of the al-Qaeda suicide bombers, Mohammed al-Owhali, should have died as a martyr in the explosion at the Kenyan US embassy in which 213 people died, including 12 Americans, with another 4,500 people injured. However, he didn't die and was soon arrested, based on a tip-off from a local who was suspicious of him. He was then linked to al-Qaeda when a phone call he had made was traced back to the Yemen hub, which he admitted to FBI agents when interviewed. Al-Owahli's error in not dying in the suicide attack in Nairobi was compounded by an even greater degree of incompetence in relation to the bombing of the US embassy in Dar es Salaam, in which eleven died with eighty-five injured. Despite planning the attacks for several years, the al-Qaeda terrorists inadvertently chose to attack the US embassy on the date of a national holiday in Tanzania. Consequently, the embassy was closed and the number of fatalities was much reduced. (9)

The NSA were monitoring calls to the Yemen hub, so why weren't they able to intercept al-Owahli and his fellow conspirators as they should have been well aware of what was being planned, having intercepted his calls to the hub before the attacks. Also, why has the NSA not been investigated for their failure to pass the information obtained from the phone interceptions to the relevant lawful agencies, as the bombings could have been prevented.

Despite the number of deaths and injuries caused by the embassy bombings, they were clearly incompetent actions. The survival and arrest of al-Owahli and the bombing of a closed embassy demonstrate poor planning and execution which greatly reduced the impact of the attacks.

Al-Qaeda's next venture would prove equally incompetent, with the attempted suicide attack on 3 January 2000, involving a fibreglass skiff on the *USS The Sullivans*. It failed, due to the boat sinking in soft sand as it slid off a trailer before it was able to float, due to the excessive weight of the explosives onboard. (10) FBI agent Ali Soufan described the failure being due to the al-Qaeda operatives not realising that they were

trying to float the boat at low tide! (11)

AL-QAEDA SUMMIT MEETING IN KUALA LUMPUR

Two days after this failure, an al-Qaeda planning meeting took place in Kuala Lumpur. The CIA were informed of this in advance by the NSA, which became aware of it after intercepting a call from Khalid Almihdhar (one of the 9/11 hijackers) and he was then followed en route from the Yemen. He had an overnight stay in Dubai and agents broke into his hotel room after he had gone out and copied his passport which, significantly, showed he had a US visa that was due to expire in April. (10) John Duffy and Ray Nowosielski, (authors of *The Watchdogs Didn't Bark: The CIA, NSA and the Crimes of the War on Terror*) note that the CIA obviously considered Khalid Almihdhar to be an important figure and the Kuala Lumpur meeting to be of vital interest to have taken this action. (12) Journalist and author of *The Commission*, Philip Shenon, described the circumstances differently, stating that the CIA were able to obtain and photocopy Almihdhar's passport through security sources at an airport as he was passing through there en route to Kuala Lumpur. (13)

Whichever story is true is ultimately irrelevant. The fact is that the CIA realised that Almihdhar was a major player and both explanations as to how they obtained his passport information show the extreme lengths they went to, in order to obtain it.

Ali Soufan who was the lead FBI investigator into the attack on the *USS Cole*, has described in his book *The Black Banners* how the FBI only became aware of Almihdhar's US visa after 9/11, as information started trickling out. The NSA had told the CIA that they learned from the Yemen hub that a meeting was to be held in Kuala Lumpur in early 2000, which led to Almihdhar being followed there. As a result of the FBI investigation into the embassy bombings, the Bureau had learned of the Yemen hub. Following on from this, the CIA agreed to share the intelligence they gained from the number being tapped, but they failed to keep to this agreement. Consequently, the FBI, as well as the State Department and the Immigration and Naturalization Service, were all kept in the dark about the al-Qaeda summit, which Almihdhar and Alhazmi attended before then flying to the US via Bangkok. (14)

James Bamford, in his book *The Shadow Factory*, also referred to this serious omission, noting that: "If the [National Security] agency had passed the name "Nawaf Alhazmi" to the State Department, analysts there would have quickly turned up the fact that Alhazmi - a suspected terrorist - had recently been issued a visa to visit the United States. They would also have discovered that a visa had been issued on almost the same day, and in the same place - Jeddah - to someone named Khalid Almihdhar." (15)

Richard Clarke, (National Coordinator for Security, Infrastructure Protection, and Counter-terrorism between 1998–2001) was in the loop regarding the surveillance of the January 2000 al-Qaeda summit in Kuala Lumpur. According to his own account, he failed to follow up with the CIA, to find out what happened afterwards. He told Duffy and Nowosielski, "I assumed these guys got on planes and went back to Saudi Arabia or Yemen." (16) Clarke's admission is extraordinary, firstly because it was his job to be profoundly interested in knowing precisely where all the summit attendees went to after the summit. Also, he (as well as CIA director George Tenet and Cofer Black, director of the CIA Counter Terrorist Centre) should have been particularly attentive because, as the 9/11 Commission were informed in a public testimony by counterterrorism expert, Rohan Gunaratna, Khalid Shaikh Mohammed (KSM) had attended the Malaysia meeting between 5th-8th January 2000. KSM had been indicted for his part in the Bojinka plot [a plan in 1996 to blow up 11 airliners in south-east Asia, en route

to the US]. He was also believed to have been involved in the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center As Malaysian authorities had previously allowed the US to "rendition" one of KSM's associates, why wasn't KSM captured at this summit meeting, or at least tracked afterwards? (17)

With a number of known high-ranking al-Qaeda individuals attending the summit, it is hard to fathom how the CIA (and Clarke) could have seemingly failed to appreciate its significance. Furthermore, despite its awareness of the summit, which lasted four days, they (and their Malaysian counterparts) were apparently unable to bug the building with microphones. They were also apparently unable to even gain access to any of the phone calls made over those days by the attendees from a specific pay phone, which was in front of the apartment where the meeting was taking place. Is it really conceivable that the CIA agents present there did not ask the NSA to ensure that information from those calls be recorded for their benefit? Furthermore, some of the summit attendees were known to have used a nearby internet cafe, which was being monitored by the Malaysian intelligence service. The hard drives of those computers could have provided vital information about al-Qaeda, but nothing is known about what they found. (18)

Following the end of the summit, Alhazmi and Almihdhar flew from Kuala Lumpur to Bangkok with Khallad bin Attash, (who will be discussed later) but the CIA lost them there. They were apparently unable to get agents to the airport in time to meet their flight. However, a perusal of the calls made from the public phone booth outside the apartment would have noted a call to the Washington Hotel in Bangkok, where the three men stayed with two others, who would later become involved in the attack on the *USS Cole*. It's not as if the CIA were unaware of the goldmine of information available from the calls made. Cofer Black described how: "They're acting kind of spooky. They're not using the phone in the apartment. They're going around, walking in circles, just like junior spies. Going up to phone booths, making a lot of calls. It's like who are these dudes?" (19)

After losing bin Attash and the two hijackers, Richard Blee, chief of Alec Station, (the CIA al-Qaeda investigation unit) gave a briefing to Cofer Black and George Tenet. He "told his superiors that officials were continuing to track the suspicious individuals who had now dispersed to various countries, directly contradicting the cable from [CIA] Bangkok Station sent the previous day that stated that they could not find the terrorists...The CIA's story to this day appears to be that from this point onward, George Tenet and Cofer Black never again remembered to follow up on any of this." (20)

AL-QAEDA TERRORISTS ARRIVE IN THE UNITED STATES

Almihdhar and Alhazmi arrived in the US a few days later on 15 January 2000. Apparently, neither Black nor Tenet ever sought a further update on the whereabouts of these Al-Qaeda operatives. Why did they fail to do so, would be a reasonable question. Why did Blee hide the truth that the CIA had lost the men? Was it because he knew that he would have been ordered to find them and, at the very least, immediately watchlist them in case they travelled to the US? Or, as Kevin Fenton surmised, "there is also the possibility that he appeared to mislead his superiors because they themselves had indicated they did not want to know about this - that they did not want any paper trail that indicated they knew something that they might later prefer not to have known." (21)

On the other hand, if Blee did act on his own initiative, why wouldn't Black and Tenet have held him directly responsible when things went so badly wrong, resulting in 9/11?

After the CIA lost the three men in Bangkok, they asked the Thai intelligence service to watchlist them, so that they could ascertain their whereabouts when they left Thailand. However, for some unknown reason, their departure was not reported promptly by the CIA station in Bangkok.

Finally, on 5 March 2000, the Bangkok station cabled Alec Station to inform them of Nawaf Alhazmi and another person having flown to Los Angeles seven weeks earlier. The cable also noted that it was unknown if or when Almihdhar had departed. This cable had been sent in response to a cable to the Bangkok station from the Kuala Lumpur CIA station, seeking an update as to where Almihdhar might be. It should have been easy to ascertain that Almihdhar accompanied Alhazmi as they sat next to each other and had bought their tickets using their own names. (22) When authors Duffy and Nowosielski questioned Mark Rossini [an FBI agent seconded to Alec Station] about whether it was possible that senior managers could have been unaware of this cable, he was quite unequivocal: "Everything there is computer driven. Everything is there, seen by everybody...It would be impossible for Blee to say he didn't know about this. It would be impossible for Cofer to say he didn't know about it." (23) Despite this knowledge, the CIA still failed to watchlist the two men and it would not be until August 2001, a few weeks before 9/11, that this information would be shared with the FBI.

When Tom Wilshere (deputy chief of Alec Station) was questioned by the Congressional Inquiry about the lack of response to this cable from the Bangkok station, he stated that "it's very difficult to understand what happened with that cable when it came in. I do not know exactly why it was missed. It would appear that it was missed completely." (24)

Tenet then testified to the Inquiry that "it was an information only cable from the field and nobody read that information only cable." (25) However, Tenet and Wilshere were clearly not telling the truth, as Kevin Fenton showed by quoting an extract from the CIA inspector general's report submitted as evidence to the Moussaoui trial (more about Moussaoui later):

"In early 2000, numerous CIA officers in different divisions accessed one or more operational documents that reported Khalid Almihdhar's passport contained a multiple entry visa for the United States and that Nawaf Alhazmi had departed Thailand on a flight bound for Los Angeles. Most of the officers who accessed the documents were in the Counterterrorism Division at that time." (26)

Lawrence Wright observed that had the CIA checked the flight manifest for Alzhami, it would have easily seen that Almihdhar was on that same flight. Furthermore, the CIA failed to notify the FBI and State Department that at least one al-Qaeda operative was in the US. (27)

THE CIA DELIBERATELY KEPT THE FBI IN THE DARK ABOUT AL-QAEDA TERRORISTS IN THE UNITED STATES.

Lawrence Wright has suggested that the CIA may have wanted to keep the FBI out of the loop in order not to compromise its intelligence sources, recognising that John O'Neill (chief of CounterTerror Section/National Security Section) at the FBI would have insisted on taking over control, as the terrorists clearly came under the FBI's jurisdiction once they were inside the US. Many people in the CIA disliked O'Neill and also felt that such a sensitive intelligence issue would be badly handled by the FBI, therefore deciding to keep the Bureau in the dark. (28)

Wright also referred to certain CIA staff who apparently came to believe that the agency

was shielding Almihdhar and Alhazmi because it wanted to recruit them. However, once they were in the US, the CIA had no legal authority to monitor them inside the country and should have passed this to the FBI. There was already an indictment for bin Laden, and Almihdhar and Alhazmi were his associates, so the FBI had the authority to follow them, tap their home and all their communications, all of which should have prevented 9/11. (29)

Richard Clarke concurred with the idea that the CIA wanted to "turn" the two al-Qaeda men and told Duffy and Nowosielski that "when Cofer Black became head of the CounterTerrorist Center at CIA, he was aghast that they didn't have sources inside Al Qaeda. And moreover, they had never tried to have sources inside Al Qaeda, because they thought it was too hard. So he told me, right after he became director of the CTC, "I'm gonna try to get sources in Al-Qaeda." (30)

WHAT HAPPENED WITH THE INFAMOUS EMAIL?

Let's return to the visa information concerning Almihdhar's US visa that was reported in early January 2000 to Alec Station, the CIA unit responsible for tracking al-Qaeda. The cable that arrived was seen by Doug Miller, an FBI agent seconded to work at the CIA. He then drafted an email to the FBI, to warn them that a known al-Qaeda operative (Almihdhar), with possible links to the embassy bombings, had a US visa and presumably intended to visit. Michael Anne Casey, a CIA officer, responded to Miller's request to release his email to FBI headquarters with the now infamous "pls hold off for now per [Tom] Wilshere [Alec Station deputy chief]." (31)

Miller discussed his concerns with fellow FBI colleague, Mark Rossini, after being told to hold off in contacting the FBI, who, in turn, was then told by Casey not to interfere, as the CIA were anticipating the next Al-Qaeda attack to take place in south-east Asia and not the US, and that "it's not an FBI matter." (32) A week later, Miller then sent the memo he had drafted to the FBI for the attention of Wilshere, asking "is this a no go or should I remake it in some way?" As Lawrence Wright noted, "Wilshere never responded. After that, Miller forgot about the matter." (33)

As both Miller and Rossini were FBI agents seconded to the CIA, they would have been fired if they had shared CIA information with the FBI without approval. However, John O'Neil, who clearly did not trust the CIA, had specifically placed Rossini in the Alec Station, telling him, "I want to send you to Langley [CIA headquarters]. You're going to be my ears and eyes." (34)

Mark Rossini later expressed his regret about remaining silent in the face of the CIA's apparent malfeasance, saying "I can't come up with a rational reason why I didn't break the rules, pick up the phone, and tell that the hijackers, or really bad guys, are in the US. And I don't know if I'll ever be able to come to terms with that. I don't know. I really don't know." (35)

However, at the time, Rossini thought the CIA must have had a good reason for keeping the FBI in the dark: "I thought, "you're a good American, you obviously have a handle on this, so I'll go along for the moment." I figured they would do the right thing because it needed to be done. But never in my wildest dreams did I think they would keep it away forever. I never suspected they had an agenda." (36)

As Kevin Fenton noted, with my block capital letters for greater emphasis: "THIS IS ONE OF THE KEY EVENTS ON THE ROAD TO 9/11. Had the notification been passed to the FBI and the two men's names placed on the US watch list, the domestic authorities would have been all over them as soon as they entered the US in mid-January 2000." Fenton also noted that any CIA perception that the next attack would happen in

south-east Asia, and not the US, should have been reconsidered “because another al-Qaeda operative [Ahmad Ressay] had been arrested on the US-Canadian border just over two weeks earlier with a car full of explosives and a map of Los Angeles.” (37)

COLLECTIVE MEMORY LOSS IN THE CIA?

Shortly after blocking Miller’s email warning to the FBI, Casey sent out a cable to relevant CIA stations to inform them that the FBI had been informed of Almihdhar’s US visa. The Justice Department’ Inspector General investigated this cable and stated that:

"When we interviewed Michelle [Casey], she stated that she had no recollection of who told her that Almihdhar’s travel documents had been passed to the FBI or how they had been passed. She said she wouldn’t have been the person responsible for passing the documents...The CIA Deputy Chief of the bin Laden Unit [Wilshere] also said he had no recollection of this cable, and he did not know whether the information had been passed to the FBI." (38)

Casey's evidence is challenged by her own actions: she blocked Miller from sending the email to the FBI and she then discussed it with Mark Rossini the next day, so her evidence that she had no recollection is hardly conceivable, with the same applying to Wilshere as well.

Casey's cable can be seen to have served two purposes. It was intended to prevent other officers from sharing the visa information with the FBI, on the basis that there was no need to tell them about it if they had already been informed. Also, those concealing this information could later claim that the FBI had been informed, so they were therefore covering themselves, as not having been culpable of any such obstruction. The above issues were buried in an endnote at the bottom of chapter six in the 9/11 Commission report, known as "footnote 44." When Duffy and Nowosielski later discussed it with Thomas Kean, Commission chairman, he replied that footnote 44 was "one of the most troubling aspects of our entire report." (39). So troubling that it was relegated to a footnote.

Concurrent with Casey's cable, a CIA officer (whose identity appears to be still classified) seconded to the FBI, was alerting two bureau agents there of all the information they had on the Malaysia meeting. He then emailed Tom Wilshere and others at Alec Station, saying "in case FBI starts to complain later...below is exactly what I briefed them on." (40) The email mentioned Almihdhar's journey to, and activities in Malaysia, but not the vital US visa, which would have led to immediate FBI involvement. It would therefore seem clear that there was a concerted effort made by Alec Station, also involving the unknown CIA detailee at the FBI, to obstruct any possible involvement of the FBI with Almihdhar's activities in the US. As Duffy and Nowosielski describe it: "an effective ruse had seemingly been run in which anyone at Alec Station or FBI counterterror who did not "need to know" was pushed out of the loop, while the appearance of propriety was generated in person and on paper." (41)

The saga of Miller's unsent cable does not end there. When questioned by Senator Carl Levin as part of the 9/11 Congressional Inquiry, Wilshere made the following statement when asked why Almihdhar's visa information was not shared with the FBI:

"The best of my knowledge the intent was to notify the FBI and I believe people involved in the operation thought the FBI had been notified. SOMETHING APPARENTLY WAS DROPPED SOMEWHERE AND WE DON'T KNOW WHERE THAT WAS." (my block letters) Kevin Fenton summed up the situation succinctly: "What was dropped was that he himself [ie Wilshere] blocked the cable." (42)

The unclassified version of the Justice Department Inspector General report, which was published after the Moussaoui trial in 2006, was never able to clarify who was responsible for Almihdhar's visa information not being passed to the FBI, as all the major players interviewed were unable to recall the cable, despite it being of such great significance. However, The Congressional Quarterly in October 2008 stated that Rossini and Miller "did come clean during an internal FBI investigation, which remains under wraps. Sources with direct knowledge of the FBI's internal probe say that the agents provided the Bureau with unadulterated versions of their CTC experiences, including orders they were given by the center's then-Deputy-Director, Tom Wilshere, to withhold intelligence about the movement of al-Qaeda operatives into the country from the FBI." (43)

The plot thickens further with Alfreda Bikowsky (Alec Station information analyst/manager) informing the Congressional Inquiry that she had personally delivered the visa information to FBI headquarters and that the blame lay with the Bureau's failure to act on the given information rather than Alec Station for not sharing it. However, she was found out because there was no record of her ever having signed in the guest log, which was a prerequisite for all visitors. She then brushed off her apparent fabrication by saying, "I must have faxed it over. I don't remember." (44) Perhaps Bikowsky should have been questioned further concerning her memory failure.

As far as the CIA Inspector General investigation is concerned, Duffy and Nowosielski described how "when it came to the matter of Almihdhar and Alhazmi, the former members of Alec Station remained as forgetful as ever. They could recall few conversations about the US visa or the later cable saying that Alhazmi had arrived in Los Angeles. No one seemed to know what had happened, nor would they volunteer anything useful that might allow Helgeson [the Inspector General] to get to the bottom of it." (45)

Mark Rossini later told the above authors that "the question of why Doug Miller's cable didn't go remains key...There's something here that is being hidden...If they had a rogue operation to recruit somebody, or they had the delusion they could work with Saudi intel in America, tell us. You're talking about 9/11, man. You're talking about something that changed the world. It's like why they can't let JP Morgan go down [during the financial crisis]. Too big to fail. That's what they fear coming out, because it would be the end of the CIA. They would be dismantled if that were to come out." (46)

However, It would seem the CIA Inspector General's report was highly critical of a number of staff, including George Tenet, Cofer Black, Richard Blee and Tom Wilshere, recommending accountability boards be convened to assess their performances, but the CIA Director at the time, Porter Goss, decided to ignore the IG's advice. Consequently, not one single CIA officer was held accountable for their part in facilitating the 9/11 attacks. The 9/11 Commission similarly apportioned no blame in relation to the CIA failing to notify the FBI of Almihdhar's US visa and didn't even mention Tom Wilshere in this regard. One might have expected this issue to have been of great significance, but it was simply relegated to what would become an infamous endnote, as mentioned earlier. (47)

WHO KNEW WHAT WAS GOING ON?

Here are some quotes from people relevant to the situation above:

Duffy and Nowosielski contacted Doug Miller in 2010 to discuss the unsent cable, but

he told them that "I wish I could speak. It's something I feel pretty strongly about. But unless you are in a position to pay my mortgage, send my child to college, then fund my retirement, I just can't talk without permission." (48) Needless to say, this permission was not granted.

Erik Larson, a 9/11 researcher, has summarised the situation succinctly: "Not only did they not share the info with the FBI, they prevented others at the CIA from doing so, such as FBI detailees Doug Miller and Mark Rossini, while taking steps to create an appearance of having done so. After 9/11, the CIA attempted to use this 'appearance' to blame the FBI for failing to catch the hijackers before 9/11, and absolve themselves of responsibility during government investigations." (49)

Mark Rossini, FBI Agent detailed to the CIA: "I believe it can be proven circumstantially the CIA was engaged in a recruitment operation within the United States (in direct violation of every rule, regulation, and law), and that they (the management of the CIA, Alec Station, and the CTC) did not want the FBI, in the persona of John P. O'Neill Jr., to interfere in their effort" (50).

Jack Cloonan, FBI Counterterror Agent: "For whatever reason or reasons, the [CIA] makes the decision - it's not an oversight, it's a conscious decision - not to share the information. If you look at this, it's really just a handful of people. I don't know how they sleep at night" (51).

Pasquale 'Pat' D'Amuro, FBI Agent and Manager, ran the FBI's 9/11 criminal investigation focused on al-Qaeda and the hijackers: "I had heard that Blee and Wilshere had the conversation in January 2000 and stopped it from coming over. ... There's no doubt in my mind that that went up further in the agency than just those two guys. And why they didn't send it over. To this day, I don't know why." (52)

Lawrence Wright has suggested that "perhaps the [CIA] agency decided that Saudi intelligence would have a better chance of recruiting these men than the Americans.[see chapter 7 on Foreign Involvement] That would leave no CIA fingerprints on the operation as well." (53)

According to Richard Clarke, "Condi didn't know. I didn't know, no one in the White House knew. I never heard their names until 9/11...there was an intentional and very high-level decision in the CIA not to let the White House know...I would think [that kind of decision] would have to be made by the CIA director." (54)

Clarke added that, "the CIA was trying to 'turn' these guys. They failed in that effort. They broke from [proper] procedures in that process, and they didn't want to be blamed after the fact." (55)

Clarke laid the blame on George Tenet, who "followed all of the information about al-Qaeda in microscopic detail. He read raw intelligence reports before analysts in the Counter-Terrorist Centre did." (56)

Clarke's excoriating criticism of Tenet and the senior CIA Counter Terrorism managers led to a joint statement from George Tenet, Cofer Black and Richard Blee in which they wrote that Clarke "wildly speculates that it must have been the CIA director who could have ordered the information withheld. There was no such order. In fact, the record shows that the Director and other senior officials were unaware of the information until after 9/11...The 9/11 Commission quite correctly concluded that "no one informed

higher levels of management in either the FBI or CIA about the case...Building on his false notion that information was intentionally withheld, Mr Clarke went on to speculate... that the CIA might have been trying to recruit these two future hijackers as agents. This...is utterly without foundation." (57)

Their joint statement raises a number of issues: firstly, why were Tenet and other senior officers unaware of what was going on in their agency? Secondly, as they were in a state of such ignorance, how could they know if junior officers were or were not trying to recruit the two terrorists? Thirdly, why has nobody been disciplined or forced to resign as a result of such wilful incompetence that had such a profound effect not only upon the US, but the entire world?

George Tenet testified to the Congressional Joint Inquiry that the CIA could have informed other US agencies about Almihdhar, but "our officers...did not do so." (58) He doesn't appear to have offered any explanation for this gross negligence and doesn't appear to have been asked for one.

At the present time, as Duffy and Nowosielski note, "we are left with a situation in which the names of individuals who should very well have been held to account are still mostly shrouded in secrecy." (59)

Clarke suggested to Duffy and Nowosielski that the plan was "a possible failed CIA-Saudi spy mission on US soil that went bad and eventually allowed 9/11 to proceed unimpeded." (60)

The above authors were told by Clarke that "the people who investigated these things after the fact admit they were bothered by what they found...admit they never got to the bottom of it." (61)

Thomas Kean, Chairman of the 9/11 Commission, told the same authors that "why you don't tell your fellow law enforcement agency [the FBI] about a terrorist coming to this country, or has a visa to come to this country, it's almost inexplicable to me." (62) Perhaps Kean and his fellow Commission colleagues should have pursued this irregularity a little more forcefully. After all, they had subpoena powers if they believed they were being denied access to the truth.

Michael Hayden, NSA director, stated to the Joint Congressional Inquiry that the NSA had no knowledge that any of the hijackers were in the US (Interview with Bob Graham on 17/10/2002, according to Duffy and Nowosielski). However, Tom Drake, an executive manager in the NSA, challenged Hayden, saying he "flat-out lied about this. NSA knew what the numbers were...You cannot be monitoring the Yemen hub without knowing what the [number calling into it is] because that's what you're monitoring. And when the number comes in, you know the ID for the number that comes in." (63)

Drake also told Duffy and Nowosielski that "he had been told directly from senior sources in the intelligence community that the attempt had taken place to turn members of Al-Qaeda. He specified his sources were close to a network that had developed around Vice President Dick Cheney." (64).

THE ATTACK ON THE *USS COLE*

Moving on from the CIA's deliberate withholding of vital information from the FBI in early 2000 (although there will be more to be said further on), al-Qaeda were "upping" the stakes as the year moved on.

On 12 October 2000, a small boat with two men on board approached the *USS Cole*, which was re-fuelling in Aden's harbour. The small skiff then exploded, ripping open a hole in the destroyer and killing 17 American servicemen.

Following the attack, the Yemenis arrested Fahd Al-Quso. He disclosed that he had

been asked to deliver \$5000 to a man called "Khallad" (Khallad bin Attash mentioned earlier) - the one-legged mastermind of the *Cole* attack - in Singapore, around the time of the al-Qaeda meeting in Malaysia in early January 2000. The money was ostensibly to buy Khallad a new prosthesis. When Ali Soufan, the FBI agent leading the *Cole* investigation, was later able to interview Quso, he confessed to meeting Khallad and one of the *Cole* bombers in Bangkok. He admitted that he handed over \$36,000 in al-Qaeda funds, not the \$5,000 originally mentioned, and that it wasn't for Khallad's replacement leg. It would appear that this money was the funding that enabled Mihdhar and Hamzi to fly to the US and support them there. (65)

Al-Quso told Soufan that bin Attash had flown to Bangkok from Kuala Lumpur to meet him, as Quso was waylaid in Bangkok for some reason.

Ali Soufan received further confirmation from Yemeni authorities that they believed someone called Khallad was the main organiser of the *Cole* attack. He then sent Khallad's passport photo to the CIA in November 2000 and asked for any information they had on him. He also asked if they knew of any al-Qaeda meeting that had taken place at which Khallad may have been present. He made further requests to the CIA in April 2001 and also July 2001, but drew a blank response on both further occasions. Lawrence Wright noted that by deliberately withholding information from the FBI about Khallad bin Attash and the fact that the mastermind of the attack on the *USS Cole* attended the al-Qaeda summit in Kuala Lumpur, the CIA obstructed the FBI's investigation into the death of seventeen American sailors. Furthermore, "much more tragic consequences were on the horizon." (66)

Ali Soufan remained puzzled about why Quso transferred \$36,000 out of Yemen around the time of the aborted attack on the *USS The Sullivans*, especially as the explanation given that it was for Khallad's new prosthesis, as that would only have cost around \$2,000. (67)

After tracing calls made by Quso, Soufan discovered he had been in touch with Khallad bin Attash in Malaysia on a payphone that was used by the terrorists attending the Kuala Lumpur meeting in early January 2000 (as referred to earlier). Soufan wondered what Khallad was doing in Malaysia and whether the payphone used was one that al-Qaeda used regularly. He sought information from the CIA about these issues, but no response was forthcoming. They advised him to contact the NSA, but this agency also pleaded ignorance (68)

Soufan's team, as already mentioned, sent further official requests to the CIA in April and July 2001 in which "again we asked if they knew anything about Khallad and al-Qaeda being in Malaysia or about the phone number. No information was passed along to us." (69)

Soufan sent his request from the FBI director's office to the CIA director's office to ensure his request was not swept under the carpet. Although the CIA denied any knowledge of a Malaysia meeting, this was clearly not the case, but it should also be noted that some agents within the FBI could have enlightened Soufan. As mentioned earlier, they had been informed about the summit meeting by a CIA agent seconded to the FBI,

The CIA's obfuscation did not end there. Duffy and Nowosielski describe what happened next: "Soufan's official request for information put Rich Blee, Tom Wilshere, Alfreda Bikowsky and Jen Matthews [at Alec Station] in a very objectionable position. If they responded honestly, questions would soon arise as to when they learned about Almihdhar and Alhazmi [who were known to have accompanied Khallad to Bangkok from Kuala Lumpur] and why they had not passed the information to the FBI about two

men who could now be connected to the *USS Cole* bombing plot via their connection to [Khallad bin] Attash." (70)

It is noteworthy that Almihdhar was in Yemen in Jan 2000 when the attack on *USS The Sullivans* failed and in Oct 2000 when the *USS Cole* was attacked, He had left the US in June 2000, returning in July 2001. Duffy and Nowosielski added that: "Their withholding -a mere breach of protocol in early 2000- might by late 2000, have been used to argue that they held culpability in the deaths of seventeen US servicemen. The actions by managers of Alec Station from here onward appear to indicate they decided to double down, wilfully withholding information from FBI analysts and outright lying to FBI investigators." (71)

Soufan would eventually be given a CIA file on the day of 9/11, soon after the attacks, in which there were photos of Khallad bin Attash meeting with other al-Qaeda operatives in Malaysia in January 2000. After vomiting on being given the information, Soufan asked himself, "if they had all this information since January 2000, why the hell didn't they pass it on? My whole body was shaking." (72)

Kevin Fenton has shown how the various post-9/11 investigations appear to have whitewashed the CIA's complicity in the obstruction of justice over the deaths sustained in the attack on the *Cole*, noting that "despite their clear relevance to the 9/11 investigations, there is not a word about Ali Soufan's three requests to the CIA in the 9/11 Congressional Inquiry report, the 9/11 Commission Report, or the Justice Department inspector general report."(73)

Fenton observed that Soufan was interviewed twice in 2003 by a key staff member, Barbara Grewe, on the Justice Department inspector general's investigation. When Soufan was then interviewed three times by the 9/11 Commission between August-November 2003, Grewe was also part of the Commission's staff and present for the first two interviews. She also drafted the memorandum for the record about them. So, Grewe had several opportunities to discuss the issue of Soufan being obstructed by the CIA, but this is not mentioned in either report. Why didn't Grewe pursue the important matter of Soufan's requests for information from the CIA during these numerous investigations? (74) Any future investigation into 9/11 should consider this issue.

EVIDENCE FROM AN AL-QAEDA INFORMER

Between Soufan's requests to the CIA about the Malaysia meeting in November 2000 and April 2001, an informer from al-Qaeda (known as Omar) identified Khallad bin Attash. The FBI had sent a photo (which they had been given by the Yemeni authorities) of a man believed to be bin Attash to Islamabad, where Omar was considered to be a joint asset of the FBI and CIA. Omar confirmed the photo as being that of bin Attash, who he claimed was involved in the African embassy bombings. Following on from this identification, it would seem that the CIA then became concerned that Omar might also recognise Almihdhar and Alhazmi and be able to give the FBI information that would be able to alert them to their possible presence in the US. According to Kevin Fenton: "the test was to show him photos of the two men and see what his reaction was. However, the photos needed to be passed officially and a reason had to be found for this. The solution was to have somebody speculate that Almihdhar and bin Attash were the same person (even though they were very dissimilar in appearance), and put this in a cable that both the sender and the recipient knew did not contain genuine speculation, but was merely generated to provide an excuse for some other purpose." (75) However, none of this communication was shared with the FBI.

Omar, at this second meeting, (and while the FBI agent was conveniently out of the

room and thus kept in the dark as to what was happening) was then shown a photo of Almihdhar taken in Malaysia, but he was also shown a separate picture of Alhazmi taken at the same summit. By showing Alhazmi's photo as well, there is a clear indication that the purpose of this "fishing expedition" was to ascertain if Omar recognised and thereby potentially knew the two hijackers and might therefore pass on significant information to his FBI handler. However, Omar wrongly identified Alhazmi as being Khallad bin Attash, due to their similar facial features. Fenton noted that, "if the purpose was just to confirm Almihdhar as a match for bin Attash, why send a photo of somebody else as well?" Furthermore, Omar wasn't shown the original photo in which he had previously recognised Khallad bin Attash." Fenton continued, "Omar was not re-shown the photograph the Yemenis had provided, the one he had already correctly identified as bin Attash. If Alec Station really had wanted to know if Almihdhar was bin Atassh, then it certainly would have been a good idea to show him the Yemeni photograph at the same time as the one of Almihdhar, but this was not done." (76)

Duffy and Nowosielski further emphasise the duplicity of the CIA's actions: "The CIA already had Almihdhar's photograph from his passport, which they obtained as he travelled through Dubai. The CIA also had photographs taken from the terrorists gathered in Malaysia, including a photograph of Almihdhar. They also possessed the videotape of the summit attendees. Could they not themselves match the face in the passport photo to the face in the surveillance photo? Further, the CIA had the photo of Khallad provided by the Yemenis, as the FBI had dutifully given it to them. Could they not see that the Khallad the Yemenis said was behind the Cole attack was not the same man as Almihdhar, and that these two clearly different men had met at the terror summit?" (77)

The outcome of this act of prestidigitation (sleight of hand) was that the CIA could now be relieved that Omar would not be able to give the FBI any incriminating evidence concerning Almihdhar and Alhazmi being in the US. However, there was a problem in that the CIA handler inadvertently sent an official cable stating that as the picture of Alhazmi had been identified by Omar as being bin Attash, the implication of this recognition was that bin Attash had been present at the Malaysia summit. This would have been vital information for the FBI had they received it, as it linked bin Attash to the other two al-Qaeda terrorists who were known to have also attended the summit meeting. However, although the CIA handler informed his own agency of Omar's identification of bin Attash as being Alhazmi, he crucially did not inform the FBI, although Cofer Black would later tell the Congressional Inquiry that the FBI had been informed. This was clearly not the case as illustrated by Ali Soufan flying to Islamabad in February 2001 to meet Omar. In the presence of the same CIA handler, Omar confirmed his recognition of Khallad bin Attash in the original picture of him provided by the Yemenis. However, the CIA handler failed to mention to Soufan that a few weeks earlier, Omar had identified Khallad in a picture taken at the Malaysia summit (although it was in fact Alhazmi). As a result, Soufan and the FBI remained unaware of Khallad having attended this summit.

According to Kevin Fenton, Barbara Grewe wrote the reports related to this matter for both the Justice Department inspector general and the 9/11 Commission Report. In the former, she wrote that there were "significant problems in communication between the FBI and the CIA [surely she meant the other way around?]....[but was] unable to fully examine why the CIA did not inform [the FBI handler, Soufan and his colleague] that the source [Omar] had identified [bin Attash] in the Kuala Lumpur photographs."

In the later 9/11 Commission Report, Grewe wrote that the CIA handler, who

apparently had no recollection of the above events, "might not have understood the possible significance of the new identification." Fenton has challenged Grewe's insouciant analysis, writing, "how exactly he could have failed to appreciate the identification of the mastermind of a recent attack that killed seventeen Americans is not explained." (Fenton, p209) Clearly, this (albeit incorrect identification) would have enabled the FBI investigators of the *Cole* attack to appreciate the significance of the Malaysia summit, of which they were presently in the dark.

The reader might think that the issues above concerning Omar's identifications are not worthy of so much consideration, but Duffy and Nowosielski discussed it with Ali Soufan, who told them that "he felt this incident was one of the most overlooked, damning tales of the pre-war on terror story." (78)

Another issue arising out of Omar's recognition of Khallad bin Attash (correctly in the Yemeni photo and incorrectly in the picture of Alhazmi taken at the summit) is that on 13 July 2001, Wilshere sent an email to CTC managers (notably Richard Blee) at the CIA and asked for permission to inform the FBI about Omar's (incorrect) identification of bin Attash being present at the Malaysia summit. However, Omar was a joint CIA and FBI asset, so why would he have needed permission to share the info if he didn't know that the CIA had deliberately withheld this identification from the FBI six months earlier? It is hard not to interpret Wilshere's action here as one of seeking to cover his back, as he could have simply informed FBI *Cole* investigators, who he was now working alongside with, (having been seconded to the FBI from May 2001) that the *Cole* mastermind had been identified in a picture of al-Qaeda leaders in Malaysia in January 2000. They would have been very interested to have received that information, but it was not forthcoming, as Wilshere received no authorisation to share the knowledge from CTC.

Ali Soufan has recounted his interview with the 9/11 Commission. He was told that the CIA had confirmed the story they told to the Congressional Inquiry, which was that the FBI had been informed that Khallad bin Attash was at the Malaysia summit along with Almihdhar and Alhazmi. Soufan challenged the Commission, suggesting they look through all the relevant files for proof that this information was never passed to the FBI. (79) The Commission's report later confirmed Soufan's testimony. (80)

The CIA's own inspector general report concluded that if the FBI had been notified of the presence of Almihdhar and Alhazmi in the US, they could have been placed under surveillance, which would have had "the potential to yield information on flight training, financing, and links to others who were complicit in the 9/11 attacks."

Soufan also told the Commission that although Omar had positively identified Khallad when shown a photo from the Kuala Lumpur meeting, the FBI were kept in the dark about it. The CIA clearly knew the significance of Malaysia, Khallad and Mihdhar, but deliberately withheld this information from the FBI. Although the CIA had a legal duty to share this information, Soufan described how, "we were deliberately kept out of the loop." (81)

Not only did the CIA lie to the FBI, but they also lied to the Commission, with one Commission member telling Soufan that, "we were told by the CIA's Counterterrorism Centre that they shared all their information with the FBI from the source and that nothing was hidden." (82)

Again, Soufan was found to be the one telling the truth, when records were checked. As stated in the Commission's report, "DCI Tenet and Cofer Black testified before Congress's Joint Inquiry into 9/11 that the FBI had access to this identification [of Khallad in Kuala Lumpur] from the beginning. But drawing on an extensive record, including documents that were not available to the CIA personnel who drafted that

testimony, we conclude this was not the case." (83) So, basically the CIA were accused by the Commission of giving false evidence, without going so far as to accuse Tenet and Black of downright lying.

TOM WILSHERE TRANSFERS TO THE FBI

Moving on to the summer months prior to 9/11, Tom Wilshere transferred from Alec Station to become deputy chief of the FBI's International Terrorism Operations Section (ITOS), including the Bureau's bin Laden Unit in May 2001. His primary role there was to assist the FBI in exploiting information for intelligence purposes, which is somewhat ironic in view of his history in blocking information from the CIA to the FBI. Furthermore, as we will see, "whatever the motivation behind his move, Tom Wilshere was to play a key role in everything that went wrong at the FBI in the run-up to 9/11." (84)

On 15 May 2001, based from the FBI, Wilshere reviewed the cables relating to the Malaysia summit in January 2000 with an unknown female CIA officer.

Quite why Wilshere would have needed to remind himself that he had been privy to the decision to keep the FBI in the dark about Alhazmi and Almihdhaar being in the US is hard to fathom.

Instead of doing what he should have done following this review, which was to alert the FBI immediately that there were almost certainly known al-Qaeda terrorists in the country, he asked Margaret Gillespie, another FBI agent seconded to Alec Station, to review the Malaysia summit cables, to see if there was any connections between the summit and the *Cole* attack. However, as noted by the 9/11 Commission, he asked her to "do the research in her own time" (85) thereby relegating it to a low priority status. Inexplicably, Wilshere did not give her the "heads up" on any of the cables he had already reviewed, leaving her to forage in the dark, as a result of which, she didn't discover the 5 March 2000 cable that said Alhazmi and a companion had flown to Los Angeles until 21 August, which then led to her alerting the INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service) and the FBI.

Wilshere could have provided all the relevant information to Gillespie in May, so why didn't he do so? Equally curious is that as she had been detailed to the CIA since 1998, she would have seen all the relevant cables at the time, so why did it take her three months to get up to speed with a handful of cables that were easily available in the database, after being asked to review the material? Kevin Fenton suggested that "the way this looks is that the Alec Station group kept the information about Almihdhar and Alhazmi from the FBI for over a year and a half, until they learned that the attack was to occur within three weeks." (86) Furthermore, it also looks like Wilshere was simply trying to provide a trail of identifiable evidence showing him to be acting in good faith and not hindering the search for the terrorists.

The situation with Wilshere is even more complicated, as he sent three emails to Alec Station in July, including a request to inform the FBI of Almihdhar's US visa and his attendance at the Malaysia meeting along with Khallad bin Attash. Such information would have linked Almihdhar to the mastermind of the *Cole* attack and would have been a red alert to the FBI. As the first of the three emails was sent on 5 July 2001, with Almihdhar having just flown back to the US the previous day, it would seem probable that he had been informed of this when he asked, "can this info be sent via official cable to the FBI?" Wilshere's request threw the cat amongst the pigeons because as Duffy and Nowosielski explain: "Such a question leads one to understand that the information about Almihdhar's visa had never been passed to the FBI. Further, though Wilshere's

name had been invoked in preventing Doug Miller's warning from being passed to the FBI, Wilshere was seemingly acting on orders from a higher-up, as he is here requesting permission to pass the information." (87) Suffice to say, such permission was not forthcoming. Was Wilshere genuinely wanting to alert the FBI in the final weeks before 9/11, or was he simply laying down more evidence to show him acting in good faith if the finger of blame should later be pointed in his direction? Further evidence, as we will see, appears to show that the latter is more likely the case.

Significantly, the day following Gillespie's discovery, on 22 August, John O'Neill left the FBI, "forced by enemies he had made through his brash style, who had used errors he had committed, some minor, some less so, against him." (88) O'Neill's brash style was just what was needed to prevent the attacks, once the FBI became aware of the situation, but that was not to be. Further irony is that he then became director of security at the World Trade Centre, where he died on 9/11.

THE CIA GO FISHING...

A very significant meeting took place on 11 June 2001, which was arranged by Dina Corsi (an FBI analyst) at FBI headquarters at the behest of Tom Wilshere. The meeting involved the sharing of information between counter-terror officers from the CIA and FBI agents investigating the *Cole* attack. As Duffy and Nowosielski describe it, "despite the stated goal of sharing information, what unfolded was an apparent "fishing expedition" by the CIA to find out just what the Cole investigators knew." (89)

Corsi showed FBI agents Steve Bongardt and Russell Fincher, who were investigating the Cole attack, three pictures (although Wilshere withheld from Corsi any pictures of Khallad bin Attash) taken through surveillance at the Malaysia summit and asked them if they recognised al-Quso (the al-Qaeda operative who had earlier been interviewed by Soufan) or anyone else - which they didn't. The agents became angry when they were denied any information, or allowed to keep any of the pictures, as the whole purpose of the meeting was to share information, and the people in the pictures were obviously significant or they wouldn't have been shown them. Finally, Corsi mentioned Almihdhar's name, although the FBI agents were unaware of who he was at that time. They were denied any further information, such as a date of birth (or most significantly that he was known to have a US visa) that would have enabled them to carry out further enquiries or watch list him. There was clearly a connection between the men in the photos and the attack on the *Cole*, but the FBI agents were being deliberately kept in the dark. Corsi claimed that she was unable to share information with the two Cole investigators because of "the wall", which was divisive within the FBI as it prevented intelligence gathering agents from sharing information with crime investigating agents. However, as Bongardt later told the Congressional Inquiry, "we had intelligence agents from the bureau that were in the room at the time and the rest of us criminal agents, even though we were frustrated, could have walked out of the room and then [the intelligence agents could have] received that information." (90)

The 9/11 Commission's defence of Corsi was that she "apparently did not realize that one of the agents in attendance was a designated intelligence agent." (91) However, as Fenton noted, "they had all been working the *Cole* bombing for months by this time, so this explanation is hard to believe." (92)

The situation is even murkier, as the CIA could have simply asked Ali Soufan to identify al-Quso, although they would have had to fax the pictures over to him as he was in the Yemen at the time. After all, he was the FBI agent who had interviewed him on at least two occasions. Furthermore, the two men in the pictures shown were

Alhazmi and Almihdhar, whose identities were well known to the CIA agents present. As such the earlier reference to "fishing expedition" would appear accurate and that the whole purpose of the meeting was to ascertain if the FBI knew about these two terrorists who the CIA were hiding from them. Even more ominously, Lawrence Wright has pointed out that the CIA agents did not show a fourth picture they had, which was of Khallad bin Attash. The FBI agents investigating the *Cole* certainly knew who he was, as they were preparing the evidence to indict him. Had they shown his picture, John O'Neill would have demanded that the CIA turned all their evidence over to the FBI. However, "by withholding the picture of Khallad standing beside future hijackers, the CIA blocked the bureau's investigation into the *Cole* attack and allowed the 9/11 plot to proceed." (93)

Ali Soufan's view appears to confirm that the meeting was little more than the "fishing expedition" described above: "Tom [Wilshere], we later learned, was fishing to see if the FBI knew anything about the men in the photos." (94) Soufan has argued that Dina Corsi could have shared the information with FBI agent Steve Bongardt at the meeting, as he was an intelligence agent. Regardless of whether Bongardt was a criminal or intelligence agent, Dina could have sought permission to share the information with the criminal agents from the Justice Department's Office of Intelligence Policy and Review, but she failed to do this, as noted by the 9/11 Commission. (95) As we will soon see, this failure on Dina Corsi's part was to have disastrous consequences.

As for the purpose of this debacle of a meeting, Duffy and Nowosielski raise the question: "Was the CIA running spy games on FBI investigators with the unwitting help of a confused analyst from FBI headquarters, Dina Corsi?" (96)

THE PHOENIX MEMO AND THE ARREST OF ZACARIAS MOUSSAOUI

In July 2001, FBI agent, Kenneth Williams sent what became known as the Phoenix Memo to the Counterterrorism Division at FBI headquarters. While parts are still classified, Williams advised that the Phoenix FBI office "believes it is more than a coincidence that subjects who are supporters of UBL [bin Laden] are attending civil aviation universities/colleges in the state of Arizona...These individuals will be in a position in the future to conduct terrorist activity against civil aviation targets." (97) The following month, Zacarias Moussaoui was arrested.

He arrived in the US in February 2001 and contacted the Pan Am International Flight Academy at the end of May. Although he didn't have a pilot's license, Bob Graham noted that "it was not unheard of for schools like Pan Am to be contacted by people who had the money and the desire to spend a few Walter Mitty hours in a flight simulator." (98)

However, his behaviour caused suspicion, such as asking "about the flight patterns around New York City and whether the doors of a cockpit could be opened during flight" (99) and the FBI Minneapolis field office were informed of this, leading to his arrest when they discovered that his visa had expired. Officers became increasingly suspicious when he was unable to account for \$32,000 recently deposited in his account and unable to explain his employment situation. They found he had a laptop in his possession but were unable to access it without a warrant. They had the option to apply for a criminal search warrant, which required providing evidence that a crime had been or might be committed. The other option was to apply for a Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) search warrant, which could be issued by a secret Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court. In order to be granted a FISA, it was necessary to demonstrate that Moussaoui was an agent of a foreign power, the definition of which

included international terrorist groups, and that he was engaged in activities of a terrorist nature on behalf of that terrorist group.

The Minneapolis FBI agents were concerned that they did not have sufficient evidence for a criminal search warrant and were worried that if they applied and failed, this would preclude them from obtaining a FISA warrant, as the supposition would be that they were wanting to access his laptop as part of a criminal investigation rather than for intelligence gathering.

On 18 August, they sent a detailed memorandum to FBI HQ, which included:

Enquiries carried out in Paris showing that Moussaoui had been in Chechnya, assisting Chechen rebels, but there was then disagreement between the Minneapolis field office and the Radical Fundamentalist Unit (RFU) at FBI HQ as to whether or not the Chechen rebels were a "recognised" foreign power. RFU insisted that Minneapolis needed to provide evidence that Moussaoui or the Chechen rebels were connected to al-Qaeda. However, he had been put on the French anti-terrorist watchlist in 1999, because, as well as his involvement in Chechnya, they were aware that he had attended an al-Qaeda training camp in Afghanistan. (100)

As if this wasn't sufficient evidence to apply for a FISA search warrant, the RFU threw up a further obstacle claiming that the French might have been referring to another Zacarias Moussaoui, and demanded that an FBI agent in Paris go through all the telephone directories in France to ensure there was no mistaken identity. RFU further obstructed the case for a FISA by failing to notify the attorneys who assessed FISA warrant applications of the Phoenix Memo in relation to the request from Minneapolis, although at least one agent dealing with the request from Minneapolis had read it, as confirmed in Justice Department Inspector General Report (101).

Bob Graham noted that all the FBI attorneys interviewed by his Inquiry agreed that insufficient evidence had been provided to link Moussaoui to a foreign power. However, they also agreed that the evidence would have been far more convincing if they had been aware of the Phoenix Memo, which would have provided a stronger case for being granted a FISA warrant. (102)

Graham also referred to a conversation on 27 August 2001, in which the RFU agent told a Minneapolis supervisor that he was getting people "spun up" over Moussaoui. The supervisor replied "that he was trying to get people at FBI HQ "spun up": he was trying to make sure that Moussaoui "did not take control of a plane and fly it into the World Trade Centre." (103) Ominously prophetic words indeed.

As Graham described this debacle, "Headquarters continued to throw up one bureaucratic hurdle after another." (104) It was later disclosed during Moussaoui's trial, that evidence from his computer would have indirectly led agents to 11 of the 19 hijackers through association, which could and should have led to their arrests. (105)

WHY WERE SENIOR FBI OFFICIALS KEPT IN THE DARK?

What is particularly interesting about this missed opportunity is that Tom Wilshere was detailed to the RFU at this time. Although he was not the line manager of the three RFU agents dealing with the case, he was the consultant or deputy of their boss, Michael Rolince, which placed him in a senior position to those three agents, with Dave Frasca, senior to the other two agents. There is only one email confirming any involvement by Wilshere in this case, in which he wrote on 24 August to the three agents investigating it, "please advise when you get a chance this AM where we are re the Minneapolis Airplane IV crowd." This email is noteworthy for two reasons: firstly, Wilshere was clearly wanting a prompt response due to the capitalized AM, indicating his

considerable interest in the case. Secondly, he appears to be trivialising the whole issue by alluding to the spoof Airplane movies, suggesting that the agents should treat the Minneapolis field office accordingly. Wilshere was almost certainly aware that two known al-Qaeda terrorists were on the loose in the US. Surely he should have made a more serious and determined attempt to ascertain if Moussaoui was part of the plan to attack targets in the US?

A further significant matter here is that the information concerning Moussaoui's arrest was not passed up the chain to senior FBI management. In the words of one 9/11 Commissioner, "the report about Moussaoui [shot] up the chain of command [in the CIA] like the lit fuse on a bomb," (106) with George Tenet receiving regular briefings on it. However, senior FBI officials were never even informed about his arrest before 9/11. As noted in the 9/11 Commission report, "Michael Rolince, the FBI assistant director heading the Bureau's International Terrorism Operations Section (ITOS) recalled being told about Moussaoui in two passing hallway conversations but only in the context that he might be receiving telephone calls from Minneapolis complaining about how headquarters were handling the matter." (107)

Kevin Fenton has described how Moussaoui's case covered 120 pages in the Justice Department inspector general's report "but omits explicit mention of the fact that the FBI failed to inform its own director about it. The only section that relates even tangentially to this failure is... on page 158 about the case being mentioned by Dave Frasca to Michael Rolince" (108): "Rolince told the OIG [Office of Inspector General] that some time in August 2001, [Frasca] stopped briefly at his office to give him a "heads up" on a case in the Minneapolis Field Office. Rolince said that the conversation lasted approximately 20 seconds. Rolince said he did not recall if [Frasca] mentioned the name Moussaoui or not. According to Rolince [Frasca] indicated there was an issue with a FISA and Rolince might receive a call from FBI management in Minneapolis...Rolince told the OIG he did not receive any further details from [Frasca] about the issue in Minneapolis but this type of heads up was not atypical. Rolince stated that he received this type of brief notification as often as 10-15 times a week from his subordinates about potential contacts from the field." (109)

Who was to blame for not informing either Thomas Pickard, the acting director of the FBI, or Dale Watson, the Assistant Director for Counterterrorism?

According to Kevin Fenton: "neither [FBI agents] Michael Maltbie nor Rita Flack can be blamed for this, as their superior, Dave Frasca, was aware of the case. It is also hard to blame Michael Rolince because he only received a small amount of information rather late in the case. The blame should therefore be apportioned between Frasca and Wilshere. Given that Frasca knew that Wilshere knew about the case and that Wilshere was either a consultant to Rolince or his deputy, it may be correct to assume that Frasca figured Wilshere had already told Rolince or would do so if he thought it were important. There is no record of Wilshere ever explaining his failure to inform Michael Rolince, or even of his being asked to do so." (110) As we saw earlier, Wilshere appears to have been very interested in the outcome of the Minnesota FISA request, so why didn't he discuss it with Rolince at any point in time

WHISTLEBLOWER COLLEEN ROWLEY IGNORED

Whistleblower, FBI Special Agent Colleen Rowley, wrote to FBI Director Robert Mueller in May 2002 (copying it to the Congressional Oversight Committee to protect herself). She expressed her concern about how FBI headquarters had thwarted all the efforts of the Minneapolis field office to obtain a FISA and went as far to say that "I

know I shouldn't be flippant about this, but jokes were actually made that the key FBI HQ personnel had to be spies or moles...who were actually working for Osama Bin Laden to have so undercut Minneapolis' effort." Notwithstanding this scathing criticism, the Justice Department Inspector General concluded that "in sum, we do not find that any employees committed intentional misconduct, or violated established FBI policies or practices, or attempted to deliberately sabotage the Moussaoui case."(111)

However, the Justice Department IG Report was seriously undermined by FBI agent Harry Samit, who testified at the trial of Zacarias Moussaoui, with the following evidence reported by *History Commons*: Samit was one of the main agents involved in Moussaoui's arrest and he bombarded his superiors with messages about the danger Moussaoui posed. Under direct examination he related what happened in August 2001. The prosecutor asked Samit several times what he would have done if Moussaoui had told the truth, and Samit was allowed by the judge to say how it would have helped the investigation and made 9/11 less likely. (112). Under cross examination, Samit said he was not fooled by Moussaoui's lies and that he immediately suspected him of preparing to hijack an airplane, but the investigation was thwarted by FBI headquarters, and the Radical Fundamentalist Unit in particular. He admitted telling the Justice Department's Office of Inspector General that FBI headquarters was guilty of "obstructionism, criminal negligence, and careerism," and that its opposition blocked "a serious opportunity to stop the 9/11 attacks." (113) Samit said he warned his supervisors more than 70 times that Moussaoui was an al-Qaeda operative who might be plotting to hijack an airplane and fly it into a building, and that he was regularly thwarted by two superiors, David Frasca and Michael Maltbie. Reporting Samit's testimony, the London Times concluded that "the FBI bungled the Moussaoui investigation." (114)

THE SYSTEM WAS "BLINKING RED!"

On 10 July 2001, George Tenet, Cofer Black and Richard Blee met with national security adviser Condoleezza Rice, for an urgent update on the terrorist threat at that time. They told her that multiple attacks within the US, with mass casualties likely, were being planned by al-Qaeda. The information presented included intercepts from the Yemen hub. Richard Clarke was also present and later told Duffy and Nowosielski that, "here they are, in the NSC adviser's office, trying to make their best case possible for action. But, in trying to make this persuasive case, they never once mentioned that already two al-Qaeda terrorists, known to be involved in the Kuala Lumpur planning session, had entered the United States. Why don't you trot out what is the most persuasive piece of evidence you've got? *These guys are already in the country.* They are not here to look at the Grand Canyon. The people who were doing that briefing knew that fact and didn't trot it out. So you ask yourself, why not?" (115) Somewhat bizarrely, Rice later denied that any such meeting had taken place, although it was then proven she had attended this meeting.

Perhaps the clearest evidence that a planned al-Qaeda attack in the US was anticipated, was provided in the infamous President's Daily Brief for 6 August 2001: "Bin Laden Determined to strike in US." The CIA prepared a daily brief for President Bush and that brief stated ominously: "FBI information since that time [1998] indicates patterns of suspicious activity in this country consistent with preparations for hijackings or other types of attacks, including recent surveillance of federal building in New York." (116) As such, this Presidential Brief gave a specific warning that Osama bin Laden intended to attack the US and that hijacking planes would be the modus operandi. As Nafeez Ahmed has described it, "the brief, in other words, outlined in a few paragraphs the

entire 9/11 plot - only one perpetrator was mentioned, al-Qaeda; only two areas in the US were indicated, Washington DC and New York; only one method was indicated, hijacking; and only one key building was referred to as a potential target, the World Trade Centre...it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the government did indeed have fairly precise understanding of what al-Qaeda was about to do." (117) With such a clear warning, National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice was either displaying extraordinary ignorance or deliberately lying when she famously stated on 16 May 2002 that "I don't think that anybody could have predicted that these people would take an airplane and slam it into the World Trade Centre, take another one and slam it into the Pentagon."

There were further reports of concern shortly before 9/11. Cofer Black clearly feared an attack was imminent. On August 15, he concluded a briefing to the Department of Defense's Annual Convention on Counterterrorism with the comment, "We are going to be struck soon, many Americans are going to die, and it could be in the U.S." (118)

THE WHOLE WORLD APART FROM THE UNITED STATES KNEW THE ATTACKS WERE COMING!

Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed has highlighted the many foreign governments who warned of the approaching attack, stating that "the truth is that at no time in the history of the United States had the government received so many urgent credible warnings of terrorist attack within the country in such a short space of time." (119) According to the *Daily Telegraph*, "Israeli intelligence officials say that they warned their counterparts in the United States last month [August 2001] that large-scale attacks on highly visible targets on the American mainland were imminent." (120)

Russian President, Vladimir Putin told *MSNBC* four days after 9/11 that, "I ordered my intelligence to warn President Bush in the strongest terms that 25 terrorists were getting ready to attack the US, including important buildings like the Pentagon."

The United States was also warned by British intelligence, according to a *Times* article, which stated that US intelligence received urgent warnings from MI6 that al-Qaeda were in "final stages of preparing an attack in the West." (121) The US government was also warned by the governments of France, Jordan, Morocco and Egypt. How much more advanced warning did they need - to say nothing about the earlier mentioned Daily Presidential Brief?

One person who did appear to take note was Attorney General John Ashcroft, who stopped flying on commercial aircrafts in the weeks leading up to 9/11, having been warned by the FBI of the risks at this time. This matter was raised in the Introduction. Nafeez Ahmed referred to an article by Harley Soronson, in which he wrote that "Ashcroft demonstrated an amazing lack of curiosity when asked if he knew anything about the threat. "Frankly I don't" he told reporters. So our nation's chief law enforcement officer was told that flying commercial was hazardous to his health, and yet he appeared not to care what the threat was, who made it, how or why?" (122) Somewhat presciently, the day before 9/11, a group of top Pentagon officials suddenly cancelled travel plans for the next morning, apparently because of security concerns.(123)

TIME WAS RUNNING OUT...

On 21 August 2001, as mentioned earlier, Margaret Gillespie informed the FBI that she had discovered the cables from January and March 2000 stating that Alhazmi and

Almihdhar were in the US. Interestingly, the later CIA Inspector General's report, following an audit of computer usage, concluded that Gillespie never accessed the March cable at any time and that she must have been given a hard copy of the cable. The report also noted that Tom Wilshere was the only person to have printed the cable. So, why did he inform her of the cable at that time, having previously wasted 3 months sending her on what was effectively a wild goose chase? Duffy and Nowosielski consider the options: "Had he reached his breaking point with Alec Station? Had he gone "rogue"? Perhaps a rebellion against a CTC that had stopped promoting him and was not taking him seriously in his new position at FBI headquarters? Or was he simply trying to do his job by putting the brakes on something dangerous by making sure the FBI saw what the CIA had been hiding from them?"

The above authors also suggested another possibility, which is that "if Wilshere did present a printed copy of the cable in question to Gillespie the day of John O'Neill's retirement [from the FBI] are we to accept that as a coincidence? Were members of Alec Station staff concerned that O'Neill would alert his friend Richard Clarke at the White House?" (124)

Whatever Wilshere's motivations, their names were passed to the State Department for inclusion on their TIPOFF watch list, which would have prevented them from flying in or out of the country but, crucially, the watch list did not apply to domestic flights within the US. Clearly there was a problem here for Wilshere and other Alec Station personnel in the event of a successful terrorist action, as they would rightly be accused of deliberately hiding the hijackers from the FBI. However, as Kevin Fenton suggested, "if notification of Almihdhar and Alhazmi's entry and Almihdhar's re-entry in July 2001 were passed to the FBI a couple of weeks before the attacks, and the Bureau did not do much with it, then that would make the CIA look less bad, and would have the added bonus of disgracing the FBI. Wilshere, now detailed to the FBI, was in a position to make sure any investigation by the Bureau went nowhere." (125) Unfortunately for this plan, Steve Bongardt was inadvertently copied in on the notification from Margaret Gillespie and demanded to be involved in the search for the two men.

FBI CHOSE INTELLIGENCE RATHER THAN CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION

At this point the FBI had to decide if the hunt for the hijackers should be as an intelligence or criminal investigation because, due to "the wall", it could prove difficult for criminal investigators to access information and evidence obtained through an intelligence operation. Steve Bongardt argued that the investigation should be carried out by criminal investigators as they would be able to track the men down more effectively. Almihdhar and Alhazmi could both have been arrested, on the basis of photographic evidence of them in Kuala Lumpur with Khallad bin Attash, the alleged mastermind of the *Cole* attack, while Almihdhar could also have been arrested for a visa violation. If Bongardt had been given the opportunity to track the two hijackers, it would also have led to many of the other 17 being rounded up very quickly, due to the easily traceable links between them. For example, as noted in the 9/11 Commission report: "Hanjour, Alhazmi, and several other operatives moved to Paterson and rented a one-room apartment. When their landlord later paid a visit, he found six men living there - Nawaf Alhazmi, now joined by his younger brother, Salem, Hanjour, Moqed, probably Ahmed al Ghamd and Abdul Aziz al Omari: Alhazmi's old friend Khalid Almihdhar would soon join them." (126)

There was a fundamental disagreement between Dina Corsi and Steve Bongardt, who argued that as Almihdhar was linked to the *Cole* bombing, it should be treated as an

ongoing criminal investigation while Corsi argued that as the information had come through intelligence channels, the investigation should be restricted to one of intelligence. She argued that without the intelligence information on Almihdhar, there would have been no link to the *Cole* investigation and therefore no basis for a criminal investigation. (127) Unfortunately, Corsi's view was supported by her boss, Rodney Middleton, but Bongardt disagreed and asked for a legal opinion. His view appears to have been supported by the 9/11 Commission, which stated that Corsi, "was confusing a broad array of caveat and legal barriers to information sharing and rules governing criminal agents' use of information gathered through intelligence channels. There was no broad prohibition against sharing information gathered through intelligence channels with criminal agents. This type of sharing occurred on a regular basis in the field." (128)

However, the Commission clearly didn't want to make too big a deal out of Corsi's error, with Kevin Fenton noting that "unfortunately, however, like so much of what is most interesting in the 9/11 Commission Report, this was relegated to the small-type endnotes."(129)

Bearing in mind this decision was being made with the system "blinking red", it is hard to justify Corsi dragging her heels, especially as Bongardt told her that "if this guy is in the country, it's not because he's going to fucking Disneyland!" (130) He followed this up with an email to her in which he stated that "someday somebody will die - and wall or not - the public will not understand why we are not more effective and throwing every resource we had at certain problems." (131)

Dina Corsi was in regular contact with Tom Wilshere at this time and he appears to have been the most senior person at FBI headquarters involved in tracking down Almihdhar and Alhazmi, with no record of Michael Rolince (Wilshere's superior) being aware of what was going on. The 9/11 Commission noted that someone (presumably Wilshere?) alleged that Rolince had been kept in the picture, but Rolince denied this when he was interviewed. (132)

THE TROUBLESOME ISSUE OF THE LEGAL ADVICE

The issue of the legal advice requested by Steve Bongardt is similarly murky. According to the Justice Department inspector general's version, Dina Corsi discussed the matter with attorney Sherry Sabol at the National Security Law Unit, who concurred that the matter should be an intelligence investigation and that no criminal agent should be present for an interview with Almihdhar. Curiously, Sabol stated that she could not recall this discussion with Corsi. Furthermore, as noted in the Commission Report, Sabol also "denies advising that the [criminal] agent could not participate in an interview and notes that she would not have given such inaccurate advice." The Commission further stated that, "there are no records of the conversation between [Corsi] and the attorney. [Corsi] did not copy the attorney on her email to the agent [Bongardt, which she sent to him on 29 August], so the attorney did not have an opportunity to confirm or reject the advice [Corsi] was giving to the agent." (133)

At the very least, one would have to say that such an omission by Corsi, of not copying Sabol into the email, was clearly unprofessional. However, by excluding the possibility of Sabol challenging her interpretation of their discussion, it certainly served the purpose of ensuring that Bongardt did not "elbow in" on the investigation.

THE INTELLIGENCE INVESTIGATION WAS CARRIED OUT BY A NOVICE

Dina Corsi had been aware of the need to open a full investigation on 22 August, following Margaret Gillespie's "discovery" on 21 August. She didn't send the necessary information through to the investigating office in New York until 29 August, when it was assigned, by supervisory agent Jack Cloonan, to a rookie agent, Robert Fuller, in what was his very first intelligence investigation. Corsi categorised the investigation with the lowest possible priority of "routine," which meant that the allocated agent had 30 days to open the inquiry. Corsi's decision was astounding as she had been told by FBI Agent Steve Bongardt that it was obvious the terrorists were inside the US for no reason other than to carry out a terrorist attack. It is hard to find any justification for Corsi's fatal choice here, but Kevin Fenton suggests she may not be the best person to blame:

"No matter how poor our opinion may be of Corsi and her conduct, we should not forget that there is no evidence to show she knew that Almihdhar was of "very high interest" in connection with a forthcoming attack against the US. Presumably, she was acting at Wilshere's direction, assumed he knew what he was doing and had no idea of what was to follow." (134)

Significantly, Jack Cloonan "had requested that criminal agents should carry out the investigation...As it turned out, there was only one intelligence agent on the [I-49] squad and he was brand new." (135) So, not only was the investigation to be handicapped by no involvement from criminal agents, thereby almost nullifying its power and authority at source, it was also only to be started as a "routine" investigation and by an agent with no previous experience.

Corsi then phoned Fuller on 30 August and told him that the plan was to locate Almihdhar in order to interview him, but she did not stress any degree of urgency. Consequently, Fuller didn't commence this investigation for a further five days. His first action on 4 September was a complete bungle: Almihdhar had been listed on 31 August in the INS and Customs database as "armed and dangerous," but Fuller somehow managed to inadvertently downgrade this warning, with the outcome being that inspectors were told not to detain Almihdhar if he was boarding a plane! Fuller later claimed that he had asked an experienced agent, Peter Robustelli, to assist him in completing the form that led to this mistake, but they have since contradicted each other's stories.(136)

On the same day, 30 August 2001, the CIA sent the [previously unshown fourth June 11] photograph of Khallad Bin Attash, to the FBI HQ and requested that it be given to Rodney Middleton, Dina Corsi's supervisor. Middleton had been involved in the decision with Corsi to prevent Steve Bongardt running a criminal investigation on Almihdhar and Alhazmi, and had been at the meeting with Sherry Sabol, where Sabol told Corsi and Middleton that Bongardt could take part in any interview of the two of them. Middleton now had photographic proof that both Almihdhar and Alhazmi had taken part in the planning of the *Cole* bombing, as they were now obviously linked in with Khallad, the *Cole* mastermind. However, of fatal consequence, neither Middleton nor Corsi called Bongardt back to allow him to start a criminal investigation into the two hijackers. This was nearly two weeks before the attacks on 9/11.

Why did they fail to do so? Kevin Fenton noted that "the absence of evidence that Corsi gave the CIA [photographic] notification to the *Cole* criminal investigators essentially proves that she did not do so, because *they* would have been swarming over it...the notification was proof of the Malaysia summit, something the *Cole* investigators had suspected since the previous year, but the CIA had repeatedly denied...[If Bongardt had been shown Khallad's photo], "he would have immediately linked it to Almihdhar, whose photo he was also shown as a part of the same series at that meeting" [on 11

June]. (137) Bongardt would then have been able to demand that the investigation be led by criminal agents and not a solitary intelligence agent. How different the outcome would have been...

The significance of the above was even confirmed in the final report of the 9/11 Commission: "Many FBI witnesses have suggested that even if Almihdhar had been found, there was nothing the agents could have done except follow him on to the planes. We believe this is incorrect. Both Alhazmi and Almihdhar could have been held for immigration violations or as material witnesses in the *Cole* bombing case. Investigation or interrogation of them, and investigation of their travel and financial activities, could have yielded evidence of connections to other participants in the 9/11 plot. The simple fact of their detention could have derailed the plan." (138)

Furthermore, as Duffy and Nowosielski highlight, "on August 25, Mihdhar bought a plane ticket departing the morning of September 11 with a credit card in his name. On the 27th, Hazmi bought his and his brother Salem's tickets for the same morning. Had anyone at the NSA been assigned to follow Alhazmi's transactions - and we do not know if anyone had - they might have noticed that after a year and a half inside the United States, he [Alhazmi] had recently booked a flight dated for the morning of September 11." (139) It is apparent that the CIA had deliberately hidden the presence of Almihdhar and Alhazmi from the FBI. The CIA were presumably keeping a very close eye on them and yet seem to have been oblivious of their plane ticket purchases.

MEANWHILE, FULLER'S INVESTIGATIONS CONTINUE TO FLOUNDER AND CONFOUND

When interviewed by the Justice Department inspector general, Robert Fuller claimed that he had carried out an NCIC (National Crime Information Center) search on both terrorists, which included criminal history, credit card and motor vehicle details. He also claimed to have checked "ChoicePoint," which is a commercial database available to the FBI. However, as quoted in the *New York Observer* on 28 November 2004:

"There was information about the people who turned out to be hijackers in the Choice Point databases prior to 9/11, that's a true statement," ChoicePoint chairman and chief executive Derek Smith confirmed. How does he know? The FBI got a court subpoena to go through its records and pull out what it had on Alhazmi and Almihdhar after the Twin Towers fell. Why the FBI didn't do this before 9/11, Mr Smith can't say, but he confirmed that the FBI didn't seek this information before 9/11."

Kevin Fenton is highly critical of the Justice Department inspector general's report here, stating that it "certainly should have checked whether Fuller did make the search and should then have taken the appropriate investigative action, asking Fuller why he apparently lied about it. However, the Justice Department inspector general appears to have been disinclined to do so." (140)

The story with the NCIC check is similar, with Fuller claiming that he searched their database but found nothing, blaming it on spelling errors – even though this database had the ability to return phonetically similar names. (141) The *Bergen (NJ) Record* called Fuller out on this saying that he "never performed one of the most basic tasks of a manhunt. He never ran Almihdhar or Alhazmi through the NCIC computer. That simple act would have alerted local cops to look for the suspected terrorists." (142)

What are we to make of Fuller's apparent dishonesty over these checks? Was it due to inexperience and incompetence or was it a deliberate attempt to ensure that the two men were not found before 9/11? If so, who would have coerced him into such malfeasance. The plot gets even thicker. On 5 September, he discussed the search for Almihdhar with

Dina Corsi and whether to contact Saudi Arabian Airlines for help with getting his credit card details as he had flown to the US in July on their flight. However, "Fuller never contacted the airline, and later told investigators that this was because Corsi told him it would not be prudent to do so." (143)

The implication of this decision cannot be over-stated: by inexplicably failing to pursue Almihdhar's credit card details, Fuller and Corsi missed the last opportunity to trace Almihdhar in the final six days before 9/11. Fuller did not carry out any further significant actions in regard to Almihdhar over the next few days.

Kevin Fenton puts Robert Fuller's failed investigation into context: "Despite all the failures, whether deliberate or not, over the prior twenty months, Fuller's search was an opportunity to overcome what had gone before, to make it right at the last possible moment. All he needed was one hit. Almihdhar and Alhazmi had lived openly in the US for over a year and a half with credit cards, phones, bank accounts...everything in their own names. If the FBI had found Almihdhar and Alhazmi it would have found the other Flight 77 hijackers, who had been living with Alhazmi for months. Given the frequent interactions between the teams of hijackers, it would not have been difficult to discover the other fourteen, especially given the parallel ticket purchases for 9/11." (144)

It is obvious that the search for Almihdhar should have been of the highest urgency, rather than Corsi giving it a "routine" status. After all, they were looking for someone who was photographed with the mastermind of the *Cole* attack, just after the failed attempt to destroy the USS *The Sullivans*.

FBI agent Ali Soufan confirmed how easy it should have been to have tracked down Almihdhar and Alhazmi, stating that that they had both used their real names opening bank accounts, obtaining their driving licenses, with Alhazmi's name in the San Diego phone book. Crucially, Alhazmi "used his debit card to buy tickets for American Airlines Flight 77 for himself and his brother, Salem." (145)

The question which wasn't addressed by either the Justice Department inspector general's report or the 9/11 Commission, is whether Robert Fuller was acting in good or bad faith. Did he deliberately remove the "armed and dangerous" notification in the INS database as well as make false statements about the searches he carried out with ChoicePoint and the NCIC to cover up his incompetence? Alternatively, was he working under Dina Corsi's orders, who appeared to have been acting under Tom Wilshere? Corsi sabotaged one final opportunity to track down Almihdhar by blocking the contact to Saudi Airlines to get details of Almihdhar's credit card. She also thwarted her FBI colleagues at and after the meeting on 11 June and compounded this by misrepresenting the legal advice from Sherry Sabol to Steve Bongardt, with the result that any attempt to find the hijackers through the FBI's crime investigators was lost.

Kevin Fenton has suggested that: "We can also ask why the Justice Department inspector general did not point out these discrepancies in its report. Time and time again the inspector general missed things, erring in favor of Tom Wilshere and his associates to the point where it becomes hard to believe this is a coincidence and not a cover-up." (146)

To put Fuller's bungled investigation into context, Richard Clarke told Duffy and Nowosielski that if Tenet had informed him and his counterterrorism team "even as late as September fourth, we would have found [Almihdhar and Alhazmi] there's no doubt in my mind...If we had put out a request on the AP wire, they would have been arrested within twenty four hours." (147)

ABLE DANGER

Before reaching a conclusion as to who was responsible for the intelligence shenanigans or malfeasance that resulted in 9/11, it is worth considering the military intelligence program, Able Danger, because, "while the CIA and NSA were failing to provide information on the future hijackers to the FBI, a US Army unit was also prevented from sharing information about al-Qaeda with the Bureau." (148)

On the orders of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Hugh Shelton in October 1999, General Peter Schoomaker, the head of the military's Special Operations Command (SOCOM), set up an intelligence program called Able Danger, to gather information about al-Qaeda networks around the world.

The specific task of Able Danger was to "design data-mining software to collect open-source information on al-Qaeda cells, and then compare that information to existing government records in hopes of turning up previously unseen connections." (149) Their data-mining gathered information from such disparate sources as al-Qaeda internet chat rooms, financial records and mosque attendance, and government sources such as visa applications, and association with other known terrorists etc.

According to (*History Commons*) "*The Complete 9/11 Timeline*," "Capt. Scott Phillipott, head of the Able Danger program, asked Lt. Col. Anthony Shaffer to talk to a representative of CIA Director George Tenet and attempt to convince him that the new Able Danger program was not competing with the CIA. Shaffer later recalled the CIA representative replying, "I clearly understand the difference. I clearly understand. We're going after the leadership. You guys are going after the body. But, it doesn't matter. The bottom line is, CIA will never give you the best information from 'Alex Base' [the CIA's covert unit targeting bin Laden] or anywhere else. CIA will never provide that to you because if you were successful in your effort to target al-Qaeda, you will steal our thunder. Therefore, we will not support this." Shaffer claims that for the duration of Able Danger's existence, "To my knowledge, and my other colleagues' knowledge, there was no information ever released to us because CIA chose not to participate in Able Danger." (150)

Bryan Sacks, professor of philosophy, noted that "apparently, Able Danger was so effective that it was able to track the minute movements of several members of al-Qaeda in the US during 2000, even detecting, for instance, when meetings between suspected cell members had taken place in and around New York City. Had local or federal law enforcement been notified in 2000, the 9/11 plot may have been derailed, but according to Able Danger staffer, Col Anthony Shaffer, military lawyers apparently cancelled meetings where information garnered from Able Danger was scheduled to be shared with the FBI. Shaffer had been tasked with setting up the meetings in or around September 2000, and only learned of their cancellation when FBI personnel failed to show up." (151.)

Further evidence of how successful Able Danger was has been provided by Representative Curt Weldon, who stated that "two days before the attack on the *Cole*, [Able Danger] saw an increase of activity that led them to say to the senior leadership in the Pentagon at that time, in the Clinton administration, there's something going to happen in Yemen and we better be on high alert, but it was discounted. That story has yet to be told to the American people." (152)

Shaffer shared his information about Able Danger and how they had identified Mohamed Atta a year before 9/11 (as well as three of the other hijackers - Almihdhar, Alhazmi and Marwan Alshehhi) with Philip Zelikow and two other 9/11 Commission staffers at Bagram air base, Afghanistan, on October 21, 2003, but Zelikow chose not to refer to this evidence in the Commission's 9/11 Report.

As noted on Wikipedia, "an investigation by the Defence Department Inspector

General's office (IG) in September 2006 concluded that "the evidence did not support assertions that Able Danger identified the September 11, 2001, terrorists nearly a year before the attack, that Able Danger team members were prohibited from sharing information with law enforcement authorities, or that DoD officials acted against LTC Shaffer for his disclosures regarding Able Danger. However, some of the people questioned by the IG claimed their statements to the IG were distorted by investigators in the final IG's report, and the report omitted essential information that they had provided. Lt. Col Tony Shaffer has claimed that the DOD retaliated against him for speaking out publicly about the IG report's distortions."

It is significant that five of the eleven intelligence agents working in the Able Danger team positively identified Atta as having been on a chart in their office (they had pictures of all their main subjects/suspects). Unfortunately, they were unable to prove the veracity of their claim, as all the relevant information (some 2.5 trillion bytes reportedly) was destroyed.

Perhaps the most scathing critique of how Able Danger was swept under the carpet come from the most unlikely of sources - Louis Freeh, who was FBI director until he resigned on June 25, 2001 shortly before 9/11. Following the decision of the 9/11 Commission to inexplicably conclude that Able Danger "was not historically significant," Freeh commented that: "This astounding conclusion -- in combination with the failure to investigate Able Danger and incorporate it into its findings -- raises serious challenges to the commission's credibility and, if the facts prove out, might just render the commission historically insignificant itself." (153)

SO - WHO IS TO BLAME?

Having got this far, the reader won't be surprised by the view of Senator Bob Graham (Co-chair of the Joint Congressional Inquiry) that both the CIA and FBI "were extremely resistant to what they felt was an intrusion into their work, and getting these agents to testify required daily squabbles with the agencies." (154) However, they weren't the only problem.

LET'S START WITH THE NSA:

NSA Director, Michael Hayden, told the Joint Congressional Inquiry that the NSA had no knowledge that any of the hijackers were in the US. (155) However, Tom Drake, an executive manager in the NSA, has said that Hayden "flat-out lied about this. NSA knew what the numbers were...You cannot be monitoring the Yemen hub without knowing what the [number calling into it is] because that's what you're monitoring. And when the number comes in, you know the ID for the number that comes in." Duffy and Nowosielski conclude from their interview with Drake that "when Khalid Almihdhar called the Yemen hub from the phone Nawaf Alhazmi had in his own name at their San Diego apartment, the NSA knew the origin of the calls." (156)

James Bamford made a similarly excoriating criticism of the leading US intelligence agency, stating that the NSA could easily have applied for a warrant under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) and that all they needed to demonstrate was that both al-Qaeda operatives "were likely agents of a foreign terrorist organization, an easy task since both Mihdhar and Hazmi were being directed by bin Laden's ops center in Yemen." (157)

A further issue here is that the FBI had clearly requested the NSA pass on all relevant information to them as emphasised by author Ron Suskind, who wrote that "in fact,

[FBI agent Dan] Coleman and other FBI al-Qaeda specialists had even placed an order with the NSA back in 1998 - that any calls between the Yemen line and the US be passed to the bureau - that the NSA didn't fill." (158)

Such gross negligence raises the question of what role the NSA played in the time prior to 9/11 and why it was not lacerated with criticism in all the post-9/11 inquiries? After all, even a former employee of the NSA has raised a serious criticism of the agency. Kirk Wiebe, an NSA business manager and analyst at the time stated that: "No warrant would have been required had Director Hayden simply made use of the authorities available to him via Executive Order 12333, Part 11, Section 2.3C, by which he could have obtained approval from the attorney general to target all communications with the safe house in Yemen, regardless of origination or destination. It remains unclear as to why this was not done." (159) The simple fact is that NSA analysts were aware of the calls made by Almihdar and Alhazmi to the Yemen hub and knew they were being made from inside America "to the same Al-Qaeda house involved in orchestrating the embassy bombings." (160)

Furthermore, Michael Hayden chose to disregard an in-house computer system recommended by NSA technical leader for intelligence, Bill Binney. As Duffy and Nowosielski describe it, "he realised that NSA analysts were drowning in meaningless data. They had a volume problem to solve, and Binney felt he was the man to do it." (161) Furthermore, he estimated the cost for the NSA to develop ThinThread in-house would be 300 million dollars, while the alternative TrailBlazer proposal would require multiple billions of dollars and the use of outside contractors. Hayden chose the more expensive option. The research team within the NSA (known as SARC) made their criticism of this decision clear, stating that the incomprehensible decision was "a case study in how the drive for big money can squander big taxpayer bucks, chip away at our constitutional protections and, more importantly...play a crucial role in the worst intelligence failure since Pearl Harbour." (162)

Writer James Bamford described how Thinthread was uniquely designed to monitor calls made to the US, barring their actual content, and therefore not in violation of FISA regulations. However, it would have been possible to monitor the links between the Yemen hub and the terrorists staying in San Diego. With the evidence of the links between them and the hub, they would have had sufficient evidence to then apply for a FISA in order to access the content of the communications (163)

It therefore seems clear that Michael Hayden and senior officials within the NSA threw away a golden opportunity to prevent 9/11, but no blame has been apportioned for this. Similarly, as mentioned earlier, the NSA was not held to account for its failure to pass on intelligence gathered from their monitoring of the Yemen hub in the lead up to the embassy bombings in 1998. Why not?

The NSA certainly did well from 9/11: Maureen Baginski (director of NSA's Signals Intelligence division, the number three position in the agency) told a group of 40-50 NSA analysts a month after 9/11 that "we are going to get all the money we want...You have to understand, 9/11 is a gift to the NSA." (164)

To summarise the incompetence/malfeasance of certain senior personnel in the NSA, consider these words of FBI agent Mark Rossini. To recall, he was seconded to Alec Station and stated that the failure of the NSA to provide relevant information to the FBI had devastating implications: "You could link back who they were, [Almihdar and Alhazmi] their connection to bin Laden, the connection to the Yemeni house, et cetera. You could have gone to any court, any judge in the FISA court and say, "We want a FISA on that residence in San Diego.

“It would have been easy. And we would have surveilled them, and we would have learned more information. People who are going to watch this, they're going to say, ‘Oh, it's hindsight 20–20.’ But, no, I'm not talking hindsight 20–20. I'm talking basic, logical investigation.” (165) But, it did not happen.

THE FBI:

In the Introduction, I mentioned that a number of FBI agents were very aware of the approaching 9/11 attacks and shared their concern with attorney David Schippers (who led the Bill Clinton impeachment investigation). Unfortunately, Attorney General John Ashcroft refused to return Schippers’ calls to him, thus raising the issue of his culpability. Why would he have not returned calls from such a senior prominent political figure? We have also seen above that a number of FBI personnel's behaviour warrants further investigation. Dina Corsi failed to seek authorisation to share information with the Cole investigating team. Kevin Fenton noted that, "the clearest way this can be seen is in her non-provision to Bongardt of the NSA information linking Almihdhar to the Yemen hub and Malaysia [summit meeting]. She should have had this cleared for passage to him immediately after the June 11 meeting, but then waited ten weeks and, even after the NSA had cleared it, continued to withhold it, despite repeated interactions with Bongardt on precisely this topic." (166)

Corsi also appeared to have deliberately misconstrued the legal advice of Sherry Sabol to prevent any interference from Bongardt (in apparent collusion with her boss, Rodney Middleton, who fortuitously left the FBI the day before 9/11), while her obstruction of Robert Fuller seeking credit card information on Almihdhar from Saudi Airlines remains completely inexplicable. Similarly, Fuller's complete incompetence (or obfuscation), as described above, is worthy of further investigation. As far as the debacle of the failure by the FBI to apply for a FISA in order to examine Moussaoui's computer is concerned, we have seen that this failure could be attributed to interference by Tom Wilshere, who had been seconded to FBI headquarters.

However, there remains one further matter over which the FBI have failed to give an acceptable account and this has been highlighted by Senator Bob Graham, who co-chaired the Congressional Joint Inquiry. He described how Eleanor Hill, who was the staff director of the Joint Inquiry, alerted Graham to the fact that staff reviewing files in the San Diego field office uncovered "some alarming things. We've confirmed that that at least two of the hijackers lived there, one for almost a year. And one of them lived in the home of an FBI asset [Abdussattar Shaikh]. The FBI is embarrassed about our finding these files." (167) Graham noted that, had it not been for this discovery by his determined staff, the FBI would have kept this stunning information secret.

According to the FBI, Shaikh was "innocent, with no knowledge of the plans of the men he had befriended." (168) However, this view has been challenged by author Nafeez Ahmed, (169) who mentioned an article by Michael Isikoff in which Shaikh had referred to Almihdhar by name to his FBI handler: "On one occasion, a source says, the case agent called up the informant [Shaikh] and was told he couldn't talk because "Khalid" was in the room" thereby indicating that the FBI agent would have known who Khalid was. (170)

With the FBI thwarting the Congressional Inquiry team from accessing information about Shaikh's contact with Almihdhar and Alhazmi, Graham concluded that the Inquiry would have to subpoena Shaikh. However, the FBI then refused to serve the subpoena, when they were presented with it. They reluctantly agreed to deliver any questions the Joint Inquiry wished to ask Shaikh, who would then answer them. Graham

described how the FBI delayed delivering the questions for several weeks, until such time that Shaikh had somehow managed to employ the services of a well-known former Justice Department attorney. Graham queried how a man who had needed to take in lodgers could afford an attorney who just so happened to have a strong relationship with the FBI: "It was as if in an effort to protect their informant, the FBI had secured counsel for him...Perhaps the informant did know something about the plot that would be even more damaging were it revealed, and that this is what the FBI is trying to conceal." (171)

Graham then referred to a letter he received from a senior figure in the FBI, stating that the Bush administration were supportive of the FBI's obstructive behaviour in disregarding the subpoena and preventing any interview with Shaikh. Graham concluded that "we were seeing in writing what we had suspected for some time: the White House was directing the cover-up." (172) It is not clear who precisely was complicit in this cover-up, but it provides yet further evidence of the need for a grand jury investigation into the events around 9/11. Could it be that some coterie within the FBI were as aware as Alec Station that Almidhdar and Alhazmi were in the US and were there, to quote Bongardt, not because they were "going to fucking Disneyland"?

THE CIA:

The question was raised earlier about whether the CIA involved the Saudis in monitoring Almidhdar and Alhazmi when they arrived in the US. However, this seems most improbable given the evidence of Mike Scheuer to the Joint Congressional Inquiry, which stated that:

"According to [Scheuer] the former Chief of Alec Station, (the unit in the DCI's Counterterrorist Centre established in 1996 to focus specifically on Usama Bin Ladin), it was clear from about 1996 that the Saudi Government would not cooperate with the United States on matters relating to Usama Bin Ladin... The former chief of Alec Station thought that the U.S. Government's hope of eventually obtaining Saudi cooperation was unrealistic because Saudi assistance to the U.S. Government on this matter was contrary to Saudi national interests." (173) Furthermore, as the Inquiry noted, "a number of FBI agents and CIA officers complained to the Joint Inquiry about a lack of Saudi cooperation in terrorism investigations both before and after the September 11 attacks." (174)

So, on this basis, the CIA were unlikely to have sub-contracted this surveillance to the Saudis. Another theory was that they were Saudi agents successfully placed in al-Qaeda as double agents. This also seems improbable because Almidhdar was married to the daughter of Hada, who ran the Yemen hub, and this would have stretched any possible subterfuge way beyond the realm of likelihood.

Evidence that the CIA (or another agency?) were following Almidhdar and Alhazmi was provided through a successful FOIA request for notes taken on 9/11 by Stephen Cambone, the Principal Deputy Undersecretary of Defence for Policy, who made the following note for Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld at an emergency policy meeting on the afternoon of 9/11:

"AA 77 [the plane that crashed into the Pentagon]—3 indiv have been followed since Millennium + *Cole*. 1 guy is assoc of *Cole* bomber. 2 entered US in early July (2 of 3 pulled aside and interrogated?)."

Cambone's note to Rumsfeld has been considered in *History Commons*, which noted that:

"Although four of the subsequently alleged Flight 77 hijackers were known to the

authorities in connection with terrorism before 9/11, it appears that the three referred to here as being followed are Nawaf Alhazmi, Khalid Almihdhar, and Salem Alhazmi, due to their ties to an al-Qaeda Malaysia summit and ties to the *USS Cole* bombing on October 12, 2000. If the note is literally correct that some US authorities were following these three since the Millennium, this would contradict the 9/11 Commission's position that the trail of the three was lost shortly after the Millennium. The comment that one of the hijackers was an associate of a *Cole* bomber could refer to photos the CIA had before 9/11 identifying Almihdhar standing next to *Cole* bomber Fahad al-Quso, or photos of him standing next to *Cole* mastermind Khallad bin Attash. The note's mention that two of them entered the US in July is also accurate, as Salem Alhazmi entered the US on June 29." (175)

It is somewhat surprising that the Pentagon (inadvertently, one would imagine) allowed the above message to be released for public view, due to its incriminating nature. While the FBI were (largely) kept in the dark, it would appear that the CIA was acting in cahoots with the Department of Defence, unless we are to believe that Cambone was informed of the above information by someone in the CIA between the time of the attacks and his meeting later that day with Rumsfeld.

As Kevin Fenton surmised, "it is hard to imagine circumstances under which these hijackers, under surveillance by people wishing to prevent the attacks, could successfully have carried out their mission...However, if we view the actions of the group around Wilshere and Blee as actions with the aim of enabling attacks, then they make perfect sense. They hide the hijackers from the FBI, put them under surveillance, realize an attack is coming, watch the nineteen buying tickets and sit back to see what happens." (176)

We have already looked closely at CIA complicity in allowing 9/11 to happen, but who within the agency should be held responsible? To start, one has to ask why George Tenet was not charged for perjury when even the Commission's chief executive, Philip Zelikow, who had a clear conflict of interest as a White House insider, stated that "Tenet simply could not tell the truth to the Commission...George had decided not to share information on any topic unless we already had documentary proof, and then he would add as little as possible to the record." (177)

Kevin Fenton's persuasive view is that "it is hard to come to any conclusion except this: whoever was running the surveillance and concealment operation wanted the attacks to succeed. This may have been Wilshere and / or Blee. However, they may have been acting on instructions from someone superior, and the purpose of what they were doing may have remained obscure to them until it was too late." (178) Indeed, it is possible that Wilshere was advised that the terrorists were under close supervision and would not be allowed to successfully carry out their mission.

The facts appear to suggest that high-level individuals in the CIA leadership were behind the orders to hide the evidence about Almihdhar and Alhazmi. For example, the failure of the CIA station in Bangkok to communicate between mid-January and March, to inform that the two suspects had left Thailand for the U.S seems to indicate that someone in a very high position ordered a "go-slow" on this information. Similarly, the manipulative actions of the CIA agent working with the joint-asset, Omar, could surely not have been ordered by Wilshere or Blee, without a greater authority being involved. The other obvious point is that if Wilshere or / and Blee had been running an unofficial and illegal operation that did not also involve the likes of Black and Tenet, why were

they not hung out to dry by the latter two following the 9/11 attacks? This is a most important question, particularly after Blee had seemingly misinformed his superiors, telling them that the terrorists were still under close observation following the Malaysia summit, when they had apparently lost them?

Kevin Fenton's theory is that "9/11 was less a failure by some intelligence community officials to connect the dots, than a success by other officials in disconnecting them. Had they not prevented their colleagues from learning certain pieces of information, these colleagues would probably have thwarted the 9/11 attacks, for example by placing Almihdhar and Alhazmi under surveillance, or even arresting them for their part in a prior terrorist attack, the bombing of the *USS Cole* in Yemen." (179)

One 9/11 researcher, Erik Larson, has suggested that "it seems unlikely, though, that Blee was the highest-level person involved in a plot to protect the 9/11 hijackers in order to enable 9/11. In my view, it is more probable that Blee himself would have been installed, recruited or manipulated by, or working in conjunction with, a covert and powerful insider network that sought a 9/11 event as a catalyst for wars to control regions with geo-strategic resources in declining supply as global demand rises; establish a US national security state; secure massive long-term public spending on the military-corporate complex; and renew and extend the global power of the US as their empire... It is noteworthy that this was the pre-9/11 agenda of the Project for the New American Century, many of whose members became principals in the George W. Bush administration, and that this 'coincidence' was not examined by the 9/11 Commission or the mainstream media." (180)

Larson's view is supported by the fact that nobody has been singled out for any serious criticism by any of the government investigations (apart from the CIA Inspector General report which recommended an Accountability Board to look into the performances of a number of CIA individuals including Tenet, Black, Blee and Wilshere.) The actions of Michael Ann Casey should also be investigated further, as she had informed other interested parties within the CIA that the information about Almihdhar had been passed to the FBI (while knowing this was not the case), in order to prevent anyone else thinking that they needed to inform the FBI. Similarly, Alfreda Bikowsky deliberately misled the Congressional Joint Inquiry, as shown earlier, and she should be investigated further for this seemingly unaccountable behaviour.

As we have seen, there are a number of individuals in the CIA and FBI as well as within the senior management of the NSA whose actions in the period leading up to 9/11 should be given far greater scrutiny than they have received so far. This lack of scrutiny is not surprising as the 9/11 Commission pre-empted any such criticism of any of the above individuals when they stated in the preface of their final report that "our aim has not been to assign individual blame." (181) Perhaps they should have done so, because as Senator Bob Graham observed:

"It amazes me to this day that no one - not one single person - has been held accountable for the intelligence and other lapses that contributed to the failure to interdict the attack... Once you realize that the attacks of September 11 were very much imaginable, it is important that people be held accountable." (182)

Notes for Chapter 5

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- 4) Ibid, p68-69
- 5) Kevin Fenton, "*Disconnecting the Dots - How CIA and FBI officials helped enable 9/11 and evaded government investigations*", Trine Day, 2011, p 215
- 6) Ibid, p217
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- 8) Kevin Ryan, *Another Nineteen. Investigating Legitimate 9/11 Suspects*. Microbloom, 2013, p60
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- 10) Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower, al-Qaeda's Road to 9/11* Penguin, 2011, p339.
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- 13) Philip Shenon, *The Commission. The Uncensored History of the 9/11 Investigation*, Twelve, Grand Central, 2008, p141
- 14) Ali Soufan, p291
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- 16) Duffy and Nowosielski, p231
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- 18) Fenton p93
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- 23) Ibid, p59
- 24) Hearing before the Joint Inquiry of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, 20 September, 2002
- 25) Testimony from the Joint Intelligence Committee, *New York Times*, 17 October 2002
- 26) *United States v Zacarias Moussaoui*, "Substitute for Passage from CIA OIG Report re Number of CIA persons who reviewed cables after Spring 2000," July 31, 2006
- 27) Wright, p352
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- 29) Ibid, p374
- 30) Duffy and Nowosielski, p48
- 31) 911 Commission p502 note 44
- 32) Duffy and Nowosielski, p55
- 33) Wright, p352
- 34) Duffy and Nowosielski p42
- 35) https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/transcripts/3602_spyfactory.html
- 36) Duffy and Nowosielski p56
- 37) Fenton, p45-47
- 38) Justice Department IG report, p242-43
- 39) Duffy and Nowosielski, p161
- 40) Ibid, p54
- 41) Ibid, p55
- 42) Fenton, p61

- 43) <https://alt.politics.elections.narkive.com/pkwQ315y/fbi-prevents-agents-from-telling-truth-about-9-11-on-pbs>
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- 45) *ibid*, p182, CIA IG 9/11 Accountability Report, p53-54
- 46) *Ibid*, p222
- 47) Commission Report, p502 n44
- 48) Duffy and Nowosielski, p45
- 49) Erik Larson - Review of Kevin Fenton's book, "*Disconnecting the Dots.*"
<https://911reports.wordpress.com/2011/08/21/deconstructing-the-911-dot-disconnection-a-book-review-by-erik-larson/>
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- 52) *Ibid*, p227
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- 54) Duffy and Nowosielski p3
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- 59) Duffy and Nowosielski, Preface, pxx1
- 60) *Ibid*, p11
- 61) *Ibid*, p160
- 62) *Ibid*, p161-2
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- 72) Ali Soufan, p289
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- 79) Soufan, p298
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- 81) Soufan, p301
- 82) *Ibid*, p302
- 83) Commission Report, p267
- 84) Fenton p226
- 85) Commission Report, p270
- 86) Fenton, p239
- 87) Duffy and Nowosielski, p77
- 88) Fenton, p239
- 89) Duffy and Nowosielski, p72

- 90) Justice Department IG report, p294
- 91) Commission Report, p537
- 92) Fenton, p251
- 93) Wright, p386
- 94) Soufan, p243-4
- 95) Commission Report, p269
- 96) Duffy and Nowosielski, p73
- 97) Graham p45
- 98) Ibid, p49
- 99) Wright, p396
- 100) Justice Department IG report, p140-41
- 101) Ibid, pages 139-60, 208, 217-18
- 102) Graham, p56
- 103) Ibid, p56
- 104) Ibid, p57
- 105) Fenton p292
- 106) Shenon, p361
- 107) Commission Report, p275
- 108) Fenton, p303
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- 110) Fenton, p300
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- 112) US District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia , Alexandra Division. 03/9/06
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- 116) Graham, p81
- 117) Nafeez Ahmed, *The War on Truth*, Arris, 2005, p178
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- 119) Ahmed, p180
- 120) *Daily Telegraph*, 16/9/01
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- 123) *Newsweek* 24/9/01
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- 125) Fenton, p311
- 126) Commission Report, p230
- 127) Justice Department IG report, p306
- 128) Commission Report, p538 note 80
- 129) Fenton, p318
- 130) Wright, p399
- 131) Ibid, p399
- 132) Commission Report, p270 and p538 note 79
- 133) Ibid, p538, note 81
- 134) Fenton, p334-5
- 135) Wright, p398

- 136) Justice Department IG report, p310-11
- 137) Fenton, p339
- 138) Commission Report, p272
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- 140) Fenton, p349
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- 142) Mike Kelly, "A Tragic Tale of Ones that Got Away" *Bergen (NJ) Record*, 18 May 2004
- 143) Fenton, p350
- 144) *Ibid*, p352
- 145) Soufan, p292
- 146) Fenton p353
- 147) Duffy and Nowosielski, p84
- 148) Fenton p168
- 149) Bryan Sacks essay in *The Hidden History of 9-11*, Seven Stories, 2008, p241
- 150) Government Security News 9/05
- 151) Quote from Sacks (see note 149 above), p241, referring to disclosure on Government Security News, 9/05
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- 153) "Why Did the 911 Commission Ignore Able Danger?" Louis Freeh, ex FBI Director, *Wall Street Journal*, 17 November 2005
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- 161) *Ibid*, p66
- 162) *Ibid*, p69
- 163) Bamford, p45-46
- 164) Duffy and Nowosielski, p112-13
- 165) https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/transcripts/3602_spyfactory.html
- 166) Fenton, p378
- 167) Graham, p160
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- 172) *Ibid*, p166
- 173) Congressional Joint Inquiry report, p438
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- 176) Fenton, p136
- 177) Shenon p360
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- 179) *Ibid*, p3
- 180) see note 49 above

- 181) Commission Report, pxvi
- 182) Graham, p113

CHAPTER 6

THE HIJACKINGS AND THE FAA / MILITARY RESPONSE

The fateful events of 9/11 began when American Airlines Flight 11 left Boston's Logan Airport en route to Los Angeles at 7:59 am, with 81 passengers and a crew of 11. The last response from the crew deck was at 8:13am, with the 9/11 Commission stating that the hijacking began at 8:14am, or shortly thereafter.

Over the next few minutes, the air traffic controller (ATC) gave a series of instructions and made repeated attempts to contact the pilot, to no avail. According to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) procedures, "if...you are in doubt that a situation constitutes an emergency or potential emergency, handle it as though it were an emergency." (1) The FAA requested a scrambled military response as often as a couple of times a week, so the procedures would have been well understood. For example, between September 2000 and June 2001, fighters were scrambled 67 times to intercept suspicious aircraft. (2)

At 8:21am, AA11 turned off its transponder, making it difficult to track the plane. A transponder is an electronic device that identifies a plane on a controller's screen and gives its exact location and altitude. Author and pilot Lynn Spencer noted that turning off the transponder was very rare, that no pilot would do this and that it would normally signify an electrical failure on the plane. (3)

The ATC told his supervisor that there was something seriously wrong. He was told to follow standard procedures for a "no radio" aircraft. As the plane then went off course, the controller began to move other aircraft out of its path. Such behaviour would have increased the concern of the ATC, as it made no sense to depart from the flight plan, with radio contact lost, because the ATC would have great difficulty tracking it (4)

With no response from the crew, the transponder turned off and the plane deviating from its course, the air controllers should have been reaching for the phone to the military immediately. To paraphrase Ian Fleming, "once is chance, twice is coincidence, three times is enemy action", as in loss of radio contact, transponder turned off and unauthorised change of direction. These aberrations constituted an emergency before it was known that it was a hijacking. As author David Ray Griffin noted, "if standard procedure had been followed, the FAA would have notified NEADS (Northeast Air Defense Sector) no later than 8:22, NEADS would have issued the scramble order no later than 8:23, the fighters would have been airborne no later than 8:27, and AA11 would have been intercepted by 8:37, over nine minutes before the North Tower was struck." (5)

At the same time that the transponder was turned off, flight attendants Betty Ong and Amy Sweeney called American Airlines Reservations through the onboard call phones and communicated what was happening. The phone line between the flight attendants and American Airlines remained open for the next 25 minutes until the plane crashed. They explained that the hijackers had stabbed two other flight attendants and then sprayed mace to force everyone to the back of the plane, also claiming that they had a bomb. How the hijackers managed to smuggle mace onto the plane and how they weren't affected by the mace spray themselves remains unknown. Ong and Sweeney also mentioned that a passenger had been killed. It would appear this was Daniel Lewin, according to the flight manifest, an American-Israeli, who had served as an officer in the elite Sayeret Matkal special operations unit of the Israel Defence Forces. He seemingly attempted to stop the hijackers in front of him without realising that another

hijacker was sitting behind him, who then allegedly cut his throat.(6)

The flight recorder shows that, before dying, Captain Ogonowski pressed the cockpit microphone, pushing its button intermittently to signal that something was wrong, and at one point allowing air controllers to hear the voice of a hijacker. (7)

However, Ogonowski failed to punch the four-digit emergency code (7500) into the plane's transponder, which pilots are taught to do the moment a hijack situation is known.

According to Terry Biggio, the operations manager at the FAA's Boston Centre, the center initially thought Flight 11 "was a catastrophic electrical failure and... was diverting to New York". (8) However, at 8:24 am, "American 11 took a dramatic turn towards the south." (9) At this same time, controllers heard two radio transmissions from the cockpit, with the voice of a hijacker declaring, "we have some planes." Pete Zalewski, the ATC who was handling Flight 11, said that after the second of these: "I immediately knew something was very wrong. And I knew it was a hijack." He alerted his supervisor. Lino Martins, another Boston air traffic controller, saying, "the supervisor came over, and that's when we realized something was serious." (10)

Zalewski was unclear if he had heard correctly so he asked an assistant to listen to the recording, as all transmissions are automatically recorded, to clarify what he had just heard. (11) Unfortunately, by the time the worrying report of "planes" (in the plural) was confirmed, both Flights 11 and 175 had crashed into the World Trade Towers.

At 8:25am, one of the hijackers (possibly Mohamed Atta) announced "nobody move. Everything will be okay. If you try to make any moves, you'll endanger yourself and the airplane. Just stay quiet." Atta thought he was speaking to the passengers, but his voice was picked up and recorded by air traffic controllers. After the transmissions by Atta and the inability to contact the airliner, air traffic controllers in Boston finally realized that the flight had definitely been hijacked. At this point, FAA Boston Centre managers started notifying their chain of command, rather than contacting the Pentagon's National Military Command Centre (NMCC) or NORAD (North American Aerospace Defence Command) directly. NORAD oversees NEADS, which is permanently assigned to it.

At 8:28, the Boston Centre contacted the FAA command center in Herndon to advise that the plane had been hijacked and was moving towards New York's airspace.

At 8:32, the FAA Command Centre in Herndon, Virginia, notified FAA headquarters and a teleconference was set up with Herndon, Boston, New York and Cleveland FAA centers.

According to the 9/11 Commission, "FAA headquarters is ultimately responsible for the management of the national airspace system," and the operations center there "receives notifications of incidents, including accidents and hijackings." (12) FAA headquarters has a hijack coordinator, who is "the director of the FAA Office of Civil Aviation Security or his or her designate." Procedures require that, if a hijacking is confirmed, the hijack coordinator on duty is "to contact the Pentagon's National Military Command Centre [NMCC] and to ask for a military escort aircraft to follow the flight, report anything unusual, and aid search and rescue in the event of an emergency." Yet, the Commission stated that although "FAA headquarters began to follow the hijack protocol," it did "not contact the NMCC to request a fighter escort." (13) Mike Canavan, who would normally be the FAA's hijack coordinator, was away in Puerto Rico that morning. His absence will be discussed later. (14) The procedure for dealing with hijackings is much more cumbersome than simply requesting assistance from the military to deal with an arising emergency. The three issues noted

above arose prior to it being known that Flight11 had been hijacked. In other words, the FAA should have requested the military to scramble fighters before they knew it was hijacked.

At 8:34, Boston Centre received a further transmission from AA11, with Atta saying "Nobody move please. We are going back to the airport. Don't try to make any stupid moves." The Boston Centre supervisor, Dan Bueno, after calling the FAA Command Centre in Herndon called Otis Air National Guard Base on Cape Cod, but was told he needed to contact NEADS. He checked the FAA regulations manual, section FAAAAO 7610.4J. Appendix 16. As Spencer noted, "it states that fighters can be launched directly at FAA request, so he is going to make that happen. He may not be FAA headquarters, but he is FAA!" (15)

WHY WEREN'T ATLANTIC CITY FIGHTERS INVOLVED?

Around 8:34am, the FAA's Boston Centre also attempted to contact the 177th Fighter Wing of the New Jersey Air National Guard based at Atlantic City, which flies F-16 fighter jets. This military unit had lost its scramble-ready status due to Pentagon cutbacks in 1998. (16) According to the 9/11 Commission, "the center... tried to contact a former alert site in Atlantic City, unaware it had been phased out. (17)

NEADS also tried contacting the same unit minutes later, but its call was not answered (18). With the removal of the Atlantic City fighters from NORAD's alert mission, "the Pentagon left what seems to be a yawning gap in the midsection of its air defenses on the East Coast - a gap with New York City at the center." (19) However, around this time, two F-16s from the 177th Fighter Wing in Atlantic City were away from base performing a training mission, and were just minutes from New York City, although the pilots were unaware of the unfolding crisis.

ATLANTIC CITY F-16s MIGHT HAVE PREVENTED ATTACKS ON WTC

Investigative reporter and author Peter Lance pointed out that, had the two Atlantic City F-16s flying over the Pine Barrens "been notified by the FAA at 8:34... they could have reached the Twin Towers by 8:42am, four minutes before AA11 slammed into the North Tower. Even unarmed, and without a shoot down order, they might have been able to take defensive action to prevent the big 767 from crashing into the tower. In any case, the fighters would certainly have been on patrol and able to interdict UA 175, which didn't hit the South Tower until 9:03 a.m." (20) Yet despite the crucial role these two fighters could have played, the 9/11 Commission Report made no mention of them. Lance quoted one of the "Jersey Girls", Lorie van Auken, whose husband died in the North Tower as saying, "I'm frankly stunned by this. If two fighters were only eight minutes away, the Commission should have done an exhaustive study on why they didn't get called. To leave them out of the official hearing record is unbelievable." (21) Indeed, Colin Scoggins (FAA military liaison) stated that he contacted NEADS and "I requested that we take from Atlantic City, not launch from the ground but those already airborne in Warning Area 107 [a training area] ...if they were there, which I believe they were..." (22) NEADS did not act on that request.

He later wrote in an email to researcher and author David Ray Griffin Griffin, that "NEADS could have called them and asked them to cancel their mission and divert." (23)

NEADS NOTIFICATION

At 8:37:52am, Boston Centre finally notified NEADS of the hijacking, with the following request:

FAA: Hi. Boston Centre TMU [Traffic Management Unit] , we have a problem here. We have a hijacked aircraft headed towards New York and we need you guys to , we need someone to scramble some F-16's or something up there, help us out."

NEADS: Is this real-world or exercise?

FAA: No, this is not an exercise, not a test. (24)

So, according to the official record, the FAA only contacted NEADS more than twenty minutes after the initial alarm bell rang, when there was no response from the flight crew at 8:13am.

NEADS then prepared two F-15 alert aircraft at Otis Air Force Base, 153 miles from New York. According to the 9/11 Commission, NEADS had only two aircraft available at two bases at Ohio in Massachusetts and Langley in Virginia to protect the most populated part of the country with the most dense air traffic as well as the cities of New York and Washington DC and an airspace of more than half a million square miles.

No attempt was made to scramble fighter jets from the much closer McGuire Air Force Base in New Jersey, 59 miles flying distance from New York City. Griffin estimated that fighter jets could have been airborne by 8:42am and travelling at approximately 30 miles per minute, could have flown to New York City in time to intercept Flight 11, shortly before it crashed into the North Tower. Were there no planes available at McGuire on 9/11? We simply don't know.

To summarise, if the timescale above is accurate, there is at least a 20 minute interval between the first problem noted with AA11 at 8:14am and the military being notified. Such a slow response, if true, was either slothful or a dereliction of duty and yet not one person within the FAA was disciplined or even reprimanded for their part in the day's events.

THE ROLE OF COLIN SCOGGINS

Colin Scoggins, the military liaison at the FAA's Boston Centre was an experienced air traffic controller and was also responsible for generating the military schedules that keep FAA facilities synchronized with military airspace requirements. He had therefore developed personal relationships with most of the military units in his region. (25)

In a statement to the 9/11 Commission, Scoggins said he arrived at the Boston Centre at "about 8:25 a.m." When he entered the center, a colleague told him about the hijacking of Flight 11. (26) Scoggins also confirmed his arrival at 8:25 on the "911blogger" website, where he contributed under the name of "cheapshot." (27)

Rather than going immediately to help deal with the hijacking, Scoggins went to the credit union at the center. He recalled, "I wasn't in a rush because when hijacks do occur, sometimes too many people try to get involved, but instead they just get in the way." It is hard to understand why Scoggins didn't think that the FAA's military liaison might be helpful to FAA personnel trying to respond to the hijacking? However, author David Ray Griffin received an email from Scoggins in which he wrote that "before he arrived on the floor that morning, Joe Cooper, a Boston Centre air traffic management specialist, had phoned NEADS about the hijacking...Cooper's call is the one that, according to the tapes, was received by NEADS at 8:38." (28) Cooper's call to NEADS is not to be confused with the call mentioned earlier by Dan Bueno, who called the Otis Air Force Base Tower before Cooper's call.

When he got to the credit union, Scoggins decided he should go to the center's traffic management unit, to make sure that fighter jets were launched in response to the hijacking. As he recalled, he told an employee at the credit union that "if it really came to it," and fighter jets "had to stop the hijack from hitting a building or something, there wasn't much [the fighters] could do." (29) Why would Scoggins have made such a bizarre comment and why would he have thought that the hijacked plane would fly into a building. After all, the presumption would surely have been that the American Airline pilot would be at the controls and hardly likely to crash the plane into a building?

Scoggins then went to the center's operational floor, arriving there at about 8:35 (30) where he discussed the situation with Dan Bueno, who told Scoggins that they lacked information on AA11's altitude due to the transponder being turned off. According to Lynn Spencer, it occurred to Scoggins that NEADS might be able to provide altitude information for Flight 11, as the NEADS radar system was more able than the FAA's to determine a flight's altitude. He therefore phoned NEADS as soon as he arrived at his station. (31)

From the above, we can assume that Scoggins, on his arrival at the Boston Centre, believed that one of his colleagues in the center had already contacted the military, as otherwise his action in going to the credit union would have been incomprehensible and a dereliction of his duty as the military liaison within the center. Indeed, Scoggins claimed that even before he'd arrived, Joe Cooper, mentioned earlier, had already phoned NEADS about the hijacking. (32)

Scoggins claimed he made his first call to NEADS regarding Flight 11 to inform them that the aircraft is "20 [miles] south of Albany, heading south at a high rate of speed, 600 knots." (33)

Flight 11 was over Albany at 8:26am. (34) At such a high speed, it would have reached 20 miles south of there around 8:28. However, Scoggins was quite certain he only arrived on the floor at Boston Centre at around 8:35 (after arriving at 8:25). He recalled that although he later tried to write up a chronology of events, he "couldn't get a timeline that made any sense." The 9/11 Commission made no mention of either call from Cooper or Scoggins, stating that "the first notification received by the military—at any level—that American 11 had been hijacked" is when Boston Centre calls NEADS just before 8:38 a.m." (35) As Scoggins had such clear recall of informing NEADS about Flight 11 being south of Albany (which was at 8:28), the entire Commission timeline becomes highly contentious.

A report by *ABC News* is more consistent with Scoggins' claims, indicating that Boston Centre contacted NEADS about the hijacking earlier, at around 8:31am, although this was also a few minutes later than Scoggins' update above. (36)

NEADS' logs indicate the call was at 8:40 a.m, and NORAD reported this as the time of the call in a press release on September 18, 2001 (37) The 8:40 time was widely reported in the media prior to the 9/11 Commission's 2004 report but later released tape recordings of the NEADS operations floor that are referred to in the 9/11 Commission Report placed the call at 8:37:52 seconds. (38) There is clearly a discrepancy in the times as reported by Scoggins and the Commission, which need further investigation.

THE MILITARY RESPONSE

Following the request from the Boston FAA Centre, Colonel Robert Marr ordered his two fighters at Ohio Air Base to battle stations, which meant the pilots would prepare to take off, but remain in their planes with the engines turned off. He then called the

NORAD commander, Major General Larry Arnold, who told him "go ahead and scramble them, and we'll get authorities later." (39) Unfortunately, it had taken Marr eight minutes to obtain this authorization from Arnold, because he had been in a teleconference with other NORAD officials, due to their involvement in a military exercise taking place at this time. (More on that later.) Colonel Randy Morris, who Marr talked to, inexplicably didn't apparently think the issue was sufficiently serious to interrupt the teleconference and put Marr through to Arnold. (40) One question here is why Marr didn't scramble the planes immediately, prior to seeking authorisation to engage the hijacked plane, as this might have given the F-15's enough time to arrive in New York before Flight 11 crashed into the North Tower.

Generally, any shoot down order would have required the authorisation of the National Command Authority, which was the President or Secretary of Defence. However a memo was issued by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff titled "Aircraft Piracy (Hijackings) and Destruction of Derelict Airborne Objects" issued on 01 June 2001, which stated that "the NMCC is the focal point within the Department of Defence for providing assistance. In the event of a hijacking, the NMCC will be notified by the most expeditious means by the FAA. The NMCC will, [my italics] *with the exception of immediate responses as authorised by reference d*, forward requests for DOD assistance to the Secretary of Defence for approval." (41)

Reference "d" is found in a 1997 document, Directive 3025.15 which states that "The DOD Components that receive verbal requests from civil authorities for support in an exigent emergency may initiate informal planning and, if required, immediately respond."

Griffin has pointed out that NEADS, being a DOD Component, contacted by the FAA concerning a clear "exigent emergency" had the authority to "immediately respond." In other words, Marr didn't even need approval from Arnold. Such a view was also shared by Colin Scoggins, who expressed this in an email to Griffin: "According to FAA Order 7610.4, [referred to on page 3] NEADS has the authority issued by NORAD to launch fighters; they do not have to wait for authority from NORAD." (42) Indeed, Marr is on record as saying, "my intent was to scramble Otis to military airspace while we found out what was going on." (43) So why didn't he do this immediately rather than await Arnold's approval. Furthermore, as NORAD Commander Larry Arnold stated, "I have the authority in case of an emergency to declare a target hostile and shoot it down under an emergency condition." (44)

NEADS TAKES 15 MINUTES TO SCRAMBLE FIGHTER JETS

According to the 9/11 Commission, NEADS had 9 minutes notice before Flight 11 crashed. Griffin has provided a timescale of response that might have enabled the F-15's to engage the hijacked plane: "Allowing a half-minute for the call from NEADS to Ohio and then 2.5 minutes for the F-15's to go from scramble order to 29,000 feet, the fighters could have been flying full speed towards New York City by 8:41. At 1,850 miles per hour, they could have traversed the 153 miles from Ohio to NYC in five minutes. During this period, shoot-down authorization could have been obtained from the Pentagon." (45) It would have been close, but Flight 11 could possibly have been intercepted and shot down, although this would inevitably have resulted in many deaths in the locality of the shoot-down. Both pilots acknowledged that they were flying at supersonic speed, according to Spencer (46) *If the pilots had arrived in time, they would at least have been able to fly alongside and clarify what was going on in the cockpit.* (my italics for emphasis)

Given that NEADS were aware of a hijacking at 8.37:52 (at the latest), it seems extraordinary that it took a further 14-15 minutes before the two F-15"s were scrambled. The 9/11 Commission report stated that they had a problem locating AA11 due to its transponder being turned off. This is obviously nonsense, as illustrated by Griffin, because, "if aircraft not sending out transponder signals were invisible to the military radars, then Soviet bombers coming to attack the United States during the Cold War could have avoided detection by simply turning their transponders off. Surely the US military's defence of the United States was not based on the hope that Soviet pilots would have the courtesy to leave their transponders on?" (47)

A further delay has been addressed by Colin Scoggins, who claimed that "they [the military officials] state in several places that they were waiting on a clearance from the FAA. That is false; we asked them on several occasions why the fighters had not launched. It seemed like an eternity." (48) Also, as noted earlier, Colonel Marr is on record as saying that when the Otis fighters took off his "intent was to scramble [them] to military airspace while we found out what was going on" and that before 9:03am when Flight 175 hit the South Tower, the fighters are "heading down south towards Whisky 105 and we don't really have a mission for them at this point." (49)

Whisky 105 is military training airspace southeast of Long Island, a few minutes flying time from New York City. According to NORAD'S statement on 18/9/01, the Otis jets were still 71 miles away from New York when Flight 175 hit the WTC at 9:03am.

The question ignored by the 9/11 Commission was why the Otis planes remained on the runway a full six minutes when ready to take off following Arnold's order? The report claimed that the F-15's remained on the tarmac because they were supposedly "lacking a target" (50) but that excuse seems implausible as the evidence of Scoggins above clearly shows. Also, if they lacked a mission, why would they then have roared full blower all the way, as reported by the pilots after the event? Furthermore, not one single person either in the FAA or NORAD has been considered guilty of negligence or misconduct. The obvious inference is that the FAA did their job but the military did not do theirs.

EVIDENCE OF SCOGGINS CHALLENGES 9/11 COMMISSION TIMELINE

Griffin noted that NORAD's claim of not being aware of the hijacking until 8.37:52am was challenged by two ABC programmes in 2002, one of which stated that "shortly after 8.30 (specified by Peter Jennings as 8.31)...word of a possible hijacking reached various stations of NORAD." (51)

Why wasn't NORAD (or NEADS) contacted at an earlier time than 8:37am, as indicated by Ben Sliney in his testimony to the 9/11 Commission. (52) He was the Operations Manager at the FAA's Command Centre in Herndon and stated that "the protocol was in place that the center that reported the hijacking would notify the military...I go back to 1964, where I began my air traffic career and they have always followed the same protocol." The Boston Centre should therefore have contacted the military directly and Sliney confirmed that he believed "a notification to NORAD was made promptly." Sliney's testimony supports Scoggin's contention that Joe Cooper had called NEADS before he arrived at the Centre at 8:25am.

Now this is where it gets interesting, because the authenticity of the official NORAD tapes is challenged by the evidence of Colin Scoggins, who "made about 40 calls to NEADS during the course of the morning." (53) As we saw, Scoggins claimed he made his first call to NEADS regarding Flight 11 to inform them that the aircraft is "20 [miles] south of Albany, heading south at a high rate of speed, 600 knots." At such a high speed,

it would have reached 20 miles south of there around 8:28am. Researcher, Paul Schreyer, has noted that: "As Boston Center's Joe Cooper called NEADS even before Scoggins, this means the first alarm call to NEADS might have happened at least 8 minutes earlier than stated in the 9/11 Commission Report. Asked about this by a journalist in 2011, Scoggins stayed by his version, saying this was puzzling him too and there were a few minutes "that never matched up." (54)

Miles Kara, 9/11 Commission staffer has minimized Scoggins's statement arguing that, "Colin does not have his recall correct, here. And you cannot go by participant recall, it is just as inaccurate as eyewitness accounts, by and large." (55)

While Kara is right to point out that recall can sometimes be inaccurate, it seems improbable that Scoggins could be so wrong about such a specific notification as "20 miles south of Albany."

DID SOMEONE "COOK THE BOOKS" WITH THE NORAD TAPES?

If Scoggins is right, it implies that the NEADS tapes were interfered with. Could such a thing have been possible?

Robin Hordon, who had worked as an air controller at the Boston Centre between 1970-1981 has stated that "there is absolutely no way that four large commercial airliners could have flown around off course for 30 to 60 minutes on 9/11 without being intercepted and shot completely out of the sky by our jet fighters unless very highly placed people in our government and our military wanted it to happen." (56)

Hordon believes that the NORAD Tapes might have been cherry-picked and doctored, writing in an email to Griffin that someone "could write over the time channel, adjusting it to any time one would want. Or one could transfer all the audio information on particular channels onto another tape that already has a chosen time reference impregnated upon it." (57)

How would Hordon have known that such tampering was possible? Well, in the statement referred to above, he also mentioned that he "was part of the team which trained other Air Traffic Controllers and transitioned the FAA from its old broadband radar and simple flight data processors into the RDP (Radar Data Processing) and computerized radar displays... and was certified to create transcripts from audio tapes, to interpret radar data in tracking aircraft from computer files, and to analyze computer tracking data, all of which would combine to "tell the story" of air traffic incidents." For example, was the time of FAA notification to NEADS 8:37:52 as stated by the Commission or was it 8:31 as stated in two ABC shows in 2002? If Hordon is right, someone could have changed the tape time quite simply.

Outrageous as this may seem, it has to be seen in the context of the tapes of an ATC's discussion, which we will come to next, concerning what happened that morning, which were then destroyed by a senior manager - what possible motive could there have been for that? Furthermore, as John Farmer (senior legal counsel to the Commission) described the systems in place, "on the operations floor at NEADS, significant portions were taped...The taping system was an antiquated reel-to-reel design, but the conversations were ultimately converted to digital files without degrading the material." (58) Could it be that alterations were made to the content of the tapes during the conversion to the digital files?

MORE TAPES INTERFERED WITH?

The New York Times reported on 6/5/2004 that: "At least six air traffic controllers who

dealt with two of the hijacked airliners on Sept. 11, 2001, made a tape recording that same day describing the events, but the tape was destroyed by a supervisor without anyone making a transcript or even listening to it, the Transportation Department said in a report today." The tape recording took place late morning on Sept. 11 at the New York Air Route Traffic Control Centre on Long Island, shortly after the attacks ended. The ATC's met together to share their thoughts and passed around a microphone, each recalling his or her version of the events a few hours earlier. Officials at the center never told senior management of the tape's existence, and it was later destroyed by an FAA quality-assurance manager, according to a report by the inspector general of the Transportation Department. An FAA spokesman, Greg Martin, stated that the FAA took "appropriate disciplinary action" against the quality-assurance manager, but didn't disclose the identity of the person or what action they had taken. (59) Unfortunately, nothing further has been disclosed by those ATC'S concerning their version of the morning's events.

FLIGHT 175

Just as Flight 11 was being hijacked at 8:14 am, Flight 175 took off from Boston's Logan Airport, 16 minutes after its scheduled departure.

At 8:42, it veered off its planned course, and began flying south.

At 8:43 the FAA notified NORAD that the flight had been hijacked, according to NORAD's 18 September 2001 timeline.

The Commission disputed this notification time, but according to one report, after NEADS were notified of Flight 11, they "had their headsets linked to the FAA in Boston." (60) This report was confirmed by *Newhouse News Service*, which reported that "at 8:43 am, [Master Sergeant Maureen] Dooley's technicians [at NEADS], their headsets linked to Boston Centre, heard of a second plane, United Flight 175, that also was not responding. It, too, was moving to New York." (61)

At 8:47, Flight 175 stopped transmitting its transponder signal. The aircraft deviated from its assigned altitude at 8:51, and began its turn toward New York City at 8:52. Between 8:52 and 8:55, air traffic controller David Bottiglia tried five times to contact Flight 175 with no response. (62)

At 8:55, Bottiglia told a manager at FAA New York Centre that he thought Flight 175 had been hijacked. According to the 9/11 Commission report, this manager then "tried to contact regional managers but was told that they were discussing hijacked aircraft (presumably Flight 11) and refused to be disturbed." (63) However, Flight 11 had crashed 9 minutes earlier, so why would they have been discussing this, rather than engaging with what was happening now?

At 9:03, Flight 175 collided with the South Tower. The impact was 43 minutes after Flight 11 first went off course, 21 minutes after Flight 175 went off course, and 17 minutes after the North Tower impact, yet the jet was not intercepted.

As we saw earlier, the two Otis F-15's were sent to Whisky 105, the military training airspace southeast of Long Island, a few minutes flying time from New York City. As they arrived there at approximately 8:55, there was certainly time for them to have intercepted Flight 175.

The 9/11 Commission wrote that, "lacking a target [the Otis fighters] were vectored towards military-controlled airspace off the Long Island coast. To avoid New York area air traffic and uncertain about what to do, the fighters were brought down to military airspace to "hold as needed." From 9:09 to 9:13, the Otis fighters stayed in this holding pattern." (64) It would have only taken the fighters a few minutes to get to the holding

area assuming they were flying at full speed, which means they would have been there at approximately 8:55, so what were they doing in the 14 minutes between 8:55 and 9:09? (confirmed by the Commission) As Griffin noted, "the official story, as told by the 9/11 Commission, simply leaves out [14] minutes in the existence of the Otis fighters. This enormous hole in the official story provides strong evidence that it is false." (65) The Commission then stated that due to technical problems, "there are no NEADS recordings available of the NEADS senior weapons director and weapons director technician position responsible for controlling the Otis scramble." (66) What was the reason for the technical problems?

Around 9:12, the Otis fighters were finally able to enter New York airspace. This was not due to a call from FAA, New York, but by a radical overtaking of the civilian airspace by NEADS, which declared "AFIO" (Authorization for Interceptor Operations) for New York airspace, giving the military authority over the FAA for that airspace. Despite this, there is no explanation as to why it took the Otis fighters from 9:13 to 9:25 to arrive over Manhattan. That's 12 minutes to travel 115 miles in planes that can travel over 1800 mph, meaning that they were flying at under a third of their maximum speed.

WHEN WAS NORAD NOTIFIED ABOUT FLIGHT 175?

According to the Commission, NEADS received no notification from the FAA about Flight 175, until 9.03am, just as it was crashing into the south tower.(67) However, NORAD had maintained since September 18, 2001, that it was notified about Flight 175 at 8:43am. Griffin has queried the Commission's refutation of NORAD's timeline: "If that [8:43 time] was *not* true, as the Commission now claimed, NORAD must have been either lying or confused when it put out its timeline one week after 9/11. It is hard to believe that NORAD could have been confused so soon after the event. So it must have been lying. But that would suggest that it had an ugly truth to conceal. The Commission, being unable to embrace either of the possible explanations, simply tells us that NORAD's previous statement was incorrect, but without giving us any explanation as to how this could be." (68)

Why would NORAD have maintained for nearly three years that they had 20 minutes notification of Flight 175 before it crashed into the South Tower? It makes absolutely no sense, as the implication would have been that they had sufficient time to intercept the plane but failed to do so.

Furthermore, the Commission made no comment on how the FAA could have been so slow (for the second time) in not seeking NORAD intervention, following the realisation that a second aircraft had been hijacked. To recap, Flight 175 veered off course with radio contact lost at 8:42, before turning off its transponder at 8:47.

The Commission's tapes-based claim that the military did not know about Flight 175 until it crashed is also contradicted by a report involving Captain Michael Jellinek, a Canadian who on 9/11 was overseeing NORAD's headquarters in Colorado. According to a story in the *Toronto Star*, Jellinek was on the phone with NEADS as he watched Flight 175 crash into the south tower, after which he asked NEADS, "was that the hijacked aircraft you were dealing with?" NEADS replied that it was. (69)

AMERICAN AIRLINES FLIGHT 77

The circumstances above and the apparent communication breakdown between the FAA and NEADS are deeply disconcerting, but events around the flights of AA77, which crashed into the Pentagon and UA93, which crashed into the ground at

Shanksville, are even more disturbing.

American Airlines Flight 77, a Boeing 757, took off from Washington Dulles airport at 8:20am on 9/11 carrying 58 passengers en route to Los Angeles.

At 8:54am, a controller at the Indianapolis Centre noticed Flight 77 deviate from its flight path and then saw that the transponder had been turned off, before disappearing completely from the radar screen, partly due to poor radar coverage in the area. (70)

The Commission concluded that it then travelled for 36 minutes undetected, as it headed back towards Washington DC, not being picked up until 9:32am by Dulles ATC's. The transponder was turned off, but it was tracked on the radar, or at least it would have been, if an Indianapolis ATC had looked for it in the right direction. As the Commission described it, "according to the radar reconstruction, American 77 re-emerges as a primary target on Indianapolis Centre radar scopes at 9:05, east of its last known position." (71) Commissioner Ben Veniste noted, in a Commission public hearing, that at 9.10am, Flight 77 was detected by the FAA radar over West Virginia heading east. (72) Unfortunately, the ATC as well as two assisting managers, failed to notice Flight 77, because they were only looking for it in a westward direction! It was only when the plane approached Washington that Dulles ATC's noticed its appearance, which culminated in a final 330 degree spiral descent over the last 7000 feet, taking approximately two and a half minutes to complete this manoeuvre, before its final dive into the Pentagon at 9:37am.

Perhaps it would have been counter-intuitive for Indianapolis ATC's to have thought that Flight 77 might have changed direction?

What we do know is that around 9:08am, even though two planes had crashed into the Twin Towers, Indianapolis Centre appears to have been completely unaware of the events unfolding there as they attempted to resolve their own problems. As they were unable to communicate with or locate American 77, Indianapolis Centre notified Air Force Search and Rescue at Langley Air Force Base in Virginia about the loss of the plane, and asked them to search for signs of a crash. (73) So, from this we can gather that the Air Force was informed of the concern about Flight 77, although according to the Commission, "NORAD heard nothing about the search for American 77." (74)

We still don't know why air force planes were not scrambled at this time and why nobody at Langley Air Force Base thought to inform NORAD, in view of the extraordinary events at the World Trade Centre a few minutes earlier?

Shortly after 9:20am, Sliney was contacted by the Indianapolis Centre, raising the issue of Flight 77 as a possible hijack, which they thought had crashed until they heard about what happened to the Twin Towers. (75) He called out for the plane to be intercepted, in frustration that there was no confirmation that jets had been launched.(76) Did anyone from the FAA respond to Sliney and contact the military, as was originally confirmed in NORAD's timeline on 18 September 2001?

The Commission stated that this did not happen and alleged further FAA incompetence by brazenly changing the timeline of 9:24 notification to NORAD to 9:34, while stating that this notification was for a missing rather than hijacked airliner. (77)

WHAT HAPPENED WITH THE LANGLEY PLANES?

Although NORAD knew of no other hijacked aircraft, following the crash of the second plane into the WTC, a precautionary measure was taken by ordering fighters at Langley Air Force Base to battle stations at 9:09am.

In later testimony, military officials gave contradictory explanations for why the

Langley F-16's were then scrambled fifteen minutes later. An early NORAD timeline on 18/9/01 stated that the fighters were launched in response to NORAD being notified by the FAA at 9:24am that Flight 77 has been hijacked. Colonel Alan Scott, the former vice commander of the Continental US NORAD Region (CONR), affirmed this, telling the Commission: "At 9:24 the FAA reported a possible hijack of [Flight] 77.... And at that moment as well is when the Langley F-16's were scrambled out of Langley." (78) However, Major General Larry Arnold, the CONR commander, gave a different explanation, telling the 9/11 Commission, "we launched the aircraft out of Langley to put them over top of Washington, DC, not in response to American Airline 77, but really to put them in position in case United 93 were to head that way." (79) Arnold then told the Commission that, "I think if those aircraft had gotten airborne immediately, if we were operating under something other than peacetime rules, where they could have turned immediately toward Washington, DC, and gone into burner, it is physically possible that they could have gotten over Washington DC [before Flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon]."

F-16s have a maximum speed of 1,500 mph at high altitude, or 915 mph at sea level, so the three fighters could have flown the 130 miles from Langley Air Force Base to Washington in just a few minutes.

Colonel Alan Scott also told the Commission that "at 9:09, Langley F-16's are directed to battle stations, just based on the general situation and the breaking news, and the general developing feeling about what's going on." (80)

Regardless of whether the Langley jets were scrambled for Phantom Flight 11 (to be discussed below), 77 or 93, the situation then became quite bizarre as the scrambled fighters flew in the opposite direction to which they had been ordered and ended up out at sea.

The *9/11 blogger*, Shoestring, has suggested that the pilots were hindered by "an extraordinary combination of confusion, communications problems, conflicting orders, breaches of protocol, and other difficulties. Consequently, when the Pentagon was hit at 9:37 a.m., the jets were further away from it than they'd been when they took off!" (81)

HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

Following General Arnold's authorisation, Major Nasypany the mission crew commander at NEADS, issued an order: "Okay, scramble Langley. Head them towards the Washington area." That order was processed and transmitted to Langley Air Force Base at 9:24, and radar data show the Langley fighters were airborne at 9:30. (82)

The six minute delay was because the FAA's Washington Centre had apparently not cleared airliners out of their projected path. The normal procedure would have been for the two F-16's, that were kept on full-alert and fully-armed with guns and missiles, to be launched and to receive ongoing orders in the air from their Supervisor of Flying (SOF), who would liaise with the FAA and NEADS. However, the SOF, Captain Craig Borgstrom, received a call from NEADS as the two pilots were preparing to scramble, asking how many planes he could launch. When he stated he had two at battle stations, "that's not what I asked!" the [unknown] officer responded. "How many total airplanes can you send up? When he replied that he was the only other available pilot, he was instructed to fly as well. (83) The other two pilots were shocked when they saw that Borgstrom was also going to fly, as this was contrary to all protocols.

Borgstrom later said, "to this day, I don't know who it was" that made the call. (84) When Tech Sergeant Jeremy Powell had called from NEADS and learned that

Borgstrom had taken off in a third jet, he exclaimed: "Three? I only scrambled two!" (85)

So here we have a great mystery. Who was responsible for giving the SOF such an unprecedented and dangerous order? Firstly, it is extraordinary that Borgstrom would not have wanted to confirm who was giving him such an order and, even more significantly, why did the 9/11 Commission not find out who that person was, bearing in mind they had access to all the NEADS recordings of that morning? Could it be that ordering Borgstrom to violate the normal procedure was a deliberate action to prevent him from being in a position to redirect his scrambled jets in the direction of Washington as Flight 77 approached?

The order given to Borgstrom had a critical impact on the ensuing events. Spencer recounted how Jeremy Powell called from NEADS at around 9:30am to explain that their mission was to set up a combat air patrol over Washington and intercept a hijacked airliner heading towards the city. The phone rang and rang and when a sergeant eventually picked up, Powell was left speechless on being informed that the SOF was in the air - without even knowing what their mission was. (86) Furthermore, Sergeant William Huckabone, at NEADS, noticed that the F-16's were flying eastwards out to sea, rather than northwards to Baltimore, as originally directed. However, as the SOF was flying, Huckabone was unable to redirect them as there was no radio contact, which should have been provided to the two F-16's by the SOF at Langley. (87) After they had wrongly been directed to fly out to sea, radio coverage should have been picked up by "Giant Killer", the controlling authority for offshore military airspace. A further problem arose when Huckabone called the controller there, requesting the jets be re-directed north towards Baltimore urgently. The naval controller's lack of urgency, led Huckabone to vent his anger to a colleague, saying he wanted to throttle the naval controller. (88)

How could the fighters have flown off in the wrong direction? According to Spencer, Captain Dean Eckmann, the lead pilot, knew that the original order was to fly northwards, but assumed they were directed eastwards to avoid other air traffic in their way. He had no idea that communications had broken down and that they were therefore being given the standard take-off route rather than the order given by NEADS. (89)

Researcher, Paul Schreyer, has queried this explanation, stating that "this seems to be a dubious claim. Because how could that have happened? The pilots knew the original scramble order. They knew which direction NEADS wanted them to fly. And then they somehow forgot? But, same as with the Otis scramble, there seems only little chance to dig deeper because "Giant Killer", the responsible control facility, deleted all its tapes from the communication on 9/11. This was done routinely, as Commission staff member Miles Kara claimed." (90)

Just to complete the fiasco, the Langley fighters were diverted a second time shortly before their arrival over Washington, at the time when United 93, the fourth hijacked plane, was heading towards the capital. At 9:50, the fighters were pushed to the southwest, away from Washington again. This episode is completely missing in the 9/11 Commission Report, even though the detour is clearly visible on radar. Author Lynn Spencer offered an explanation in 2008 and Miles Kara repeated it in 2011: both claim that a NEADS controller had just erroneously transposed two digits of the coordinates he gave to the Langley pilots that moment - 38.25 North, 77.02 West instead of 38.52 North.

WHY WERE NO FIGHTERS SCRAMBLED FROM ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE?

While discussing the 9/11 attacks, in 2004, Paul Hellyer, a former Canadian minister of national defence, posed the question, "Why did airplanes fly around for an hour and a half without interceptors being scrambled from Andrews [Air Force Base] ... right next to the capital?" He said: "With a quick-reaction alert they should have been in the air in five or ten minutes. If not, as a minister of national defence, which in the United States would be the secretary of defence, I would want to say, 'Why not?'" (91)

NORAD commander Major General Larry Arnold is on record saying, 'We [didn't] have any aircraft on alert at Andrews.'(92) However, prior to 9/11, the District of Columbia Air National Guard [DCANG] based at Andrews had a publicly stated mission 'to provide combat units in the highest possible state of readiness.' Prior to 9/11, the mission statement was posted on the DC National Guard's public website. Shortly after 9/11, this mission statement was removed and replaced by a DCANG 'vision' to 'provide peacetime command and control and administrative mission oversight to support customers, DCANG units, and NGB in achieving the highest levels of readiness.' Peter Lance has asked a very obvious question about this: "Why was the mission statement changed?"(93) Furthermore, as Griffin has suggested, the claim that Andrews Air Force Base (near Washington) would not have fighter jets on standby is hard to imagine, in view of the need to protect the capital, especially, as that is the base for the president's plane, Air Force One.

Indeed, an article in *Aviation Week and Space Technology* stated that fighters from Andrews armed with missiles were in the air over Washington soon after the attack on the Pentagon. (94). This article confirmed the statement by Richard Clarke that General Myers had confirmed during a teleconference that "Andrews is launching fighters from the DC Air National Guard" just after the Pentagon attack.(95). As we therefore know that the Commission was wrong about Andrews, can we trust their account that the McGuire base (referred to earlier) was also not able to respond?

In fact, F-16's from Andrews were already in the air, as three took off at 8:36 on a training mission over North Carolina. However, no attempt was made to call them back to patrol the skies over Washington and they didn't return until the attacks were over. Spencer has confirmed that Andrews also had 15 jets at the base and four pilots available, but that they were not armed with missiles which would take over 45 minutes to load. Nevertheless, they could have been scrambled without missiles, and the failure to do so remains another unaddressed issue. (96) As Colin Scoggins noted, "I requested that NEADS launch fighters from Andrews Air Force Base, the DC Guard. They don't have an intercept mission, but they fly every morning...we needed to get planes up in the air." (97)

On the day of 9/11, former Defense Secretary, Caspar Weinberger stated on *Fox News* that "the city is ringed with Air Force bases and Navy bases, and the ability to get defensive planes in the air is very, very high." How could Andrews Air Force base not be on alert, when the protection of Washington, including the Pentagon, the Houses of Congress, the White House and the President was so paramount?

EVIDENCE THAT NORAD KNEW OF FLIGHT 77 AT 9:24AM

General Ralph Eberhart, who was commander of NORAD on 9/11, reiterated the timeline of 18 September in testimony to the U.S. Senate in October 2001 and for two years it stood as the official account. Eberhart confirmed that NORAD was notified about the hijacked Flight 77 coming into Washington at 9:24 am, fourteen minutes before it impacted the Pentagon. He repeatedly told the Senate Armed Services Committee that this was a "documented notification." (98) Surely Eberhart would have

confirmed this information before committing himself to its veracity in his evidence to a government inquiry?

General Arnold repeated this time in his evidence to the Commission: "9:24 was the first time that we had been advised of American 77 as a possible hijacked airplane. Our focus - you have to remember that there's a lot of other things going on simultaneously here, was on United 93, which was being pointed out to us very aggressively I might say by the FAA." (99) The Commission concluded that "this statement was...incorrect. The notice NEADS received at 9:24 was that American 11 had not hit the World Trade Centre and was heading for Washington DC."(100)

Is it really possible that the officials at Indianapolis Centre, as well as those at the Herndon Command Centre and FAA Headquarters could all have been so unaware, especially after knowing that two hijacked airplanes had already crashed into the WTC, to not have told the military that AA 77 might also have been hijacked? If that was truly the case, why has nobody ever been held responsible for such gross incompetence?

A final point to consider here is the evidence presented in Chapter Three, indicating that Vice President Cheney was fully aware that Flight 77 was approaching Washington.

THE PHANTOM FLIGHT 11

As we saw above, the original NORAD timeline indicated that the Langley fighters were scrambled in response to notification from the FAA at 9:24am that Flight 77 had possibly been hijacked and appeared to be heading back toward Washington. The Commission insisted that the military did not learn about this flight until 9:34, and provided an alternative explanation for the Langley scrambles, which can only be described as a Keystone Cops Comedy of Errors, although the outcome was far from funny.

Firstly, according to the Commission's Legal Counsel John Farmer, at 9:21am (34 minutes after Flight 11 crashed into the North Tower) Colin Scoggins at the Boston FAA Centre informed NEADS that Flight 11 was still in the air and heading towards Washington. (101) The mix-up arose, (apparently) partly due to American Airlines not confirming that Flight 11 had crashed into the North Tower. Somehow, in the panic of the situation, it was thought that Flight 11 had not crashed and that it was a different plane that did, with Flight 11 still hijacked and in the air, flying towards Washington. (102)

Farmer described how this information "electrified the operations floor at NEADS", with Major Nasypany deciding to scramble two fighters from Langley Air Force Base, southeast of Washington and to redeploy the Otis fighters from the north to chase after the phantom plane. The Langley fighters were then scrambled at 9:24am by Major Fox. (103) Scoggins explained the error over Flight 11 by saying he had been given this information by another ATC, despite there being no radar reading to confirm it - due to it having crashed into the North Tower. He has since stated that "I have finally confirmed where the phantom AAL 11 came from and it was from Doug Canoles who was on the telcon I was on. He said he was told by Mary Ellen Krause who denies ever telling him that."(104)

So, we are no closer to identifying who was responsible for the phantom Flight 11 saga. Griffin has asked why it was not possible to determine the identity of the person from the FAA tapes, as this should have been easy enough to do and that "the claim that this alleged person's identity could not be determined seems suspiciously convenient, as this way no one needs to take the blame."(105) Scoggins later recalled that American

Airlines did not confirm that its plane had hit the North Tower for several hours, saying "With American Airlines, we could never confirm if it was down or not, so that left doubt in our minds." (106) Scoggins also suggested that "what I think happened is that someone in HQ knew that AAL77 was missing, and when they were talking about AAL77 they may have dropped the numbers and were reporting that AAL was still missing or still flying but no one knew where. I think this ended up on the telcon as AAL 11 is still airborne." (107) However, the traffic controllers at the Boston Centre were reportedly very clear about the fate of AA 11. According to a story in the *Christian Science Monitor* two days after 9/11, flight controllers said that they never lost sight of the flight. Flight controller Mark Hodgkins later told ABC News: "I watched the target of American 11 the whole way down." (108) The *New York Times* reported that as soon as the Boston flight controllers heard that a plane had hit the WTC, they knew that it was AA 11, because they had been tracking it continuously since it had begun behaving erratically. (108) Scoggins, as the military liaison at the Boston Centre, presumably knew all of this. Griffin has therefore asked: "How, then, could any conversation have "transmogrified" into "the idea that a different plane had hit the tower, and that American 11 was still hijacked and still in the air?" (109)

Griffin challenged further: "If this extraordinary episode, which led NORAD to send fighters on a wild goose chase, really happened, is it not puzzling that no one in the military ever mentioned it? We can perhaps understand that the FAA would not have wanted to publicize such an embarrassing mistake. But what motivation would the *military* have had for keeping silent about it?" (110)

According to the Commission, "at the suggestion of the Boston Center's military liaison, NEADS contacted the FAA's Washington Centre to ask about American 11. In the course of the conversation, a Washington Centre manager informed NEADS: "We're looking - we also lost American 77." The time was 9:34. This was the first notice to the military that American 77 was missing, and it had come by chance. If NEADS had not placed that call, the NEADS air defenders would have received no information whatsoever that the flight was even missing, although the FAA had been searching for it. No one at FAA headquarters ever asked for military assistance with American 77." (111)

What it boils down to, if the above story is correct, is that the Langley planes were scrambled and the Ohio planes were redirected for a fictitious plane, thereby leaving both New York and Washington DC completely unprotected, while Flight 77 was able to approach the capital without any interference.

John Farmer, suggested that NORAD deliberately misled Congress and the Commission by hiding the fact that the Langley scramble took place in response to the erroneous report that Flight 11 was still airborne. He wrote that the mistaken report was on more logs and tapes than anything else on 9/11 and was the reason for the Langley scramble as well as the Air Threat Conference Call. "Yet it had never been disclosed; it was, instead, talked around." (112)

FAA INCOMPETENCE?

The Commission portrayed the FAA as being grossly incompetent, but without blaming any particular individuals. They apparently failed to notify the military about the four hijacked planes in time, even though this was a well-practiced procedure they had successfully carried out hundreds of times in the past. The Commission also noted that the FAA grounded all the aircraft in the country, when the full scale of the attacks became apparent, and that they performed "that unprecedented order flawlessly." How

could the FAA have been so competent and yet so incompetent at the same time? If the military had told the truth (according to the Commission's timeline) that they weren't informed of flights 175 and 93 until after they crashed and Flight 77 until shortly before its crash into the Pentagon, there would have been no suspicion that they had been in any way complicit in the attacks.

NORAD's timeline from one week after 9/11 until June 2004 was that the Langley fighters were scrambled after the FAA notified them about Flight 77 at 9:24am, and that would have given the military 14 minutes to intercept the aircraft, which would have been sufficient time. However, as Griffin suggests "the story about phantom Flight 11 lets the military completely off the hook, putting *all* the blame on the FAA. If the story about phantom Flight 11 were true, it would have been completely irrational for the military not to have talked about it." (113) How could NORAD not have noticed this episode on its tapes for nearly three years. Didn't anybody listen to the tapes in order to make sense of their own timeline? Furthermore, according to the NORAD Tapes, as recounted by Michael Bronner, General Arnold approved the scrambling of the Langley jets for the phantom 11. If that were true, is it conceivable that Arnold could have forgotten this, as we are led to believe? Surely this would have been the most important decision he made throughout his entire career and the idea that he could have been unable to recollect it appears implausible. Indeed, Arnold told the Commission in May 2003 that the Langley jets were scrambled to intercept Flight 93, so what are we supposed to make of that?

Paul Rea has also argued that it would also have been in the best interests of the FAA to have been forthright from the start: "If... radar overload and ambiguity plus a phantom flight were such significant factors, why wouldn't air controllers and military commanders have said so all along? It would have been in their institutional self-interest...to make such an excuse." (114)

Peter Jennings interviewed Colonel Dawne Deskins of NEADS on ABC News on the first anniversary of 9/11. She stated that not long after the North Tower was hit, "They (Boston air traffic controllers) told us that they showed the American Airlines 11 was still airborne. So now, we're looking at this, well, if an aircraft hit the World Trade Center, who was that?" Griffin's analysis of her recollection is that, "there is no suggestion [in the ABC News programme] that the Langley jets were scrambled because of a belief that AA11 was still airborne." (115) Griffin also noted that another programme broadcast on the same day confirmed the original NORAD timeline of 18 September 2001: Tom Brokaw in "America Remembers" on NBC in 11/9/02, narrated that at 9:30am, "Flight 77 has been out of contact with controllers in Indianapolis for more than 20 minutes. Fighter jets are dispatched to track the flight." (116)

HistoryCommons confirmed that the military were aware of the confusion over phantom Flight 11: "In the hours following the attacks, acting Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Richard Myers will apparently refer to this erroneous report that Flight 11 was still airborne and heading toward Washington, telling the Associated Press that "prior to the crash into the Pentagon, military officials had been notified that another hijacked plane had been heading from the New York area to Washington." Myers will say "he assumed that hijacked plane was the one that hit the Pentagon, though he couldn't be sure." (117) As with the evidence of Colonel Deskins above, there is no confirmation from Myers that fighters were scrambled to pursue Phantom Flight 11.

A challenge to the Commission's story is provided by further evidence of Myers. In his memoirs, he wrote that he was called by Clarke's White House teleconference at 9:16am "to confirm that American Airlines Flight 11...had hit the North World Trade Centre Tower." (118) As Paul Rea notes, "at the highest levels of command, then, it

was known that Flight 11 had *already* impacted - and therefore was *not* continuing toward Washington." (119)

To conclude this section, Griffin raised some challenging questions as mentioned earlier but worth repeating: "The story told by NORAD's old timeline – that the Langley fighters were scrambled in response to the FAA's notification at 9:24 about AA 77 – opened NORAD to the charge that it had had time to intercept this flight before it got to the Pentagon. But the story about phantom Flight 11 lets the military completely off the hook, putting *all* the blame on the FAA. If the story about phantom Flight 11 were true, it would have been completely irrational for the military not to have talked about it... Are we supposed to believe that, after the FAA had repeatedly given the military late and false information, military officials would have lied to protect the FAA?"(120)

COULD THE NORAD TAPES HAVE BEEN FALSIFIED?

We saw earlier from Robin Hordon that it would have been possible to change the timeline on FAA tapes, so could the NORAD tapes have been falsified? A year passed between the time that Colonel Scott and General Arnold presented NORAD's third timeline to the Commission in May 2003 and when excerpts from the tapes were played at the Commission's hearing on 17 June 2004. There would therefore have been over a year to modify the tapes. It appeared that NORAD's tapes were supported by the FAA tapes because, as Griffin reasoned: "Could anyone believe that the FAA, knowing that it had done its job properly and that only the military had fouled up, would have doctored its own tapes to exonerate the military by making itself look completely incompetent?" However, Griffin was told by Laura Brown (Deputy Director of Public Affairs at FAA headquarters) that the FAA handed over all their recordings to the FBI. This was unusual as they would normally have been handed over to the National Transportation Safety Board. Griffin concluded that: "In light of this information plus the voice morphing techniques that have been available to intelligence agencies since at least 1999, the agreement of the tapes with each other poses no problem for the fabrication hypothesis... government agents would have had both the means and the opportunity, as well as the motivation, to produce fraudulent tapes." (121)

THE CONFUSION CONTINUED WITH DELTA FLIGHT 1989

As if the confusion over Phantom Flight 11 was not enough for one day, there was a further communication breakdown between the Cleveland ATC and the pilot of Delta 1989. A few minutes after the Pentagon attack, the ATC had just heard a transmission from Flight 93 in which a bomb was mentioned. The ATC passed the other flights he was monitoring to colleagues while he concentrated on what was happening on Flight 93. In the confusion that arose, the crew of Delta 1989 were unable to respond to the frequency of the new ATC. (122)

As a result of this, "Boston Center called NEADS at 9:41am and identified Delta 1989...as a possible hijack." [although its transponder was never turned off] (123) It was Colin Scoggins (again) who notified NEADS that Delta 1989 was missing and out of communication with controllers. (124) However, by 9:45, NEADS was informed that Delta 1989 had not been hijacked and was going to land in Cleveland. It was tracked by NEADS on radar until it landed at 10am. Interestingly, NEADS had managed to scramble fighters from Selfridge, Michigan and Toledo, Ohio, to respond

to Delta 1989. (125) What this illustrates is how quickly NEADS was able to act, calling in other air force bases to help, rather than just relying on the on-call Otis and Langley fighters.

When Scoggins was questioned about his involvement with Delta 1989 on the *9/11blogger* forum, he wrote that "Cleveland called us [Boston ATC] and said they were not talking to DAL1989. When that happens the previous center or sector tries to reach the aircraft. On this day, if an aircraft missed a transmission we considered them a hijack. At that time NEADS had asked me to give them any and all info I knew." (126)

The anonymous *9/11blogger*, Shoestring, has raised some interesting questions about Delta 1989, suggesting the possibility that:

"Delta 1989 was playing the part of a hijacked aircraft in a training exercise, and this led to all the mistaken reports about it. It would mean that, at the time the attacks took place, a "live-fly" exercise was being conducted, which involved a real aircraft pretending to be hijacked. It would imply that this exercise was not promptly cancelled, but instead continued throughout the entire duration of the attacks...

When NEADS in Rome, New York, was notified of the first real-world hijacking at 8:38 a.m., its mission crew commander, Major Kevin Nasypany, thought this was part of the exercise, which he'd helped to design. He said out loud, "The hijack's not supposed to be for another hour." NEADS was in fact alerted to the suspected hijacking of Delta 1989 almost exactly one hour later, at 9:39 a.m. This was therefore around the time it was due to be notified of the simulated hijacking in the exercise, and supports the contention that Delta 1989 was playing the targeted aircraft in that exercise." (127)

The Commission stated above that NEADS were informed about Delta 1989 as a possible hijack at 9:41 am. However, Colonel Alan Scott, the former vice commander of the Continental United States NORAD Region, told the 9/11 Commission on 23 May 2003 that, fifteen minutes earlier at 9.27am, the FAA's Boston Centre reported to NEADS that there was "a fifth aircraft missing, Delta Flight '89." Another unexplained element of confusion to the story.

Perhaps the situation was even more complex than this, if we are to believe Richard Clarke, He confirmed that just before the Pentagon was hit at 9.37am, Jane Garvey, FAA Administrator, informed the White House teleconference that " here's what we have as potential hijacks: Delta 1989 over West Virginia, United 93 over Pennsylvania." (128) Clarke stated that Air Force General Myers was involved in this conference. If that is the case, then why didn't he immediately alert NORAD / NEADS about this?

John Farmer blamed Garvey for NEADS being thwarted "by the failure of the FAA executives on the White House videoconference to pass on the information" about Flight 93, but didn't apportion any blame to General Myers. Why not? (129)

MEANWHILE FLIGHT 93 IS MEANDERING OUT THERE, BUT THE MILITARY ARE AWARE OF IT - OR NOT?

The apparent failure of the FAA to notify NORAD / NEADS about Flight 93 has already been discussed in detail in chapter 4. NORAD's own initial timeline, released on September 18, 2001, did not give a time for when the FAA alerted it to Flight 93, stating simply that the FAA and NEADS "established a line of open communication

discussing AA Flt 77 and UA Flt 93." General Myers wrote that, "we learned that there was apparently a fourth hijacked aircraft, United Airlines Flight 93." After being told this, he saw live footage of the South Tower collapsing at 9:59am, according to his memoirs. He thereby contradicted the Commission's timeline as to when the military were informed about Flight 93, as this had stated that NORAD was not informed about it until after it had crashed. (130)

Myers' memoir was supported by Deputy Defence Secretary, Paul Wolfowitz on 14/9/01 who stated on TV, *NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*, that "we were already tracking in on that plane that crashed in Pennsylvania...it was the heroism of the passengers on board that brought it down but the Air Force was in a position to do so if we had to." (131) As we saw earlier, General Arnold was also aware of Flight 93.

Brigadier General Montague stated on the *ABC News* on 9/11/02 that "we received the report from the FAA that Flight 93 had turned off its transponder, had turned, and was now heading towards Washington, DC...We started receiving reports from the fighters that were heading to, to intercept. The FAA kept us informed with their time estimates as the aircraft got closer and closer." (132)

Colonel Robert Marr (commanding NEADS on 9/11) also confirmed that he was monitoring Flight 93. As Kevin Ryan noted, "It was not only Marr who remembers monitoring Flight 93 in the NEADS battle cab. NEADS intelligence officer Lt. Col. Mark Stuart, who was standing right next to Marr during the crisis, reported the same thing. Both of them said that they were tracking Flight 93." Stuart confirmed this in his interview with the Commission in a Memorandum for the Record on 30 October 2003.(133)

Notwithstanding the evidence of the above senior military figures, Farmer wrote that the FAA's "failure for nearly thirty minutes, and after the attacks had been under way for nearly ninety minutes, to notify the military that United 93 had been hijacked was, quite simply, the greatest institutional failure on 9/11." (134) However, if Farmer was right here, (and Myers, Wolfowitz, Arnold, Winfield, Marr and Stuart were all mistaken) why weren't the military more proactive in seeking more information from the FAA, with there having been three attacks within an hour?

Further evidence that the military did know about Flight 93 was provided by Major Nasypany, who stated in an interview with Michael Bronner that: "I knew where 93 was. I don't care what [the commission says]. I mean, I care, but - I made that assessment to put my fighters over Washington. Ninety-three was on its way in." (135) How could all these senior military officers be so deluded in their recollections?

According to Lynn Spencer, the information from the FAA's Command Centre teleconference was being forwarded to Jane Garvey, FAA administrator, while she was participating in the White House video conference led by Richard Clarke, but none of the relevant information gathered was going to the NMCC or NORAD. (136) However, as mentioned in Chapter 4, Richard Clarke, the National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism wrote in *Against All Enemies* that FAA Administrator Jane Garvey told his White House conference that " here's what we have as potential hijacks: Delta 1989 over West Virginia, Flight 93 over Pennsylvania." (137). According to Clarke, Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defence and General Richard Myers, acting chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, were both participants in this video-linked conference and would therefore have been aware of Flight 93. As such, the military were informed by the FAA of Flight 93 having been hijacked - if Clarke's account is accurate - which was also confirmed by all the military personnel mentioned above.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF LAURA BROWN'S TESTIMONY

As we saw earlier, Laura Brown was the Deputy Director of Public Affairs at FAA headquarters on 9/11. Her memo, "FAA Communications with NORAD on September 11, 2001" was sent to the Commission on 21 May 2003. Brown stated that:

"Within minutes after the first aircraft hit the World Trade Centre, the FAA immediately established several phone bridges that included FAA field facilities, the FAA Command Centre, FAA Headquarters, DOD [referring to the NMCC], the Secret Service....The US Air Force liaison to the FAA immediately joined the FAA headquarters phone bridge and established contact with NORAD...The FAA shared real-time information on the phone bridges about the unfolding events, including information about loss of communication with aircraft, loss of transponder signals, unauthorized changes in course, and other actions being taken by all the flights of interest, including Flight 77."

Commissioner Richard Ben-Veniste referred to this memo when questioning senior NORAD officers, although it was excluded from the final report, despite it being acknowledged as true by General McKinley: Ben-Veniste recounted "essentially an ongoing conference where under, in real time, FAA was providing information as it received it, immediately after the first crash into the Towers...I see General McKinley is nodding." (138) McKinley added that "it's my understanding that the FAA was in contact with our Northeast Air Defence Sector [NEADS]...that those lines were open and that they were discussing these issues." The Commission disregarded Brown's memo and Gen McKinley's confirmation of it, stating that the FAA phone bridge "was monitored only periodically because the information was sporadic, it was of little value, and there were other important tasks." (139)

Quite what tasks could have been more important than remaining in constant contact with the FAA, at such a critical time, are not mentioned by the Commission. Indeed, as Rea noted, "since the FAA had the better radar, and the challenge was to locate rogue aircraft before they hit targets, how could the information on the FAA's line have been of little value"? (140)

Brown's FAA timeline and General McKinley's testimony was also challenged by a report carried out by the Department of Transportation's Office of Inspector General (OIG) in August 2006, which concluded that: "the FAA in response to a May 22, 2003 Commission for the Record (QFR) inaccurately reported that it had notified DOD about American Flight 77 [due to] FAA's reliance on an erroneous timeline entry...While investigating FAA's QFR response, we found that it also inaccurately reported that the Air Force Liaison to FAA had joined an FAA headquarters phone-bridge and established contact with NORAD immediately following the crash of the first aircraft (American Flight 11) into the World Trade Center at 8.46am. In fact, the Liaison did not join the phone-bridge until after the third hijacked aircraft (American Flight 77) struck the Pentagon at 9.37am." (141)

The Air Force Liaison told the OIG that "I was en route to the (FAA headquarters) building when the first plane hit the World Trade Center...So probably five, ten minutes after that, I got to the building...I went to my office. Everybody was there around the TV. We watched the events unfold. At first, we were kind of hanging back and saying, you know, there's something awful going on with the air traffic system...But at a certain point, not too long after that, it became obvious that, you know, something really strange is going on and so...I relocated. I went upstairs to the 10th floor...it was right

after the airplane hit the Pentagon."

According to the *9/11 Myths* website, the report doesn't name this person, but they do say it's a female, the Air Force Liaison, and that she's now retired. That's a match for [Colonel]Sheryl Atkins, "so we believe she's the most likely candidate. In this case it seems that Atkins began to take part in events at some point after the crash at the Pentagon (9:37), but exactly what she did, and whether she would have taken the responsibility to pass on information to NORAD, has yet to be explained." (142) Nor did Atkins explain how she and her colleagues could still have been thinking it was simply "something awful going on with the air traffic system" after the second plane crashed into the WTC.

So, on the one hand, we have the discrediting of Laura Brown's memo justifying the FAA position, but now we have another issue to deal with. How could it possibly be that a pivotal person responsible for synchronising a response between the FAA and the NMCC disregarded their duty to act as such, by simply staring at the TV screen from approximately 8.55am until 9:35-9:40am.

We are talking about an approximately 40 minutes period during which the Air Force Liaison person was absent from her post. Would it be fair to say that if the Liaison person had joined the phone-bridge by 9am, real time information about Flight 77 might have enabled the military to intercept it? Furthermore, this person was clearly on the phone-bridge at around 9:40am, so there would have been the opportunity to share real-time information about Flight 93. Her actions appear inexplicable. On the other hand, if this person wasn't present, why did nobody within the FAA highlight how they were let down by the military by the absence of such a crucial person, rather than stating they were there? Whichever way you look at it, there is something here that should have been investigated further. Atkins stated that her role was not to act as the bridge between the FAA and the NMCC and this was true as we will see below, because this was the responsibility of General Canavan.

ANOTHER MISSING MILITARY LIAISON

Colonel Sheryl Atkins wasn't the only military liaison officer to go missing during the critical period of the attacks. Lynn Spencer described how Major Nasypany had been trying to contact the military liaison at New York Centre, but no one was answering the phone. He was seeking authorisation to place the Otis fighters over New York, as they were in military airspace 100 miles away. It is unclear at what time Nasypany made his calls, but it is possible this may have prevented the interception of Flight 175 before it crashed into the South Tower. (143)

THE ABSENCE OF GENERAL MICHAEL CANAVAN

Monty Belger (FAA acting deputy administrator) told the Commission that the official protocol on 9/11 was for the FAA headquarters, primarily through the hijack coordinator to request assistance from the NMCC if there was a need for military assistance. (144)

General Canavan (former Special Forces General) was the FAA Hijack Co-ordinator. It was therefore his responsibility to act as the link between the FAA and the National Military Command Centre (NMCC) at the Pentagon. The NMCC would then liaise with the Secretary of Defence.

Unfortunately, he had flown to Puerto Rico on the morning of 9/11 and Lynne Osmus, his Deputy, only arrived in the office after all the planes had crashed. According to Miles Kara (9/11 Commission staffer), "given that General Canavan... was TDY [on temporary duty travel], Lynne Osmus was the acting Hijack Coordinator. She was on sick leave that morning but came in anyway once she learned what was happening." Kara continued, "In her absence my recall is that the acting Coordinator was Claudio Manno. Retrospectively, I do not believe that Manno actually was aware of that that morning. According to the Osmus interview, she stated that Lee Longmire was the acting Coordinator... It is not explicit in Longmire's recall that he was aware he was the Hijack Coordinator." (145)

In other words, Canavan flew to another country, ostensibly to fire a subordinate, without seemingly making appropriate provision for his duties at the FAA to be carried out. What can be said about Manno and Longmire apparently having the baton handed over to them (and by whom?). Despite this confusion, Canavan was not publicly asked by the Commission (when interviewed on 23/5/03) who he had nominated to act as his deputy during his absence on 9/11. Why not? His absence was a significant factor in the breakdown of communication between the FAA and the military.

For example, just after Flight 175 crashed, Ben Sliney talked to the military liaison at Herndon, but he was unable to assist because his role was military airspace usage and he was not in the military chain of command. Sliney assumed that others of higher rank were responding to the crisis, but he was not to know that Canavan was in Puerto Rico. (146)

WHO WAS RUNNING THE SHOW IN THE MILITARY?

General Eberhart

General Eberhart was the Commander in Chief of NORAD and the US Space Command on 9/11. The responsibility for the failure to intercept the four hijacked airplanes ultimately fell on his shoulders, so what was he doing that morning?

Eberhart was in his office at Peterson Air Force Base, where he saw footage of the first crash into the WTC. As stated in his evidence to the 9/11 Commission, "after the second impact, it was "obvious" to Eberhart that there was an ongoing and coordinated terrorist attack." (147) Shortly after this time, he called General Myers, who was acting Chief of the Joint Staff, in the absence of General Sheldon, who was mid-Atlantic en route to a NATO meeting in Europe. According to Myers' autobiography, Eberhart told him "we've got several hijack codes in the system", (148) which meant that the aircraft were hijacked. However, none of the four planes had squawked the hijack code (7500 as mentioned earlier) on 9/11 and therefore it is not clear how such codes could have been in the system? (149)

Eberhart chose to remain at Peterson because "he did not want to lose communication." He then changed his mind, apparently believing that things "had quieted down" and decided to drive to NORAD's Cheyenne Mountain Operations Centre at approximately 9:30am, following his phone call with Myers. (150) This journey takes roughly 30 minutes, but it took Eberhart 45 minutes on that day due to traffic congestion, as noted in the *Washington Post* on 29 July 2006. (151) During this journey, Eberhart was unable to respond to the ongoing crisis (or indeed make any orders) due to poor reception on his mobile phone. So:

1) Why did Eberhart leave Peterson when "he did not want to lose communication."

Although the ostensible reason was due to the better communication capabilities at Cheyenne, it was a curious decision considering that Peterson is the headquarters of NORAD and the US Air Force Space Command and therefore presumably has reasonably advanced communication capabilities.

2) What led him to decide that things had "quieted down" when, by his own admission to Myers, there were still "several hijack codes in the system." Two planes had crashed into the Twin Towers and other planes were unaccounted for, so how could Eberhart possibly have thought that things had "quieted down"?

3) If it was a matter of such importance to transfer to Cheyenne, why didn't Eberhart fly there by helicopter, (after all, as HQ for NORAD and the Space Command, presumably a helicopter was available at the air force base) rather than risk considerable delay by driving - bearing in mind the possibility of traffic delays? By taking such ill-considered action, he effectively removed himself from commanding any response to the ongoing terrorist attacks, as Flight 77 had not yet crashed into the Pentagon and Flight 93 was still in the air.

Eberhart's strange behaviour does not end there. One of his responsibilities was to set the Infocon Threat Level which was established in March 1999. As journalist James Corbett described it: "the Infocon threat level was designed as a measure of the threat to Defence Department computer systems and networks and different levels required different protocols for securing communications and information systems."

History Commons described the night before 9/11: "The Infocon level is lowered to Normal, meaning there is no special threat, at 9:09 p.m. this evening. The reason for this, according to historical records for the 1st Fighter Wing at Langley Air Force Base, Virginia, is "a decreased threat from hacker and virus attacks on the computer networks across the US.'" (152) Eberhart reduced Infocon to the lowest threat level, making it easier for hackers to compromise Defence Department systems, for example the Pentagon communication networks. Eberhart has never been asked in a public forum about why he made this change at this particular time, bearing in mind the system was "blinking red" (as described by CIA Director Tenet in chapter 5). Could the reduction in the Infocon level have had an impact on the poor communication connections that were noted between the military and the FAA on the morning of 9/11? As General Myers told the Commission on 17 June 2014: "In the National Military Command Centre that day we did have trouble trying to conference the FAA into our threat conference that was ongoing. So we had to use a separate phone line for that which was not as efficient." (153)

This problem was also confirmed by Captain Leidig in his evidence to the Commission (to be discussed below): "FAA tried to be included in that conference and we had difficulty throughout the morning getting them in the conference. That hampered information flow to some degree." (154) What is also extraordinary about Eberhart's decision is that (as we will see below) the US military was in the middle of a series of complex military exercises (war games) that would stretch its communication systems to the limit. What was he thinking?

There are further concerns about Eberhart's behaviour on 9/11. For example, the Commission stated that "NEADS never received notice that American 77 was hijacked." (155) This directly contradicts evidence that Eberhart gave to the US Senate on 25 October 2001, six weeks after 9/11. He told the Senate that NORAD scrambled jets at 9:24am when informed that Flight 77 was heading towards Washington and that this was "documented notification." (156) Was Eberhart lying when he gave this evidence to the Senate and what possible gain was there in him doing so? When Eberhart was interviewed by the 9/11 Commission in March 2004, he had changed his

story from what he told the Senate. He now said he had "no knowledge" of the circumstance that initiated the scramble of the Langley fighters. He was apparently only made aware of the circumstances later. Researcher Elizabeth Woodworth has queried this, asking:

"Are we to believe that the most senior official in the Air Force was completely oblivious, for two and a half years of the wild goose chase for the phantom Flight 11? Furthermore, if the Commission's "reconstruction" of events is correct, why would every single person in NORAD and NEADS (who would presumably have been aware of the Phantom Flight 11) have remained silent, when by disclosing this information, it would portray the FAA as being at fault for the failure to intercept Flight 77?"

One more criticism of Eberhart's behaviour is that he oversaw NORAD'S military exercises on 9/11, including Vigilant Guardian, (discussed below) in which a scenario included terrorists hijacking an airplane with the intention to attack New York. As Woodworth described it, "the exercise was conducted "sim over live," meaning the simulated hijackings were to be inserted into the live air traffic control system. As a result, NEADS personnel for some time were uncertain whether the radar tracks were real or simulated." At one point, radar personnel at Cheyenne asked NEADS to "get rid of this goddamn sim." Eberhart should have cancelled the military exercises as soon as the second plane hit the WTC in order to prevent such confusion, but the sim remained until after the Pentagon attack, with Eberhart later telling the Commission that the military exercises had not adversely affected NORAD'S response and had "at most cost us 30 seconds." (157) Is that really credible in light of the above?

OTHER KEY PEOPLE WENT MISSING

General Winfield

Brigadier General Montague Winfield was the NMCC Deputy Director of Operations (DDO) on 9/11. He was not at his post between 8:30 and 10:30 am, as he was at a personnel meeting, convened to discuss the ratings of Air Force officers. Captain Charles Joseph Leidig, his Deputy, had just qualified for being DDO one month before; General Winfield had asked him the afternoon before if he would sit in as DDO from 8:30. Winfield returned to his post only after all the planes had crashed. Why didn't Winfield, who was at the Pentagon, immediately relieve Leidig, as the situation required, in what would have been the greatest challenge in his career?

As Paul Rea describes the situation: "Capt Leidig had started to train as Deputy for Command Centre Operations only two months earlier; he'd qualified for the position just the month before. Leidig's assignment ran from 8:30am to 10:30am, the time frame of the attacks... Suddenly in charge of the Pentagon's war room at a crucial moment, Capt Leidig had difficulty handling a crisis he wasn't prepared for. When Gen Winfield learned of the hijackings, he neither returned to his watch nor came to the aid of his distressed deputy." (158) Was Winfield's absence deliberate in order to claim plausible deniability? Suffice to say, neither of them is mentioned in the Commission report. They certainly should have been, because due to his inexperience, Leidig initially launched a "significant event" rather than an "emergency response" conference, which inevitably delayed the appropriate level of air-defence response in the critical moments in the morning of 9/11.

Winfield gave a very different account of his actions when he claimed on *ABC's Moments of Crisis* on 3/10/02, that he and others in the NMCC realised after the second

WTC crash that there was "a coordinated terrorist attack on the United States." Although Winfield was interviewed by the Commission, no information has been released to the public. Why would he have claimed after the event that he was performing his rightful duties when he clearly wasn't? Evidence of his misrepresentation is provided in this exchange between Commissioner Ben-Veniste and Leidig:

MR. BEN-VENISTE: And do you recall at some point -- we have it at 10:37 -- that the vice president of the United States reported on that call that there was an anonymous threat against Air Force One, using the then-code name Angel, that it was to be the next target? Do you recall that, sir?

ADMIRAL (He'd been promoted) LEIDIG: Sir, I think that occurred right after I was relieved on the watch by General Winfield. Right after we resolved what was going on with United 93, around that time General Winfield took over. (159)

However, General Myers told a different story, writing that "Winfield was the duty officer in charge of the center that morning...where he was participating in a conference call linking the NMCC, NORAD and the White House, which had been under way since just before we arrived at the Pentagon." (160) So, who do we believe, Admiral Leidig or General Myers?

As we saw in chapter three, Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld also stayed away from the NMCC (unless Clarke's account is accurate), arriving there after all the planes had crashed. The absence of these key people remains unexplained, and they were not the only missing prominent persons.

General Myers

General Richard Myers was acting Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and was in a meeting with Senator Max Cleland during the critical period from 9 am. According to his autobiography, he and Cleland "chattered" about the first plane crash (at 8:46) when he arrived and then, just as Cleland was preparing tea for them, "a staff person came in...and informed us that the second tower had been hit. We both knew the interview was over." (161) Before leaving for the Pentagon, General Eberhart had called him as noted earlier. "As we raced away from Capitol Hill", he heard of the Pentagon crash. (162) The South Tower was hit at 9:03 and the Pentagon at 9:37, so why did it take Myers approximately half an hour to leave his meeting and commence the short car journey to the NMCC headquarters at the Pentagon, if his memoirs are accurate? Peter Lance told a different story, stating that he "remains incommunicado...with Cleland. This despite the fact that before entering the Senator's office, Myers sees a TV report of the plane crash into the WTC's North Tower. For the next fifty minutes, as additional planes are hijacked, the nation's chief military officer. doesn't leave the meeting until the Pentagon is hit at 9:37. Apparently no one on the Senator's staff took the initiative to interrupt the meeting." (163)

In his first interview in which he described his experiences on September 11, five weeks after the attacks took place, Myers confirmed Lance's account, claiming that "nobody informed us of that, but when we came out, that was obvious," he said. (164)

In a third account, on the first anniversary, Myers told *NBC News*, "Somewhere in the middle of that meeting, they came in and said the second tower has been hit... and I think that's when we figured out something - that America or at least the World Trade Centre is under attack." He added, "And then I left the office," and, he says, NORAD

Commander Ralph Eberhart then called him. (165)

So, Myers has given three different timelines about when he heard about the second plane attack at the World Trade Centre. Was it at the beginning, middle or end of his meeting with Cleland? Just to confuse matters further, Richard Clarke gave another completely different story of Myers' whereabouts in his book *Against All Enemies*: According to his account, he talked to Myers on the Pentagon screen, with "generals and colonels around him. It was now 9:28." He told Clarke that it's "not a pretty picture... We are in the middle of Vigilant Warrior, a NORAD exercise, but ...Otis has launched two birds toward New York. Langley is trying to get two up now." (166) Did Richard Clarke imagine this dialogue or was Myers being obfuscatory or confused in all the above statements?

Myers told the Commission that he received a call from General Eberhart before leaving Capitol Hill. Myers has acknowledged that the NMCC, at the Pentagon, needed to be his command post that morning and described it as "essentially my battle station when things are happening." (167) And yet he left it soon after arriving. He decided to go all the way from the NMCC, in the basement of the Pentagon, to the office of Donald Rumsfeld, on the third floor of the E Ring, to see if he could find the secretary of defence. (168)

The first hour after he reached the NMCC would have been "life or death minutes." As *911blogger*, Shoestring noted, "There may have been essential tasks that, as acting chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, he alone was able to carry out. Searching for Rumsfeld, in contrast, was a relatively trivial undertaking. Furthermore, Myers could have just phoned Rumsfeld's office and asked where Rumsfeld was or sent a junior staffer from the NMCC to look for the secretary of defence. Why did he forego these options?"

Myers was consequently away from the NMCC for up to 18 minutes while he went to the office to see if he could find the secretary of defence. During that time, he was presumably unable to do anything in response to the terrorist attacks.(169)

Myers later wrote that "Terrorists had staged major attacks in New York and Washington. Although we did not yet have reliable intelligence on when and where they would strike next, it seemed likely that they would." (170) Myers stated in his evidence to the Commission that, "We didn't know at that time if we were in the middle of a several-day long attack, what kind of attacks could come next, or who and what might be targeted." (171)

If he believed more attacks were likely, Myers surely ought to have stayed in the NMCC so he would be in the best position to respond to them if they occurred.

For some strange reason, Myers gave a very different story to the Commission, which recorded that "His first thought was "what's next"?... Myers was also focused on the location of the Secretary. He stated he had only been in the NMCC for a short period of time when the Secretary arrived (sometime between 10:15 and 10:30)." (172) Whichever way we look at it, there is no denying that the most significant military figures, Generals Eberhart, Winfield, Myers and Canavan (mentioned earlier) were all effectively missing during the critical period of the 9/11 attacks. Was it purely coincidental, or was it planned? Also, why is there such contradictory evidence concerning the whereabouts of Rumsfeld and Myers. Paul Rea has noted that "just two days after 9/11, Gen Richard Myers, the Vice Chair of the Joint Chiefs, was confirmed as chairman, the top position in the US military. Despite the unprecedented air-defence failure that occurred on his watch, Gen Myers was overwhelmingly confirmed by the Senate as though nothing had happened." (173)

WHY DID THE AIR FORCE KEEP CHANGING ITS STORY?

One of the most extraordinary aspects of 9/11 is the changing stories presented by the Air Force - four different stories to be precise.

I) Two days after 9/11, on September 13th, General Richard Myers appeared before the Senate Armed Services Committee hearing that confirmed his appointment as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. When asked when planes were scrambled, he replied that no planes were scrambled until after a plane crashed into the Pentagon.

He also stated that "we had launched on the one that eventually crashed in Pennsylvania. I mean we had gotten somebody close to it...I do not recall if that was the case for the one that had taken off from Dulles." [Flight 77 that crashed into the Pentagon] (174)

In other words, two days after 9/11, the highest ranking military official stated that that he wasn't clear if any planes had been scrambled for the first three planes that crashed. This timeline left the military open to the accusation of a stand-down order, and they quickly presented a new timeline a few days later.

2) NORAD provided a timeline on 18 September 2001, which stated that it had been notified by the FAA of the hijacking of Flight 175 at 8:43am, which was 20 minutes before it crashed into the south tower of the WTC.

Why would they have stated this one week after 9/11 if it was not true, as this implicated them in having 20 minutes warning before it crashed into the South Tower? Griffin has raised a simple question: "Would that not have been a very irrational lie? The only other explanation would seem to be that these NORAD officials were confused. But can we believe that they would have been confused about such a major point only a few days after the event." (175)

If this account is the accurate one, NEADS technicians learned of the hijacking at the exact same time as the flight controllers. As we saw earlier, they apparently had their headsets linked to Boston flight control because they were tracking Flight 11 at this time, and so would have learned instantly about Flight 175.(176)

The timeline also confirmed that the Otis fighters had taken off at 8:52am, scrambled in response to Flight 11.

General Ralph Eberhart, commander of NORAD on 9/11, confirmed this timeline in testimony to Senator Wayne Allard at the US Senate Armed Services Committee in October 2001, adding that NORAD was notified of Flight 77 approaching Washington, "77 that crashed into the Pentagon, we were working that with the FAA and we launched the airplanes out of Langley Air Force Base as soon as they notified us about hijacking. At that time it took those airplanes six minutes to get airborne." In other words, NORAD was informed of Flight 77 being hijacked at 9:24am Eberhart also stated in relation to Flight 93 that "it became obvious to us that-we thought it was headed probably for Washington DC, but maybe New York City...And then our intent was to go out and meet that aircraft and destroy it if we needed to, if it entered either Washington DC, or New York City airspace." (177)

Kevin Ryan, has noted that: "A book released in January 2003 further established this account of the military's response. The book, called *Air War Over America: Sept. 11 Alters Face Of Air Defence Mission*, was based on hundreds of interviews with the personnel responsible for conducting the nation's air defenses that day. It was authored by Leslie Filson, public affairs officer for the 1st Air Force, and had been reviewed for accuracy by all the top brass who were in charge of the air defenses on 9/11." How could Phantom Flight 11 have been overlooked? (178)

3) In May 2003, Colonel Alan Scott, a senior officer at NORAD, told the 9/11 Commission that "at 9:05am, FAA reports a possible hijack of United 175. Again, that's three minutes after the impact in the tower." Somewhat bizarrely, he then stated that at "9:16, now FAA reports a possible hijack of United Flight 93." Scott's evidence is bizarre because there was no awareness of Flight 93 having been hijacked until 9:27am, a full 11 minutes after Scott claims that NORAD were aware of it. His timeline also contradicted the timeline for Flight 175 provided by NORAD on 18 September 2001. Scott further stated that "at 9:24 the FAA reports a possible hijack of 77. That's sometime after they had been tracking this primary target. And at that moment as well is when the Langley F-16s were scrambled out of Langley."(179)

As we saw earlier, General McKinley endorsed Scott's timeline, saying "this is the best and most accurate data that we could piece together for your Commission."

Following the evidence of Colonel Scott, General Arnold stated that, "9:24 was the first time that we had been advised of American 77 as a possible hijacked airplane. Our focus -- you have got to remember that there's a lot of other things going on simultaneously here, was on United 93, which was being pointed out to us very aggressively I might say by the FAA."

4) The 9/11 Commission came up with a timetable that completely ignored all the evidence it had received from the senior officers it interviewed. The report stated that NORAD's "air defenders had nine minutes notice on the first hijacked plane" but no advanced notice at all on any of the other three hijacked planes until after they had crashed. (180) As Ryan summarised it: "In order to explain away the considerable evidence for knowledge about the hijacked planes, the Commission made the ludicrous claim that all the Air Force officers had been either mistaken or lying in previous testimonies. Why any of the officers would spend years lying, in ways that made the Air Force look incompetent, was never revealed." (181)

Instead, the phantom Flight 11, which was never mentioned in Filson's book, despite the participatory involvement of all the top commanders in NORAD was blamed for NORAD not being aware of Flight 77. For example: General Arnold noted in Leslie Filson's book that "we watched the 93 track as it meandered around the Ohio-Pennsylvania area and started to turn south toward DC." (182)

However, when Arnold was questioned by Commissioner Jamie Gorelick at the final public Commission Hearing on 17/6/04, he had completely changed his story:

MS. GORELICK: A couple of follow-up questions. First, for General Arnold, you testified before us before that the jets were scrambled in response to Flight 93, not American 11, and when you were asked about --

GEN. ARNOLD: I was wrong. I was wrong.

Commissioner Ben-Veniste to Arnold: "General, is it not a fact that the failure to call our attention to the miscommunication and the notion of a phantom Flight 11 continuing from New York City south in fact skewed the whole reporting of 9/11?" Arnold replied that he had not been aware of those facts when he testified the year before and stated that "I was trying to remember in my own mind what was it that persuaded us to scramble those aircraft. And I thought at the time it was United 93." (183) As it was General Arnold who ordered the scrambling of the Langley jets, his answer is quite extraordinary, to say the least, considering it was almost certainly the most significant decision he made in his entire career.

Why would all the senior military figures have got their stories so wrong? According to Michael Bronner, "Farmer [Commission Counsel] wrote to me in an e-mail

summarizing the commission's referral. "The false testimony served a purpose: to obscure mistakes on the part of the FAA and the military, and to overstate the readiness of the military to intercept and, if necessary, shoot down UAL 93." (184)

Bronner also recounted that: "The real story is actually better than the one we told," a NORAD general admitted to 9/11 commission staffers when confronted with evidence from the tapes that contradicted his original testimony.

WHY SO MANY MILITARY EXERCISES ON THE DAY?

Before looking at the military exercises that took place on 9/11, let's consider Amalgam Virgo 01, an exercise that took place in early June 2001 involving the hypothetical scenario of a cruise missile being launched by "a rogue [government] or somebody" from a barge off the East Coast. Osama bin Laden is pictured on the cover of the proposal for the exercise.

In July 2001, two months before 9/11, NORAD was already planning for the Amalgam Virgo 02 exercise, scheduled for June 2002, which would involve the simulation of two simultaneous commercial aircraft hijackings inside the US. 9/11 commissioner Richard Ben-Veniste referred to this exercise when questioning Colonel Scott and General McKinley, although it was not mentioned in the final report. As stated by *History Commons*: "USA Today will note that this is an exception to NORAD's claim that, prior to 9/11, it focused only on external threats to the US and did not consider the possibility of threats arising from within the US. 9/11 Commissioner Richard Ben-Veniste will similarly comment that this planned exercise shows that, despite frequent comments to the contrary, the military considered simultaneous hijackings before 9/11." (185) Indeed, Ben-Veniste asked General McKinley: "would you agree that on the basis of the information available that there could be, could have been better preparedness by NORAD to meet this threat?" McKinley replied, "in retrospect, sir, I think I would agree with your comment." (186)

Louis Freeh, director of the FBI for much of the 1990s until June 2001, told the 9/11 Commission that the subject of "planes as weapons" was always one of the considerations in the planning of security for "a series of these, as we call them, special events," and "resources were actually designated to deal with that particular threat." Here is his verbatim response when questioned by the Commission:

MR. BEN-VENISTE: So it was well-known in the intelligence community that one of the potential areas or devices to be used by terrorists, which they had discussed, according to our intelligence information, was the use of airplanes, either packed with explosives or otherwise, in suicide missions.

MR. FREEH: That was part of the planning for those events. That's correct. (187)

In March 2005, Rep. Cynthia McKinney (D-GA) gained a confused but revealing admission from Gen. Myers when he testified to the Armed Services Committee (alongside Rumsfeld) that NORAD was holding at least four different exercises on 9/11. (188)

GLOBAL GUARDIAN

Global Guardian is an annual exercise sponsored by US Strategic Command (Stratcom) in cooperation with US Space Command and NORAD. Its purpose is to test for military readiness to fight a nuclear war, in an Armageddon-type scenario. As the 9/11 attacks were taking place, Global Guardian was said to be "in full swing," with hundreds of military personnel involved. It had been going on since the previous week. (189)

Admiral Richard Mies was Stratcom's commander-in-chief and in charge of Global Guardian on 9/11. He, like so many of the other senior officials on the day, was conspicuous by his absence, attending a fundraising breakfast event and thereby absent from his post during Stratcom's most important exercise of the year.

Global Guardian was normally held in October, but in May 2001 it was changed to September by still undisclosed persons.

Admiral Richard Mies, stated that a lot of its "command and control systems that, in peacetime, are normally not on alert were at a much, much higher state of alert [on September 11] and we had a number of aircraft, manned control aircraft that were airborne that were simulating their wartime roles." (190) Quite what STRATCOM was doing has never been satisfactorily explained. Presumably the two E-4B's (which were the military's most advanced electronics platform) that took off from Andrews Air Force Base, either side of the crash at the Pentagon played a significant role here. (See the end of Chapter Three for more on this.) However, the Air Force have always denied these planes were in the air over Washington at that time. Why the secrecy? (191)

OPERATION NORTHERN VIGILANCE

NORAD was in the middle of Northern Vigilance, a military operation that involved deploying fighter jets from NEADS to Alaska and Northern Canada to monitor a Russian Air Force training exercise. The Russian exercise was scheduled to take place over the North Atlantic, Pacific, and Arctic Oceans from September 10 to September 14, and the NORAD fighters were due to stay in Alaska and Northern Canada until it ended. (192) Russia stopped its exercise as soon as it was aware of the terrorist attacks. According to the *Toronto Star*, Northern Vigilance was abandoned at 9 am "In a flash, Operation Northern Vigilance is called off. Any simulated information, what's known as an 'inject,' is purged from the screens." (193) The use of "injects" (phantom blips projected onto radar screens electronically) is a technique employed to test the defending side in air defence exercises.

OPERATION VIGILANT GUARDIAN

As well as conducting Northern Vigilance, NORAD was also running a major exercise called Vigilant Guardian, which "postulated a bomber attack from the former Soviet Union," according to the 9/11 Commission Report. General Eberhart assured the Commission that despite such a major deployment, "it took about 30 seconds" to adjust to the real-world situation due to "the increased number of staff at the sectors and NORAD because of the scheduled exercise." (194) The 9/11 Commission Report mentioned Vigilant Guardian as being the one exercise that took place on 9/11. This single mention comes in an endnote in which the Commission "investigated whether military preparations for the large-scale exercise compromised the military's response", and that they found "the response, if anything, was expedited by the increased number of staff." (195) The Commission's view, as well as that of General Eberhart, is questionable as a considerable number of NEADS fighter jets were waylaid in Alaska and Canada and therefore unable to respond to the unfolding crisis.

What happened on previous Vigilant Guardian exercises? When questioned by the Senate Committee on Armed Services, General Richard Myers disclosed that in October 2000, NORAD practiced scenarios based around suicidal pilots planning to deliberately crash stolen aircraft into the United Nations headquarters - a 39 storey skyscraper in New York. The two scenarios were practiced on October 16 and October

23 as part of NORAD's annual command post exercise called Vigilant Guardian. He also stated that a similar exercise called "Falcon Indian" took place at the UN building on 6/11/99. Myers also referred to separate simulated plane attacks on the White House and the Statue of Liberty on 5/6/00 (196)

At the time of 9/11, Vigilant Guardian also included a number of scenarios based around plane hijackings, with the fictitious hijackers targeting New York in at least one of those scenarios. Lieutenant Colonel Dawne Deskins, mission crew chief for the Vigilant Guardian exercise later said that initially she and everybody else at NEADS thought the call from Boston Centre was part of Vigilant Guardian. (197)

As we saw in Chapter 5, the system was "blinking red." 9/11 researcher and writer Elizabeth Woodworth has therefore asked a very good question: "Given the warnings of incipient terrorist attacks that had been repeatedly received by the Administration and the FBI, why would anyone coordinate two major annual air training exercises at this time, and divert key resources to the North Pole on an outdated mission? Who was in a position to do this?" (198)

VIGILANT WARRIOR?

There is a question mark here, as it is not clear if there was such an exercise code named Vigilant Warrior on 9/11. General Myers referred to it according to Richard Clarke in his book, *Against All Enemies*. During the White House Teleconference, Clarke asked Myers if NORAD had scrambled any fighters, following the two attacks on the World Trade Centre. Myers replied: "Not a pretty picture Dick...We are in the middle of Vigilant Warrior, a NORAD exercise." (199) The implication here is that the exercise was proving obstructive in some unexplained way. There is no available information about this exercise and it is possible that Myers meant Vigilant Guardian. However, both the CIA and the White House subjected Clarke's book to a prolonged vetting process before allowing it to be published, so it seems improbable that such an error could have been missed. So, what, if anything, was going on with Vigilant Warrior?

NRO EXERCISE

The National Reconnaissance Office (NRO), which operates spy satellites for the NSA, CIA and Pentagon, was commencing an exercise involving a simulated accidental plane crash of a corporate Lear-jet into their building at 9am. After the attacks at the World Trade Centre, 3000 employees were sent home and left the nation's spy satellites monitored by a skeleton crew. Researcher and writer Mark Gaffney noted that consequently, "some or all of the US spy satellite apparatus was under-staffed or unmanned altogether, possibly compromising the NRO mission, which is to provide for the national security of the United States...Was the real purpose of the drill to sow confusion and to empty the building in order to prevent honest government employees from seeing something they were not meant to see, such as evidence of complicity in the attacks?" (200)

PLANE CRASH EXERCISES AT THE PENTAGON

At a press briefing on 16 May 2002, National Security Advisor, Condoleezza Rice said that "I don't think anybody could have predicted that these people would take an airplane and slam it into the World Trade Centre, take another one and slam it into the Pentagon; that they would try to use an airplane as a missile, a hijacked airplane as a

missile.” How could Rice have been so ill informed? For examples, as 9/11 researcher Matthew Everett has shown, there were at least three separate exercises in the 12 months prior to 9/11 based around a plane hitting the Pentagon. (201)

The first of these occurred in late October 2000. In the Office of the Secretary of Defence’s conference room, military planners held the Pentagon Mass Casualty Exercise, which was based around a passenger aircraft crashing into the Pentagon, with 341 victims. The exercise was first described in a military newspaper in a report that the British *Daily Mirror* later said, “reads like an account of what actually happened” on 9/11. (202)

The next exercise occurred in May 2001. As *US Medicine* later reported, the Department of Defense’s response to the 9/11 attacks “was aided by the fact that department medical personnel had carried out a simulation exercise in May in which a hijacked 757 airliner crashed into the Pentagon.” (203)

In early August 2001, a third mass casualty exercise, involving a practice evacuation, was held at the Pentagon. General Lance Lord, the assistant vice chief of staff of the Air Force, who was one of the participants in the exercise, later recalled that it was "purely a coincidence, the scenario for that exercise included a plane hitting the building." (204)

DID MILITARY EXERCISES ON 9/11 CAUSE DELAYED RESPONSE?

General Eberhart told the Commission that the military exercises had not adversely affected NORAD'S response and had "at most cost us 30 seconds." However, when we look at the reactions of some of those involved, Eberhart's comment becomes contentious. When the FAA initially sought a military response to the hijacked Flight 11, NEADS response was "Is this real world or exercise?"

Michael Bronner reported that when NEADS were contacted by the FAA, the following conversation took place, as the military staff heard of a hijack:

Tech Sergeant Shelley WATSON: What was that

Senior Airman Stacia ROUNTREE: Is that real-world?

Master Sergeant Maureen DOOLEY: Real-world hijack.

WATSON: Cool!

Watson's response clearly indicates that the reported hijack was assumed to be part of the day's military exercise. A few minutes later at 8:43 when a threat to the cockpit of Flight 11 was reported, Major James Fox exclaimed, "I've never seen so much real-world stuff happen during an exercise." (205)

Here are some other examples, that would suggest the response to the hijackings was confused by the war games:

Colonel Robert Marr (who scrambled the Otis Fighters) was preparing for the days training exercise, which included a simulated hijacking in which an aircraft was to be hijacked for political purposes, and flown to an island in order to seek asylum.(206)

When NORAD's Northeast Air Defence Sector (NEADS) in Rome, New York, was notified of the first real-world hijacking at 8:38am, its mission crew commander, Major Kevin Nasypany, thought this was part of the exercise, which he'd helped to design. As we saw earlier, he said out loud, "The hijack's not supposed to be for another hour." (207) NEADS was in fact alerted to the suspected hijacking of Delta 1989 almost exactly one hour later, at 9:39 a.m. This was therefore around the time it was due to be notified of the simulated hijacking in the exercise. As mentioned earlier, Nasypany's response supports the contention that Delta 1989 was playing the targeted aircraft in

that exercise.

Major General Larry Arnold, who was at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, also later said that when he first heard of the hijacking, in the minutes after NEADS was alerted to it, "The first thing that went through my mind was, is this part of the exercise? Is this some kind of a screw-up?" (208) Lynn Spencer noted that even NORAD's commander could be put to the test in a military exercise. (209)

All of NORAD, including NEADS, was participating in an annual military exercise described as a "simulated air war" and as "an air defence exercise simulating an attack on the United States." As part of this, false radar blips were being transmitted onto radar screens.

History Commons reported that "many minutes into the real 9/11 attacks, there may be false radar blips appearing on the screens of NORAD personnel. Additional details, such as whose radar screens have false blips and over what duration, are unclear. However, while the *Toronto Star* will indicate that the simulated material is removed from NORAD radar screens shortly before 9:03 am, when the second attack on the World Trade Centre takes place, at 10:12 am an officer at the operations center will call NEADS and ask it to "terminate all exercise inputs coming into Cheyenne Mountain" (210) This would indicate that the NORAD operations center continued to receive simulated radar information for over an hour more, until after Flight 93 has crashed.

As an example of how this radar interference affected the military response, just before Flight 175 crashed at 9:03am, staff at NEADS were querying if the unfolding events were "real life" or part of the day's exercises. "I think this is a damn input, to be honest" hisses one tech. "Then this a damned messed-up input" comes a gruff reply." (211)

As anonymous *911 blogger*, Shoestring noted: "It is unclear whether, on this occasion, when the NEADS personnel mentioned an "input," they were suggesting that the second hijacking was simulated, or they thought it possible that the television coverage of the attack on the WTC was simulated video footage, intended to make the exercise more realistic. What is remarkable, either way, is that at a time when it should have been obvious to them that the U.S. was in the middle of a major terrorist attack, these key personnel were uncertain whether what was happening was real or simulated." (212)

Shoestring further suggested that, "it seems possible that the injection of false radar information could have been one way that normal emergency responses were sabotaged, so as to ensure the success of the attacks on New York and Washington, DC." (213)

Perhaps the confusion caused by false radar information may also explain why at some time before 9:28, as recorded by Richard Clarke, the White House Teleconference was informed by Jane Harvey, the administrator of the FAA, that "we have reports of eleven aircraft off course or out of communications, maybe hijacked." (214)

Elizabeth Woodworth has asked "why, when only 4 planes were hijacked, were there so many reports of other hijacked planes? And why were the military personnel so ready to interpret these hijacking reports as being part of the exercises, when no one [certainly not Condoleezza Rice, Donald Rumsfeld or GW Bush apparently] had ever "imagined" such a thing?" (215)

CAN WE TRUST THE NORAD TAPES - AND THE 9/11 COMMISSION?

The implication of the NORAD tapes is that the account given on 18/9/01 was false. Why would all those involved remain silent when the NORAD tapes relieve the military of any responsibility for what happened? As mentioned earlier: "The real story is actually better than the one we told," a NORAD general admitted to 9/11 commission

staffers when confronted with evidence from the tapes that contradicted his original testimony.

Can we trust the Commission's impartiality when most of the actual research and the writing of reports was carried out by a staff of about 75 people, nearly half of whom were former members of the CIA, the FBI, the Department of Justice and other governmental agencies. (216) It is a fair question to ask where their loyalty lay. We have seen that the Commission staff had the means, opportunity and motive to falsify the NORAD (and FAA) tapes. Bronner described how: "Through the heat of the attack the wheels of what were, perhaps, some of the more modern pieces of equipment in the room—four Dictaphone multi-channel reel-to-reel tape recorders mounted on a rack in a corner of the operations floor—spun impassively, recording every radio channel, with time stamps." (217)

General Arnold told the Commission that despite being NORAD Commander "the Northeast Air Defence Sector apparently had a tape that we were unaware of at the time. And your -- to the best of my knowledge, what I've been told by your staff is that they were unable to make that tape run. But they were later able to -- your staff was able, through a contractor, to get that tape to run." (218) It would be interesting to know more about who that contractor was and how that contractor got the tape to run. Arnold further stated that "a lot of the information that you have found out in your study of 9/11, the things that happened on that day, helped us reconstruct what was going on... the question that came to me was, why did we scramble the aircraft out of Langley Air Force Base, the F-16's out of Langley Air Force Base? And I was trying to remember in my own mind what was it that persuaded us to scramble those aircraft." (219) How plausible is it that Arnold could not remember why he gave the scramble order for the Langley jets, considering that his decision was arguably the most significant event of his entire career?

Furthermore, if the 9/11 Commission was right about Phantom 11, it has a staggering implication as described by Griffin:

"Everyone in the military – from those in the Pentagon's National Military Command Centre (NMCC), under which NORAD operates, to high-level officers at NEADS and in NORAD more generally, to pilots and other subordinates—who knew the true course of events, whether from direct experience or from listening to the tapes, kept quiet about the inaccuracies in NORAD's timeline, even though they knew that the true story would put the military in a better light, completely removing the possibility that the military had stood down its defenses. Why would they do this? (220) Griffin has concluded that probably "the reason no one in the military mentioned phantom Flight 11 before 2004 is that this story was a late invention?" (221)

WHO SHOULD WE BELIEVE?

According to Farmer: "What is clear is that at the highest levels of government, during these critical moments, the top officials were talking mainly to themselves. They were an echo chamber. They were of little or no assistance to the people on the ground attempting to manage the crisis." (222) While this appears true, the FAA can hardly be blamed for the communication problems at the Pentagon, as mentioned in the earlier section concerning General Eberhart. Also, if Clarke's account is accurate, the FAA, through administrator Jane Garvey, did inform the two highest ranking officials in the DOD about Flight 93, namely Rumsfeld and Myers.

Farmer's perception is also challenged by the evidence given to the 9/11 Commission by two senior managers in the FAA. Ben Sliney, Operations Manager at Herndon,

stated that: "Available to us at the Command Centre of course is the military cell, which was our liaison with the military services. They were present at all of the events that occurred on 9/11... The normal protocols for the events that were transpiring then -- that is to say hijacked aircraft, which requires a notification to NORAD -- those, at least I was given to understand, were made promptly... If you tell the military you've told the military. They have their own communication web that I think defeated some of the notification processes, as I've been listening to today. But in my mind everyone who needed to be notified about the events transpiring was notified, including the military." (223)

Sliney's evidence was followed by that of Monty Belger (Acting Deputy Administrator of the FAA on 9/11) who confirmed that "I truly do not mean this to be defensive, but it is a fact -- there were military people on duty at the FAA Command Centre, as Mr. Sliney said. They were participating in what was going on. There were military people in the FAA's Air Traffic Organization in a situation room. They were participating in what was going on. To my knowledge, the NMCC was added to the conference call, the open conference call at 9:20...The fundamental primary source of information between the FAA, DOD, FBI, Secret Service, and which every other agencies -- the airlines would probably be on that net -- is the FAA hijack net. That was activated with the NMCC at 9:20. It was my assumption that morning, as it had been for my 30 years of experience with the FAA, that the NMCC was on that net and hearing everything real-time...I did not ask specifically, is the NMCC on. And I can tell you I've lived through dozens of hijackings in my 30-year FAA career, as a very low entry-level inspector up through to the headquarters, and they were always there. They were always on the net, and were always listening in with everybody else." (224) Why would the military not have been on the FAA net on 9/11?

The evidence of Sliney and Belger was confirmed as accurate by General McKinley, who informed the Commission in the previous year's Hearing that "It is my understanding from talking with both FAA and our supervisors at the Northeast Air Defence Sector in Rome, that those lines were open and that they were discussing these issues." (225)

So, who are we to believe? Commissioner Bob Kerrey told Eberhart that the military had been "taking a bullet for the FAA... I think the military performed, under the circumstances, exceptionally well." (226) The reader will have to decide if Kerrey was right. Quite why NORAD would have "taken a bullet" remains hard to comprehend?

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

Even if we assume that the Commission's timeline is accurate and that NEADS received no notification from Boston FAA until 8:38am (which is contentious as we saw earlier from Scoggins' statement that Cooper had called NEADS before he arrived at 8:25am), there are still a number of problems with the Commission's story. Firstly, there is the 8 minute delay in Colonel Marr being able to access General Arnold, who was engaged in a military exercise and could not be disturbed. Bear in mind that the Commission accepted General Eberhart's evidence that it only took "30 seconds" to go from exercise to real world action. We can see that this statement is false from the very beginning of the morning's events.

Even after Marr was given consent to scramble the Otis fighters, they remained on the tarmac for a further six minutes, apparently due to a lack of a target. However, we saw that Colin Scoggins contradicted this, stating that he was giving NEADS sufficiently

accurate information for them to act on (eg 20 miles south of Albany). Next we come to the void of what the fighters were doing from approximately 8:55am when they arrived in Whisky 105 military airspace and 9:09 (14 minutes) at which point the Commission described the two planes remaining there "to hold as needed" until 9:13. The Commission makes no attempt to explain what happened to the Otis fighters in those missing 14 minutes. There is also the issue of why NEADS failed to redirect the Atlantic City fighters that were in the air, just a few minutes from New York, despite being asked to do so by Colin Scoggins.

What are we to make of NORAD stating on 18/9/01 that they were informed of Flight 175 at 8:43, thereby having 20 minutes in which to intercept it. Apart from the issue of what choices the fighters would have had engaging the Boeing 767 over New York airspace, the fighters could certainly have flown alongside Flight 175. By doing so, they would have been able to see what was going on in the cockpit, which may well have influenced their course of action.

It is now impossible to ascertain what, if any, mistakes were made by the FAA during the attacks on the World Trade Center, as the recording of the morning's events that were taped, were then destroyed by an unknown manager.

One question, if the Commission story is true, is why the FAA didn't seek military assistance much earlier for Flight 77 and certainly before they knew it had been hijacked. This would have been standard procedure and had been carried out regularly in the years preceding 2001.

In relation to Flight 77, we might wonder how an ATC and two supervisors could all have failed to notice the change in the flight's direction for over half an hour. Why was it that Langley Air Rescue failed to notify colleagues at NORAD that the plane was missing /maybe crashed?

Who was the senior NEADS officer who phoned Captain Craig Borgstrom at Langley and told him to fly, when his role as Supervisor of Flying was to remain at base and direct the two pilots under his control? This unprecedented breach of protocol had a disastrous impact on managing the direction of the fighters and yet we don't know who was responsible for this breach?

Next, we have Phantom Flight 11, which was never mentioned until June 2004 when the Commission presented its evidence. How plausible is it that the entire Air Force and the FAA, could have ignored this "elephant in the room" for nearly three years?

Finally, we have the debacle of Flight 93 and the apparent failure of the FAA, according to the Commission, to notify the military of it having been hijacked until after it crashed. Despite the Commission's story, numerous senior military officials have stated that they were fully aware of Flight 93, long before it crashed.

The actions of the major figures in the military, Eberhart, Winfield, Myers and Canavan) as well as the two most senior officials at the Department of Defence, Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz (whose actions, or rather, lack of them, are discussed in Chapter 3) are all highly questionable.

There was an unusual confluence of military exercises on 9/11. For example, Global Guardian usually took place in October, but was moved to the week of 9/11, but it is not known why, or who made that decision. In view of the system "blinking red", this was clearly an extremely bad decision. The NRO exercise resulted in a loss of radar capacity at the most vital time in the attacks, due to most of their staff being sent home. Finally, we have the extraordinary situation of NORAD's four different timelines between 13 September 2001 when Myers gave evidence to the Senate and 17 June 2004, when Myers, Eberhart and Arnold attended the final Commission public hearing. Which one, if any, is true? The one thing we can be sure of is that there are so many

unanswered questions raised in this chapter that a further rigorous and independent inquiry is clearly required.

Notes for Chapter 6

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- 48) See note 42 above, p51
- 49) Filson p56 and 58-59
- 50) 9/11 Commission Report, p20
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CHAPTER 7

FOREIGN INVOLVEMENT / COMPLICITY?

According to Richard Clarke, on the day after 9/11, the "CIA was explicit that al Qaeda was guilty of the attacks, but Paul Wolfowitz, Donald Rumsfeld's deputy at the Department of Defence, was not persuaded. It was too sophisticated and complicated an operation, he said, for a terrorist group to have pulled off by itself, without a state sponsor - Iraq must have been helping them." (1)

We now know that Iraq was not a state sponsor of al-Qaeda, but it is also clear that al-Qaeda could not have achieved its objectives, so fortuitously and spectacularly, without some governmental support. Notwithstanding the evidence discussed in earlier chapters incriminating the US government, could other nations have also been complicit in any way?

As Horst Ehmke, former coordinator of the West German secret services, observed: "Terrorists could not have carried out such an operation with four hijacked planes without the support of a secret service." (2) We will therefore look at evidence concerning three countries that have been thought by some to have played a part in the events of 9/11.

SAUDI ARABIA

We saw in Chapter 5 that the hijackers, Almihdhar and Alhazmi, arrived in Los Angeles in mid-January 2000, without any apparent contacts or ability to speak English. As James Bamford observed, it is highly improbable that they would have embarked on such a complex and dangerous mission without support from someone able to speak good English and help them settle and then prepare for the planned hijackings. (3)

Shortly after their arrival, they had the seemingly good fortune to meet a Saudi compatriot, Omar al-Bayoumi, by chance. Bob Graham (Co-chair of the Congressional Joint Inquiry) wrote that Omar al-Bayoumi was a Saudi national, employed by the state to spy on Saudis in San Diego who were thought to present a potential risk to the kingdom. (4)

During the last week of January 2000, he just happened to visit the same restaurant where Mihdhar and Hazmi were eating in Los Angeles. Graham surmised: "That a suspected Saudi spy would drive 125 miles to a meeting at the Saudi consulate in Los Angeles, where he would meet with a consular officer [Fahad al-Thumairy] with suspected terrorist ties, and then drive another 7 miles to the one Middle Eastern restaurant - out of more than 134 Middle Eastern restaurants in Los Angeles - where he would happen to sit next to two future terrorists, to whom he would happen to offer friendship and support, cannot credibly be described as a coincidence." (5)

Lawrence Wright has queried who sent Bayoumi to oversee them, noting that as the CIA had been following them: "Perhaps the agency decided that Saudi intelligence would have a better chance of recruiting these men than the Americans. That would leave no CIA fingerprints on the operation as well." (6)

Shortly after this meeting, Mihdhar and Hazmi accepted Bayoumi's offer to come and stay with him. He then paid the first two month's rent for them to rent their own accommodation.

WHAT WAS IN THE "28 PAGES?"

According to the classified 28 pages of the Congressional Joint Inquiry, which were declassified [although there are still some redactions] in July 2016: "While in the United States, some of the September 11 hijackers were in contact with, and received support or assistance from, individuals who may be connected to the Saudi Government. There is information, primarily from FBI sources, that at least two of those individuals were alleged by some to be Saudi intelligence officers." (7)

Evidence that al-Bayoumi was one of the two Saudi spies referred to above includes this statement:

"According to FBI documents, al-Bayoumi's pay increased during the time that al-Hazmi and al-Mihdhar were in the United States. According to a recent —[redacted] analysis of ties between the terrorist attacks and elements of the Saudi Government, before al-Hazmi and al-Mihdhar arrived in the U.S., al-Bayoumi generally received approximately \$465 per month in "allowances." According to the —[redacted] document, in March 2000, a month after al-Hazmi and al-Mihdhar arrived in San Diego, his "allowances" jumped to over \$3,700 a month and stayed constant until December 2000, when al-Hazmi left San Diego. Al-Bayoumi's allowances were then decreased to approximately \$3,200 a month and stayed at that rate until al-Bayoumi left the United States in August 2001, approximately one month before the September 11th attacks." (8)

Also included in the 28 pages was that "al-Bayoumi had extensive contact with Saudi Government establishments in the United States and received financial support from a Saudi company affiliated with the Saudi Ministry of Defence...That company reportedly had ties to Usama Bin Ladin and al-Qa'ida." (9)

As Philip Shenon described it, "Bayoumi appeared to be a part of a larger network of Arab expatriates who had been tasked to help Hazmi and Mihdhar... another Saudi in San Diego who appeared to work as a spy, Osama Basnan, [nb his name is sometimes spelled Bassan or Bassnan] had funnelled thousands of dollars to Bayoumi." (10)

Osama Basnan, who appears to be the second Saudi intelligence agent referred to above, "may have been in contact with al-Mihdhar and al-Hazmi during their time in San Diego. Basnan was a close associate of al-Bayoumi... The FBI also received reports from individuals in the Muslim community alleging that Basnan might be a Saudi intelligence officer. According to a CIA memo, Basnan reportedly received funding and possibly a fake passport from Saudi Government officials. He and his wife have received financial support from the Saudi Ambassador to the United States and his wife... a member of the Saudi Royal Family provided Basnan with a significant amount of cash. FBI information indicates that Basnan is an extremist and supporter of Usama Bin Laden." (11)

The declassified pages further note that "he also lived across the street from the hijackers and made a comment to an FBI asset that he did more than al-Bayoumi did for the hijackers." (12)

Despite this admission, the Inquiry stated that "while the documentary evidence that al-Bayoumi provided assistance to al-Hazmi and al-Mihdhar is solid, the files contain only limited evidence that Osama Basnan had contacts with the two individuals." (13)

When FBI agents later searched Basnan's home, they found evidence of \$74,000 in cheques from February 1999-May 2002 from the US Ambassador Prince Bandar's wife to Basnan's wife. Bandar's wife "had supposedly sent the money to help Basnan's wife pay for thyroid surgery; Basnan's wife had signed a number of the checks over to Bayoumi's wife." (14) The 9/11 Commission concluded that "we have found no evidence that Saudi Princess Haifa al Faisal [Bandar's wife] provided any funds to the conspiracy, either directly or indirectly." (15) However, "according to the FBI, on May

14, 1998, Basnan cashed a check from Bandar in the amount of \$15,000." (16) Why was the Saudi Ambassador to the US giving a substantial amount of money to a man who, less than two years later, was thought to be assisting two of the 9/11 hijackers? Needless to say, the 9/11 Commission didn't trouble themselves with this particularly thorny issue.

The "28 pages" also noted that "the FBI is aware of contact between the hijackers and a close friend of Basnan's, Khaled al-Kayed, a commercial airline pilot and certified flight instructor living in San Diego. Al-Kayed admitted to the FBI that in May 2000, al-Mihdhar and al-Hazmi contacted him about learning to fly Boeing jet aircraft." (17)

Furthermore, "FBI documents also indicate that several Saudi Naval officers were in contact with the September 11 hijackers... [and that] one Saudi Naval officer, was in telephone contact with flight 77 hijackers Khalid al-Mihdhar and Nawaf al-Hazmi on nine occasions from March 11, 2000 to March 27, 2000." (18) As noted in a *Guardian* [UK]report:

"Yet some of the sections of the declassified pages remain withheld. One such section concerns a Saudi navy officer who in March 2000 was in telephonic contact with two of the hijackers. It is unclear if the FBI ultimately found anything relevant on the officer, but the FBI currently does not consider the Saudi Arabian government complicit in the attack." (19)

A further disclosure is a reference association between the hijackers and a half-brother of Osama bin Laden: "Abdullah Bin Ladin claims to work for the Saudi Embassy in Washington, D.C. as an administrative officer. He is identified by the FBI as Usame Bin Ladin's half brother. He is a close friend of Mohammed Quadir-Harunani, a possible associate of Mohammed Atta and Marwan al-Shehhi prior to September 11, 2001." (20)

This information is revealing because of the Bush family's financial ties to both the Saudi royals and bin Laden family as co-investors in the Carlyle Group private equity firm, where GW Bush's father was able to take advantage of his previous position as President for financial gain. In fact, on the morning of 9/11, Bush Sr. attended a Carlyle business conference where another [allegedly estranged] bin Laden sibling was the guest of honour. Just days later, Shafiq bin Laden was allowed to leave the US on a chartered flight back to Saudi Arabia in a planned evacuation overseen by Prince Bandar himself. (More on that below.)

Graham concluded that the 28 pages raised serious questions about support given to the hijackers by the Saudi government. He also expressed concern about the FBI investigation being ponderous to the extent that it "raises serious questions as to who was directing the Bureau's actions." (21)

Graham raised another matter that increases concern about Saudi involvement as well as seemingly inexplicable FBI complicity. He noted that when Almihdhar left the US in June 2000, Alhazmi the lodged with an FBI informant, Abdussattar Sheikh, whose specific role was to spy for the US on any suspicious behaviour of Saudi nationals. (22) According to the official account, the reason for Alhazmi and Almihdhar's presence in the United States was unknown to retired Professor Shaikh. Similarly, they, in turn, were unaware of Shaikh's clandestine post-retirement occupation as an FBI informant (23) The mystery around this relationship between Shaikh and the hijackers is explored further in chapter 5.

THE FBI AND CIA CONTINUE TO COVER-UP

Considering the above, Graham suspected an ongoing cover-up by the intelligence agencies and that the FBI's conclusion that al-Bayoumi was not working for Saudi intelligence was to save them from the embarrassment of admitting that they failed to monitor him. Also, to prevent a strain in relations with Saudi Arabia. (24)

Graham's perception appears to have been vindicated in September 2005 when the directors of the FBI (Robert Mueller) and CIA (Porter Goss) concluded a joint-agency report into possible Saudi involvement in 9/11. The declassified one page summary concluded that "there is no evidence that the Saudi government or members of the Saudi royal family knowingly provided support for the attacks of 11 September 2001 or that they had foreknowledge of terrorist operations in the Kingdom or elsewhere...[However,] The Saudi Government and many of its agencies have been infiltrated and exploited by individuals associated with or sympathetic to al Qa'ida." (25)

Their report also concluded that "there is no information to indicate that either Omar al-Bayoumi or Osama Basnan materially supported the hijackers wittingly, were intelligence officers of the Saudi Government or provided material support for the 11 September attacks, contrary to media speculation."

Their conclusions were hardly surprising. Researcher Kevin Ryan noted that: "The [Joint Congressional] Inquiry's report was built largely on information provided by the FBI and the CIA. The 28 pages show this clearly. What people might fail to question is why the Inquiry would go about investigating intelligence agencies simply by reporting information provided by those agencies. That contradiction was amplified when the Inquiry's leaders allowed the FBI to intimidate their own panel members [for disclosing classified information] by investigating them while they were investigating the FBI." (26)

WHAT WAS GOING ON IN SARASOTA?

Two weeks before 9/11, the family of wealthy businessman and advisor to a Saudi prince, Esam Ghazzawi, left the US leaving valuable items behind as they seemingly fled in haste. The FBI was forced to make a limited disclosure of their information about this family, following FOIA litigation, brought by Dan Christensen of *BrowardBulldog.org* in 2012. (27) In 2016, the FBI released a largely redacted copy of their secret investigation into suspected Saudi government involvement in 9/11. Included in their disclosure was information that Mohamed Atta and other terrorist suspects, including two of the other 9/11 hijackers had visited Ghazzawi. His home is about 10 miles from the Venice airport, where Atta and two other hijack pilots trained. The release of Ghazzawi's name was the first time the government confirmed Ghazzawi's involvement in the FBI investigation that lasted until at least 2004, yet was never disclosed to the 9/11 Commission or congressional investigators.

Bob Graham has suggested that the family's rapid departure was due to having been tipped off about the approaching 9/11 attacks. (28)

COVERING UP THE COVER-UP?

Unredacted parts of the FBI's 2012 report are still being kept hidden from prying eyes. Attorneys acting for 9/11 survivors and families of those who died attempted to compel the FBI to release the entire unredacted report. President Trump had promised the families that this would happen, but the Justice Department opposed any such

disclosure.

Journalists Tim Golden and Sebastian Rotella wrote the following in *ProPublica* on 15/4/20:

"The attorney general, William Barr; the acting director of national intelligence, Richard Grenell; and other senior officials insisted to a federal judge in the civil case that further disclosures about Saudi connections to the 9/11 plot would imperil national security...[They] insisted in court filings that even its justification for that secrecy needed to remain secret. Four statements to the court by FBI and Justice Department officials were filed under seal so they could not be seen by the public. An additional five, including one from the CIA, were shared only with the judge and cannot be read even by the plaintiffs' lawyers...What the various security agencies are trying to hide remains a mystery... "The extraordinary lengths that they're going to here suggest that there must be some deep, dark secret that they're still trying very hard to hide after almost 20 years," said a lawyer for the families, Steven Pounian.

Furthermore, former FBI agents who have made court statements in support of the 9/11 families have been warned by the bureau that they risk violating secrecy laws...[which could] could imperil "good relations with Saudi Arabia." (29)

WHY THE NEED TO COVER-UP FOR SAUDI ARABIA?

Bob Graham has unequivocally accused the Bush administration of complicity with Saudi Arabia, stating that "the more discoveries we made, the more the administration's obstructionism intensified." (30) As described above, this cover-up has continued into 2021.

WHAT WOULD HAVE BEEN IN IT FOR SAUDI ARABIA?

Dr Paul Craig Roberts has raised a question of fundamental importance, noting that: "No explanation has been provided as to why Saudi Arabia, with its long and tight connection to Washington and to the Bush family, has any interest in enabling a terrorist attack on the US." (31)

Bob Graham expressed his thoughts on this subject in an interview: "When asked why Saudi Arabia, an ally of the United States, would have aided the attackers, Graham describes the alliance between the two countries as a 'difficult' marriage, fraught with mistrust and suspicion, and historically based on the United States offering protection to the Saudi regime, which is unpopular with many of its people, in exchange for oil. Saudi Arabia feels vulnerable on many fronts, including aggression from its neighbours, and may want to forge relationships with powers with diverging interests from the United States. Graham speculates that Bin Laden, who had amassed an army in Afghanistan and enjoyed support from extremists in Saudi Arabia, may have threatened the Saudi royals with firing up 'civil insurrection' if they didn't help him in whatever it was he was planning in the United States. The Saudis have an informal network of citizens living in the United States who are charged with monitoring Saudi students here, Graham says, and he believes they were told to assist Bin Laden's young recruits—whether or not they knew what the recruits planned to do." (32)

In conclusion, it would appear possible that Saudi Arabia supported the al-Qaeda terrorists, but as we saw in the first chapter, the terrorists did not bring down the WTC towers. Prince Bandar, former Saudi Ambassador to the US, who was known as "Bandar Bush" due to his closeness to the president's family, challenged the view that Saudi Arabia was complicit in supporting the hijackers. He stated in a CNN

documentary in 2007 that Saudi Arabia had tracked them and that they had been actively following many of the hijackers "with precision." He further stated that "if US security authorities had engaged their Saudi counterparts in a serious and credible manner, in my opinion, we would have avoided what happened." (33) Bandar's statement raises more uncomfortable questions, particularly as he referred to tracking "many of the hijackers." Why did the US agencies not respond to Saudi intelligence in a serious and credible manner, if what he said was true. Also, why would the Saudis not have been more insistent? After all, Prince Bandar had easy access to President Bush, so there was really no excuse for the information not to have been received at the very highest level of government. What we can conclude is that the above evidence confirms the case for requiring a new investigation into the events around 9/11.

US foreign policy expert, James Risen, has summarised the situation: "Certainly, the power and influence over American foreign policy held by Saudi Arabia can be overstated. Critics often fall prey to dark conspiracy theories. It is easy to exaggerate the degree of Saudi complicity in the rise of al-Qaeda or the 9/11 plot...Yet it is still true that, both before and after 9/11, President Bush and his administration have displayed a remarkable lack of interest in aggressively examining the connections between Osama bin Laden, al-Qaeda and the Saudi power elite...and until they are thoroughly investigated, the roots of al-Qaeda's power, and the full story of 9/11, will never be known." (34) Addressing why there is such a conspiracy of silence and tacit denial, Risen observed that "the Saudis influence on American politics is pervasive. It is an issue only slightly less sensitive to discuss in polite company in Washington than that of Israeli political influence." (35)

One final issue, mentioned earlier, was that in the two days following 9/11, there was a speedy repatriation of at least 300 Saudi citizens residing in the United States at that time. As Craig Unger described it:

"How was it possible that, just as President Bush declared a no-holds-barred global war on terror that would send hundreds of thousands of US troops to Afghanistan and Iraq, and just as Osama bin Laden became Public Enemy No1 and the target of a worldwide manhunt, the White House would expedite the departure of so many potential witnesses, [at least 140 Saudis] including two dozen relatives of the man behind the attack itself?" (36)

However, according to the Commission, "we have found no credible evidence that any chartered flights of Saudi Arabian nationals departed the United States before the reopening of national airspace." Peter Lance has noted that this was challenged by Judicial Watch, a conservative watchdog group that obtained documents from the Department of Homeland Security, showing "that an additional 160 Saudis were allowed to leave on some fifty-five commercial flights and that some had taken off as early as September 11, bringing the total number of Saudis in the airlift to more than three hundred." (37) Why was this allowed to happen, when there may have been Saudis on board those planes who could have provided significant information, if they had been interviewed in depth by the FBI?

ISRAEL

In April 2018, the Lawyers Committee for 9/11 Inquiry, together with more than a dozen families who lost relatives on 9/11 and with help from the organisation *Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth*, filed a petition with the US Attorney in Manhattan requesting a Grand Jury investigation into unprosecuted federal crimes at the World Trade Centre on 9/11. In November, the Attorney accepted this application, although

there have been no further developments since then. (38)

The Israeli "High Fivers"

Included in the evidence presented to the Manhattan Attorney was the information that five Israeli men in a van were arrested, after the police were notified that they had been seen celebrating the World Trade Centre attacks from across the Hudson River in New Jersey. They were described in the FBI report as being in "high spirits." Their van was searched by officers with a bomb-sniffing dog, which tested positive for explosive residue. Samples from the van were taken for examination, but nothing further was ever disclosed. The five men were not only physically present at the waterfront *before* the first plane impact but found with thousands of dollars in cash, box-cutters, a pass to World Trade Centre Building 1 and fake passports. The driver of the van, Sivan Kurzberg, told the officers, "We are Israeli. We are not your problem. Your problems are our problems. The Palestinians are the problem."

The five men were held in custody for 71 days, according to *ABC News*, (39) before being deported to Israel without being charged. As *ABC News* reported: "For the FBI, deciphering the truth from the five Israelis proved to be difficult. One of them, Paul Kurzberg, refused to take a lie-detector test for 10 weeks — then failed it, according to his lawyer. Another of his lawyers told us Kurzberg had been reluctant to take the test because he had once worked for Israeli intelligence in another country."

The full FBI report has yet to be released to the public or any explanation given as to why they were detained for so long without being charged. For such a long detention, one must assume there was significant evidence, and this begs the question as to why there remains such a veil of secrecy? The 9/11 Commission did not mention their arrests and nor did the 2015 report by the 9/11 Review Commission, which was mandated by Congress to conduct an assessment of any evidence known to the FBI that was not considered by the 9/11 Commission.

From information in the FBI reports that have been disclosed, the five men were seen filming the WTC as early as the first plane strike, according to two separate witnesses. The men all claimed to work for a moving company (Urban Moving Systems) but evidence indicated this was not a legitimate company. Indeed, the manager of the company that employed the five men fled the country back to Israel after their arrest, following an initial informal interview.

The evidence provided to the Manhattan Attorney noted that "the FBI, as part of its investigation, compiled the addresses used by the alleged hijackers, the addresses used by suspected associates of the alleged hijackers, and the addresses used by the five arrestees. An FBI report indicates that one or more of these arrestees was possibly connected to a suspect in the WTC terrorist attacks...These arrestees were eventually released and deported, apparently against the better judgment of some of the FBI."

On their return to Israel, one of them publicly reported that they had been sent to the US to "document the event", which would clearly indicate foreknowledge of 9/11.

The highly suspicious role of these Israelis has been confirmed by the most prominent Jewish newspaper in the US, the New York-based *Forward*, which stated on March 15 [2002] that: "According to one former high-ranking American intelligence official, who asked not to be named, the FBI came to the conclusion at the end of its investigation that the five Israelis ... were conducting a Mossad surveillance mission and that their employer, Urban Moving Systems... served as a front."

Forward also reported that a counter-intelligence probe concluded two of the men were operatives of Mossad, Israel's spy service. (40)

WHY WERE ISRAELI "ART STUDENTS" SPYING ON FEDERAL OFFICIALS?

In early 2001, the US Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) started receiving reports from DEA field offices about young Israelis who claimed to be art students with art to sell. They were targeting federal officials, including the DEA, Air Force, Secret Service, FBI and US Marshals. As reported by Christopher Ketcham in *Salon*, "strangest of all, the students had visited the homes of numerous DEA officers and other senior federal officials." (41)

Some of the Israelis were also caught making detailed notes of the inside of federal buildings, after entering illegally.

Interestingly, a number of the Israeli "art students" lived in Hollywood, Florida, a city of 25,000 in close proximity to where Mohamed Atta and three of the other hijackers also lived for some time before 9/11. According to Ketcham, "several students lived at 4220 Sheridan St., just down the block from the 3389 Sheridan St. apartment where terrorist mastermind Mohammed Atta holed up with three other Sept. 11 plotters."

Fox News ran a four-part investigation in mid-December 2001, with Carl Cameron reporting that the "art students" may have been part of a spy ring tracking al-Qaeda operatives in the US. a spy ring that according to Cameron's sources may have known about the preparations for the Sept. 11 attacks but failed to share this knowledge with U.S. intelligence. (42)

Cameron reported that 60 Israeli nationals had been detained in the weeks after 9/11, with many of them deported, while at least 140 "art students" had been detained in the preceding months.

Cameron also reported that "some of the detainees failed polygraph questions when asked about alleged surveillance activities against and in the United States." None of the other mainstream media agencies ran with this story and it was soon removed from *Fox News* archives but, according to Ketcham, "inside the DEA, the Fox piece reverberated. An internal DEA document obtained by *Salon*, written just a few days after the final Fox report, warned of "security breaches in DEA telecommunications by unauthorized "foreign nationals" - and cites an Israeli-owned firm with which the DEA contracted for wiretap equipment - breaches that could have accounted for the access that the art students apparently had to the home addresses of agents." The DEA document also noted that many of the art students had backgrounds in Israeli military intelligence and / or electronic surveillance.

Cameron's *Fox News* report fell on deaf ears in the mainstream media to the extent that the respected British intelligence and military analysis service, Jane's Information Group, noted on 13 March 2002: "It is rather strange that the U.S. media seems to be ignoring what may well be the most explosive story since the 11 September attacks -- the alleged break-up of a major Israeli espionage operation in the USA, which aimed to infiltrate both the Justice and Defence departments and which may also have been tracking al-Qaeda terrorists before the aircraft hijackings took place." (43) However, this silence can be explained by Cameron, quoting an anonymous intelligence officer, who stated that to publicly air suspicions of Israeli wrongdoing was tantamount to "career suicide." This was not to be the fate of Cameron himself but, as noted by Ketcham, he "was excoriated by various pro-Israel lobbying groups for his exposé." Ketcham concluded his article by asking "what were these 'students' doing going around accessing buildings without authorization, tracking undercover cops to their homes -- if not for some sort of intel mission?"

According to Ketcham, theory number one was that it was related to drug dealing:

"Israeli organized crime is the now the biggest dealer of Ecstasy in the United States. The trouble with this theory is the obvious one: In the annals of crime chutzpah, for drug dealers to brazenly approach drug agents in their homes and offices may represent the all-time world record."

Ketcham then considered theory number two, which was "that they were all engaged in espionage. Why would the Mossad -- or any spy outfit with a lick of good sense -- use kids without papers as spies? And, just as our incredulous DEA agent noted, what intelligence useful to Israel could be gathered from DEA offices, anyway?"

An article in *Herald Scotland* sums up the evidence well: "Put together, the facts do appear to indicate that Israel knew that 9/11, or at least a large-scale terror attack, was about to take place on American soil, but did nothing to warn the USA. But that's not quite true. In August 2001, the Israelis handed over a list of terrorist suspects - on it were the names of four of the September 11 hijackers. Significantly, however, the warning said the terrorists were planning an attack "outside the United States."

The article concluded that "what we are left with, then, is fact sullied by innuendo. Certainly, it seems, Israel was spying within the borders of the United States and it is equally certain that the targets were Islamic extremists probably linked to September 11. But did Israel know in advance that the Twin Towers would be hit and the world plunged into a war without end; a war which would give Israel the power to strike its enemies almost without limit? That's a conspiracy theory too far, perhaps. But the unpleasant feeling that, in this age of spin and secrets, we do not know the full and unadulterated truth won't go away. Maybe we can guess, but it's for the history books to discover and decide." (44)

Contrary to this report of an Israeli warning of an attack "outside the United States," The *Daily Telegraph* reported that, "Israeli intelligence officials say that they warned their counterparts in the United States last month [August 2001] that large-scale attacks on highly visible targets on the American mainland were imminent." (45)

There is more evidence that the art students were tracking the hijackers, as noted earlier by their proximity to some of the hijackers in Hollywood. As Matthias Gebauer noted in a *Der Spiegel* article on 1 October 2002: "[Israeli] Agents lived in the vicinity of the apartment of the two seemingly normal flight school students, observing them around the clock. With the deportation of the agents, the observation of the later terrorists was terminated... this was apparently not treated as sufficiently urgent by the CIA and also not passed on to the FBI." (46)

Gebauer's report would appear to confirm that of the *Daily Telegraph* above.

Further evidence that Israeli intelligence were aware of the hijackers plans was provided in an article in Haaretz on 26/9/01, which reported that: "Odigo, the instant messaging service, says that two of its workers received messages two hours before the Twin Towers attack on September 11 predicting the attack would happen and the company has been cooperating with Israeli and American law enforcement, including the FBI, in trying to find the original sender of the message predicting the attack." Nothing further was reported about this story.

PAKISTAN

The existence of a close relationship between the Pakistan ISI (Inter-Services Intelligence), Pakistan's intelligence agency, and the Taliban and also al-Qaeda are a matter of public record, as has been the close working relationship between the ISI and

the CIA. Former UK minister Michael Meacher noted that "for years, the CIA used the ISI as a conduit to pump billions of dollars into militant Islamist groups in Afghanistan, both before and after the Soviet invasion of 1979." (47)

It is therefore significant that Lt. Gen. Mahmoud Ahmad, who was the chief of the ISI, had been in the US for a week since 4 September 2001 for consultations with the CIA, the National Security Council, the White House and the Pentagon. There was obviously a lot to talk about for him having to be there for the entire week. Coincidentally, he was having breakfast with senators Bob Graham and Porter Goss (who later co-chaired the 9/11 Congressional Joint Inquiry) as the two planes crashed into the World Trade Center. (48)

A month later, General Ahmad was in disgrace and forced into early retirement. What caused such a sudden reversal of fortune? On 30/9/01, *ABC News* reported that the FBI had "tracked more than \$100,000 from banks in Pakistan to two banks in Florida, to accounts held by suspected hijack ringleader, Mohammed Atta... that money... can be traced directly to people connected with Osama bin Laden." Much of that money was transferred in the summer months of 2000 and funded the hijackers' flight-school tuition and living expenses.

In the week following this disclosure, Ahmad retired from the ISI when "the US authorities sought his removal after confirming the fact that \$100,000 were wired to WTC hijacker Mohammed Atta from Pakistan by Ahmad Umar Sheikh at the insistence of Gen Mahmoud." (49)

According to Paul Sperry, Washington bureau chief of *WorldNet Daily*, Sheikh is "one of Osama bin Laden's chief money men." He wired the \$100,000 "from Pakistan to Atta from an account in the United Arab Emirates...Sheikh picked up an unspent residual of more than \$25,000 from Atta...right before the attacks." (50)

On the surface, this story appears too implausible to believe. However, Michael Meacher described how, "with CIA backing, the ISI has developed, since the early 1980s, into a parallel structure, a state within a state, with staff and informers estimated by some at 150,000. It wields enormous power over all aspects of government. The case of Ahmad confirms that parts of the ISI directly supported and financed al-Qaeda, and it has long been established that the ISI has acted as go-between in intelligence operations on behalf of the CIA." Meacher also quoted Daniel Ellsberg, the former US defence department whistleblower who had stated that: "It seems to me quite plausible that Pakistan was quite involved in this ... To say Pakistan is, to me, to say CIA, because ... it's hard to say that the ISI knew something that the CIA had no knowledge of." (51) Ahmad's close relations with the CIA would seem to confirm this.

As a further example of the close link between the ISI and al-Qaeda, it was reported on *CBS* that bin Laden had received kidney dialysis treatment in the Rawalpindi military hospital on the day before 9/11. The report described how, "on that night, says this medical worker who wanted her identity protected, they moved out all the regular staff in the urology department and sent in a secret team to replace them." (52)

Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed, political analyst, has raised a fundamental issue about the above information, questioning why the links between the ISI, al-Qaeda and the US government have not been pursued:

"Yet no warrant for the arrest of either Ahmad or Sheikh for their role in financing 9/11 terrorist attacks has ever been issued. Even after Sheikh was detained, put on trial and sentenced to death for the murder of US citizen Daniel Pearl, the US government refused to act in relation to his far more devastating role in financing the murder of 3,000 American citizens. His crucial function as Osama bin Laden's financial chief is

being neglected, as is former ISI chief Mahmoud Ahmad's role in instructing Sheikh. Why the deafening silence on Ahmad and Sheikh?" (53)

In view of the close working relationship between the CIA and ISI, is it believable that Ahmad, having spent the week prior to 9/11 in Washington in deep discussion with all the major political and military figures, could have imagined that he could pull off such an act of duplicity without knowing that he would be protected from any repercussions? Also, why has Bob Graham been so adamant in his conviction of Saudi involvement and yet be so seemingly oblivious to the equally damning evidence of Pakistan's apparent complicity?

The 9/11 Commission, unsurprisingly, kept well clear of the issue of foreign government collusion or complicity, stating that: "It does not appear that any government other than the Taliban financially supported al-Qaeda before 9/11." (54) However, on the subject of the Taliban, Lawrence Wright noted that: "The Taliban foreign minister, Wakil Ahmed Muttawakil, confided to the American consul general in Peshawar and the United Nations in Kabul that al-Qaeda was planning a devastating attack on the United States. He feared that American retaliation would destroy his country." (55) His fears were well-founded, but why did the United States ignore his warning?

NOTES FOR CHAPTER 7

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- 7) Report of the Joint Inquiry Into the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, 2001 - By the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, p415
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- 11) See note 7 above, p417
- 12) *Ibid*, p426
- 13) *Ibid*, p422
- 14) Shenon, p53
- 15) 9/11 Commission Report, p498,note122
- 16) See note 7 above, p428
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CHAPTER 8

INSIDER TRADING

According to the 9/11 Commission, there was no suspicion of insider trading that enabled people with prior knowledge about the attacks to gain financially. The 9/11 Commission report wrote this in footnote 130 of Chapter 5, which briefly focuses on the alleged insider trading:

"Highly publicized allegations of insider trading in advance of 9/11 generally rest on reports of unusual pre-9/11 trading activity in companies whose stock plummeted after the attacks. Some unusual trading did in fact occur, but each such trade proved to have an innocuous explanation. For example, the volume of put options – investments that pay off only when a stock drops in price – surged in the parent companies of United Airlines on September 6 and American Airlines on September 10 – highly suspicious trading on its face.

"Yet, further investigation has revealed that the trading had no connection with 9/11. A single US-based institutional investor with no conceivable ties to al-Qaeda purchased 95 percent of the UAL puts on September 6 as part of a trading strategy that also included buying 115,000 shares of American on September 10. Similarly, much of the seemingly suspicious trading in American on September 10 was traced to a specific US-based options trading newsletter, faxed to its subscribers on Sunday, September 9, which recommended these trades.

"These examples typify the evidence examined by the investigation. The SEC and the FBI, aided by other agencies and the securities industry, devoted enormous resources to investigating this issue, including securing the cooperation of many foreign governments. These investigators have found that the apparently suspicious consistently proved innocuous." (1)

Despite the Commission's explanation, there is considerable evidence challenging their view. Firstly, how could the Commission be so sure that the sole investor they mentioned, while not a member of al-Qaeda, did not have advance knowledge of the attacks? Their report referred to "put options," which are basically bets that stock prices will drop abruptly. The purchaser, who enters a time-specific contract with a seller, does not have to own the stock at the time when the contract is purchased.

There was a 9/11 Commission memorandum "FBI Briefing on Trading" dated 18 August 2003 in which it was suggested that one suspicious trade could be traced back to Wirt Walker 111 (his name was redacted, but he was identified from information that was not redacted), a distant relative of President GW Bush, and a business partner of Marvin Bush, the president's brother. It would appear that Walker was not interviewed by the FBI or the Commission, presumably because he was deemed to have "no conceivable ties to al-Qaeda." This presumption has been challenged by Kevin Ryan, who suggested that "the insider trading evidence indicates that Wirt Walker could be brought up on charges today, for crimes related to 9/11." (2) Although the FBI memorandum in 2003 was classified at the time, it was declassified in a FOIA request in 2009.

One person who studied the put options and challenged the Commission's narrative was Allen Poteshman, professor of Finance at the University of Illinois, who published an analysis in 2006 of the airline stock option trades preceding the attacks. His study came to the conclusion that an indicator of long put volume was "unusually high which is consistent with informed investors having traded in the option market in advance of the attacks." (3)

Lars Schall, German financial journalist, has noted that between September 6 and 7, the Chicago Board of Option Exchange saw purchases of 4,744 put options on United Airlines, but only 396 call options. Assuming that 4,000 of the options were bought by people with advance knowledge of the imminent attacks, these "insiders" would have profited by almost \$5 million.

- On September 10, 4,516 put options on American Airlines were bought on the Chicago exchange, compared to only 748 calls. Again, there was no news at that point to justify this imbalance; assuming that 4,000 of these options trades represent "insiders", they would represent a gain of about \$4 million.
- [The levels of put options purchased above were more than six times higher than normal.]
- No similar trading in other airlines occurred on the Chicago exchange in the days immediately preceding 9/11. (4)

The president of the German central bank, Bundesbank, Ernst Welteke, reported that a study by his bank indicated that "there are ever clearer signs that there were activities on international financial markets that must have been carried out with the necessary expert knowledge, not only in shares of heavily affected industries such as airlines and insurance companies, but also in gold and oil." (5) His researchers found "almost irrefutable proof of insider trading." (6) As Welteke explained, "if you look at movements in markets before and after the attack, it makes your brow furrow. But it is extremely difficult to really verify it."

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION (SEC) INVESTIGATION

David Callahan, the editor of the US magazine *SmartCEO*, filed a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the SEC about the put options prior to 9/11. The SEC replied to Callahan that "we have been advised that the potentially responsive records have been destroyed." (7) Therefore, we will never know how the SEC and the 9/11 Commission came to their conclusions regarding the 9/11 put options trading for their final report, because relevant documents were not only held back, but destroyed – despite an agreement between the SEC and the National Archive of the United States, whereby the SEC agreed to keep all records for at least 25 years.

Of great concern is that the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported that the SEC, during its investigation, took the unprecedented step of deputizing "hundreds, if not thousands, of key players in the private sector." (8): "In a two-page statement issued to 'all securities-related entities' nationwide, the SEC asked companies to designate senior personnel who appreciate 'the sensitive nature' of the case and can be relied upon to 'exercise appropriate discretion' as 'point' people linking government investigators and the industry." The requested information was to be held in strictest confidence, "on a need-to-know basis."

In his book "Crossing the Rubicon", former Los Angeles Police Department detective Mike Ruppert explained the SEC's unprecedented move to deputize:

"What happens when you deputize someone in a national security or criminal investigation is that you make it illegal for them to disclose publicly what they know... In effect, they become government agents and are controlled by government regulations rather than their own conscience. In fact, they can be thrown in jail without a hearing if they talk publicly.

"I have seen this implied threat time and again with federal investigations, intelligence agents, and even members of the United States Congress who are bound so tightly by secrecy oaths and agreements that they are not even able to disclose criminal activities

inside the government for fear of incarceration." (9)

As noted in the following chapter on the Anthrax Attacks, this was the same tactic employed by the FBI. As Professor Francis Boyle stated, "this may be why there is nothing but an FBI-imposed 'deafening silence' coming from the US life-scientist community on the terrorist anthrax attacks."(10)

Researcher and author Mark Gaffney has challenged the transparency of the SEC operation, by asking: "If the trading was truly 'innocuous,' as the [Commission] report states, then why did the SEC muzzle potential whistleblowers by deputizing everyone involved with its investigation? The likely answer is that so many players on Wall Street were involved that the SEC could not risk an open process, for fear of exposing the unthinkable. This would explain why the SEC limited the flow of information to those with a "need to know," which, of course, means that very few participants in the SEC investigation had the full picture. It would also explain why the SEC ultimately named no names. All of which hints at the true and frightening extent of criminal activity on Wall Street in the days and hours before 9/11. The SEC was like a surgeon who opens a patient on the operating room table to remove a tumour, only to sew him back up again after finding that the cancer has metastasized through the system." (11)

A propos criminal activity on Wall Street, it is interesting to note that: "Wall Street, on the day the planes slammed into the World Trade Towers, was on the cusp of being exposed by the New York State Attorney General, Eliot Spitzer, as the orchestrator of a fraud of unprecedented proportion against the investing public. That investigation was stalled for more than six months." (12)

To conclude this section on the SEC, the magazine *Slate* reported that two years after the 9/11 attacks, neither the Chicago Board Options Exchange nor the Securities and Exchange Commission would make any comment about their investigations into insider trading before 9/11. "Neither has announced any conclusion. The SEC has not filed any complaint alleging illegal activity, nor has the Justice Department announced any investigation or prosecution.... So, unless the SEC decides to file a complaint—unlikely at this late stage—we may never know what they learned about terror trading." (13)

MORE EVIDENCE

Researcher Kyle Hence revealed that "analysts also noted that though the insurance sector was one of the strongest in a depressed stock market, there were huge spikes in put options in Marsh & McLennan and in Citigroup. Marsh & McLennan, the biggest insurance broker, was a World Trade Centre tenant with 1,700 employees. It also saw, next to UAL, the highest spike in put options; thus you have a confluence of facts that, in the minds of many experienced traders and experts, amounts to unequivocal evidence of foul play. Clearly traders placed bets based on sure-fire insider prior knowledge. The odds against this happening randomly or coincidentally are astronomical; probably incalculable."

Kyle Hence further stated that "according to Phil Erlanger, a former Senior Technical Analyst with Fidelity, and founder of a Florida firm that tracks short selling and options trading, insiders made off with billions (not mere millions) in profits by betting on the fall of stocks they knew would tumble in the aftermath of the WTC and Pentagon attacks. Andreas von Bulow, a former member of the German Parliament, once responsible for the oversight of the German secret services, estimated that profits by insider traders were \$15 billion. *CBS* offered a far more conservative figure when it

reported (Sept 26) that "at least seven countries are dissecting suspicious trades that may have netted more than \$100 million in profits." (14) Regardless of estimates, to Dylan Ratigan of *Bloomberg Business News*, the evidence was compelling; "This is the worst case of insider trading ever." (15)

Lars Schall has referred to further evidence of insider trading "provided by Catherine Austin Fitts, a former managing director and member of the board of the Wall Street investment bank Dillon, Read & Co, Inc (now part of UBS): "In that category of people who benefit from 9/11 are also the arms manufacturer Raytheon, whose share price gained directly from the 9/11 attacks. Trading of the shares of Raytheon, the producer of Tomahawk and Patriot missiles (and parent company of E-systems, whose clients include the National Security Agency and CIA), experienced an abrupt six-time increase of call option purchases on the day immediately before September 11.

The outright purchase of call options implies the expectation that a stock price will rise. In the first week after 9/11, when the New York Stock Exchange opened again, the value of Raytheon actually shot up considerably. Looking at the development of the stock price, the impression is a very weak performance before the attacks at just under \$25 on September 10 and then a considerable increase up to \$34,80 on September 27, 2001." (16)

Schall also noted that "many other companies affected directly by the 9/11 attacks also experienced massive shares trading just prior to the attacks. For example, Merrill Lynch & Co, with headquarters near the Twin Towers, saw 12,215 October \$45 put options bought in the four trading days before the attacks; the previous average volume in those shares had been 252 contracts per day (a 1200% increase). When trading resumed, Merrill's shares fell from \$46.88 to \$41.50; assuming that 11,000 option contracts were bought by "insiders", their profit would have been about \$5.5 million.

UNUSUAL FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS IN THE WORLD TRADE CENTER, FIVE MINUTES BEFORE THE FIRST ATTACK

Mark Gaffney raised another issue ignored by the Commission, which was the approximately 400 computer hard drives found by workmen in the ruins of the WTC. "According to Reuters and CNN, in the period after 9/11, US credit card, telecommunications and accounting firms hired a German company named Convar to recoup data from the damaged hard drives." (17)

Gaffney described how "Convar got the contract because, two years before, it had developed a proprietary method for recovering data using a cutting edge laser scanning technology. As of December 2001, Convar had examined 39 hard drives and in most cases succeeded in recovering 100% of the data. The company was specifically searching for encryption keys, indicating a financial record. Convar found evidence stored on the drives of "an unexplained surge in transactions prior to the attacks." Convar director Peter Henschel told CNN that "unusually large sums of money, perhaps more than \$100 million, were rushed through the computers as the disaster unfolded...The suspicion is that insider information about the attack was used to send financial transaction commands and authorizations in the belief that amidst all the chaos the criminals would have a good head start....Of course it's possible that Americans went on an absolute shopping binge, that Tuesday morning. But at this point there are many transactions that cannot be accounted for." After the initial story by CNN and Reuters, the issue of the WTC hard drives disappeared from the news, and nothing has been heard since. (18)

Henschel's comments were later confirmed by a Deutsche Bank New York branch employee who survived the attacks. The whistleblower, who insisted on remaining anonymous for his own protection, contacted Mike Ruppert and told him that "about five minutes before the attack the entire Deutsche Bank computer system had been taken over by something external that no one in the office recognized, and every file was downloaded at lightning speed to an unknown location". (19)

Richard Wagner, a data retrieval expert at Convar, said illegal transfers of more than \$100 million might have been made immediately before and during the disaster.

"There is a suspicion that some people had advance knowledge of the approximate time of the plane crashes in order to move out amounts exceeding \$100 million," Wagner said. "They thought that the records of their transactions could not be traced after the main frames were destroyed." (20)

How extraordinary is it that nothing further has been heard about precisely what information was retrieved from those hard drives? Why did the Commission fail to mention them?

Notes

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CHAPTER 9

THE ANTHRAX ATTACKS

Following on the heels of the 9/11 attacks, America experienced further trauma shortly afterwards, in the form of a number of letters sent out containing anthrax. It would be hard to overstate the level of fear, as "even the most humble and obscure person living in the most remote location could never be sure that a piece of junk mail in the letterbox had not brushed up against an envelope teeming with lethal anthrax spores." (1)

Although anthrax is not a good terrorist weapon, as it is not contagious, it is an excellent weapon for the battlefield where an army can be sprayed with it. However, it is also a very effective choice as a means of creating mass panic, which is precisely what the anthrax letters achieved. Victims of the letters were identified between October 3 and November 20. At least twenty two people were infected, half with cutaneous infection and half due to inhalation, which resulted in five fatalities. After the death of the first victim, Robert Stevens, on October 5, the *Washington Post* reported that people were so "jittery" they were "on their knees begging for drugs" i.e. Cipro, which is the most effective anti-biotic for anthrax infection.

One can well understand the concern of the general public, but it is curious, to say the least, that an anthrax attack was so clearly anticipated in the period leading up to it. Graeme MacQueen (retired professor of religious studies at McMaster University, Ontario) noted that Brigitte Nacos revealed in her book *"Mass-Mediated Terrorism"* that there were seventy six references in *The New York Times* to biological or chemical terrorism, twenty seven of which specifically included anthrax between September 12 and October 3. For example, an article on September 27 was titled "Anthrax Scare Prompts Run on an Antibiotic." (2) As MacQueen emphasised, "that is to say, there were a plethora of bioweapons warnings in *The New York Times* before there was supposed to have been any knowledge of an actual anthrax attack."

MacQueen also noted that Judicial Watch, a public interest group, filed a series of lawsuits against US government agencies in 2002, stating that "in October (2001) press reports revealed that White House staff had been on a regimen of the powerful antibiotic Cipro since the 9/11 attacks. Judicial Watch wants to know why White House workers, including President Bush, began taking the drug nearly a month before anthrax was detected on Capitol Hill." (3)

Further confirmation of government insider awareness of an imminent anthrax terror event was provided by Richard Cohen, a *Washington Post* columnist, who wrote in 2008 that "I had been told soon after September 11 to secure Cipro, the antidote to anthrax. The tip had come in a roundabout way from a high government official and I immediately acted on it." (4)

Initially, al-Qaeda and Iraq were the primary suspects. In a *Newsweek* poll on 21 October, 63% of those questioned attributed the anthrax attacks at least in part to bin Laden's organization. (5) The poll coincided with the synchronistic publication of *"Germs: Biological Weapons and America's Secret War"*, in which authors Miller, Broad and Egelberg hypothesized that Iraq might use a surrogate terrorist group to deliver a bioweapon to a particular target.

Further muddying of this particular water was provided by a report stating that alleged 9/11 ringleader, Mohamed Atta, had met with an Iraqi diplomat / intelligence agent in Prague in April 2001. For example, in an interview with *NBC's Meet the Press* on 9 December 2001, Vice-President Dick Cheney announced that "it's been pretty well confirmed that (Atta) did go to Prague, and he did meet with a senior official of the

Iraqi intelligence service last April, several months before the attack." Unfortunately for Cheney's story, several official organizations (including the FBI) investigated the possibility that such a meeting occurred, and they all concluded that the evidence did not support the likelihood of such a meeting. (6)

James Woolsey, a former Director of Central Intelligence, was vociferous in blaming Iraq for both 9/11 and the anthrax attacks. Attempts to blame Iraq reached a climax on *ABC News* on 29 October 2001, when news anchor Brian Ross cited sources which declared that the letter sent to Tom Daschle (discussed below) contained bentonite and that Iraq was the only country known to have used this additive. However, two days later, Ross admitted to his audience that bentonite had now been ruled out after further tests. (7)

Curiously, claims of Iraqi involvement undermined the US government's case that al-Qaeda was behind the attacks. As an *Observer* article on 14 October 2001 stated, quoting an anonymous CIA source, "they aren't making this stuff in caves in Afghanistan." (8)

Moreover, the anthrax attacks must be understood in the context of the reaction to the events of 9/11. Six days later on September 17, Attorney General John Ashcroft announced that he intended to introduce dramatic changes to the principle of civil liberty through the Patriot Act and that he wanted Congress to "enact these important antiterrorism measures this week."

Tom Daschle was Senate Majority Leader and, as arguably the most powerful Democrat in the Senate, would have led the discussion over the passage of the Patriot Act, while Patrick Leahy, as Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, was responsible for addressing the issue of civil liberties throughout this process. One observer of the pressure on the Senate to pass the Patriot Act quickly was journalist John Lancaster, who noted "the blistering pace of the legislation through Congress." (9)

In the weeks after 9/11, Ashcroft made a number of speeches, implicitly threatening that the Democrats would be responsible for any further attacks, due to their obstruction of the passage of the Patriot Act. Leahy responded by saying that while wanting to cooperate, he was not prepared to rubber-stamp any legislation because "if the Constitution is shredded, the terrorists win." (10)

The pressure applied by government hawks did not abate, with the *Washington Post* reporting on 1 October 2001 that "Bush administration officials said yesterday there will likely be more terrorist attacks in the US, possibly including chemical and biological warfare, and they urged Congress to expand police powers by 5 October to counter the threat." This deadline passed, as both Daschle and Leahy were forlornly seeking reassurances from the White House over some specific issues, including "a provision setting out rules under which law enforcement agencies could share wiretap and grand jury information with intelligence agencies." (11) The issues raised by Daschle and Leahy were hardly unreasonable prevarication, because the obfuscations between the CIA and FBI, arising out of "the Wall" clearly played an enormous part in enabling the 9/11 attacks to take place. (See Chapter 5)

What followed next was straight out of a sci-fi horror film: shortly after the 5 October deadline had passed, Senators Leahy and Daschle were sent letters containing anthrax spores, with their letters posted between 6-9 October. As Patrick Pasin pondered, "how odd that al-Qaeda and Iraq would have a special hatred of Democratic senators who slowed down the Patriot Act!" (12) This apparent oddity is perfectly understandable, as explained by Graeme MacQueen: "There is no mystery as to why the Senate was targeted rather than the House of Representatives. In the House, the Republicans had a comfortable majority. It was almost impossible for the Patriot Act to fail in the House.

But the Senate, through a number of accidents, had ended up with a Democratic majority. It was a majority of one, but still a majority...The Senate vote was essential: both chambers had to pass the bill before it could become law." (13) Surely this explains why the two most powerful Democrats in the Senate were targeted: intimidating them would inevitably persuade other Democrats to tow the Bush administration line.

Another commentator, Paul Craig Roberts (who served as Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Economic Policy under President Reagan and then associate editor of the Wall Street Journal) observed that "It was obvious to any person familiar with the techniques that governments use to erode liberty by destroying the protection given to citizens by law, that the purpose of the anthrax letters, especially the letters to senators Patrick Leahy and Tom Daschle, was to raise the fear level in order to guarantee the passage of the tyrannical Patriot Act." (14)

As a result of these two letters, the Senate building was closed down, which caused further panic and fear. No doubt the two letters were sent to elicit precisely this reaction among the elected members of the Senate. When Bush finally signed the bill into law on 26 October 2001, it is noteworthy that he invoked the anthrax attacks as the justification for the curtailment of civil rights. (15)

ANOTHER INSIDE JOB?

Francis Boyle is Professor of International Law at the University of Illinois and was responsible for drafting the Biological Weapons Anti-Terrorism Act of 1989, which was the American implementing legislation for the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention. He pulled no punches when he observed that:

"starting in October 2001, the world witnessed terrorist anthrax attacks on the American government that were obviously designed to shut down the US Congress at a very critical moment in America's history as a Republic. It was during this precise moment that Congress should have been in session, making vital decisions, exercising strict oversight of the executive branch of government...Such US Congressional oversight did not occur because of these terrorist anthrax attacks. Even worse yet, President Bush and Attorney General Ashcroft deviously manipulated these terrorist attacks on Congress in order to stampede the American people and the US Congress into enacting into law the totalitarian USA Patriot Act with almost no congressional input whatsoever." (16)

Indeed, Representative Ron Paul has stated that hardly any members of Congress read the draft bill before it was voted into law. He is quoted by Kelly Patricia O'Meara in an article in *Insight* magazine saying that the bill was not made available to members of Congress for review before the vote, "at least I couldn't get it. They played all kinds of games, kept the House in session all night and it was a very complicated bill. Maybe a handful of staffers actually read it, but the bill definitely was not available to members before the vote." (17)

In the same article, Bernie Sanders, an Independent in the House of Representatives, shared Paul's concerns saying, "I took an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States, and I'm concerned that voting for this legislation fundamentally violates that oath. And the contents of the legislation have not been subjected to serious hearings or searching examination."

Boyle's seemingly wild accusation against the Bush regime was based on his understanding of the composition of the anthrax spores that had been sent to Daschle, which was "extremely sophisticated: super-weapons-grade anthrax with a special treatment designed to eliminate electrostatic charges so it could float in the air."(18)

This understanding of the quality of the anthrax is also shared by bio-terrorism expert Leonard Cole, (author of *The Anthrax Letters*) who wrote that "the anthrax in the letter sent to Senator Daschle was found to have been of an unusually fine grade. When the envelope was opened in the senator's office on October 15, the powder floated out as if lighter than air." (19)

Francis Boyle concluded that "the only scientists who would have had the capability to manufacture this would be individuals who either are currently employed, or who had been employed, by the US government's bio-warfare programme. Arguably, they were currently employed since they would have had to have access to one of the US government's high-containment bio-warfare labs in order to process and assemble these bio-terrorism weapons." (20) Boyle's view was also endorsed at a workshop at the Council for Responsible Genetics on 3 November 2001 by Jonathan King, Professor of Microbiology at MIT. (21). Boyle concluded that the FBI was complicit in covering-up the people involved in the attacks. He had contacted Marion Bowman, a senior FBI official specializing in counter-terrorism, who told him that they were co-ordinating their investigation with Fort Detrick, even though Boyle warned him that he should not trust the people there. "My suspicion about Fort Detrick being the source of the biological agent behind these terrorist anthrax attacks was later confirmed." (22)

Boyle then alleged further FBI malfeasance: "Despite my explicit informational warning to the FBI, soon thereafter the FBI authorized the destruction of the US government's anthrax culture collection at Ames, Iowa - despite the fact that it had been determined that the substance used in the terrorist anthrax attacks on the US Congress was Ames-strain anthrax coming from the US bio-warfare lab at Fort Detrick. At the very least, this appears to be a cover-up orchestrated by the FBI." (23)

Boyle then pointed out that "if independent life-scientists at the CRG (Council for Responsible Genetics) had had access to the Ames Anthrax collection, they could have performed genetic reconstructions of the Daschle letter and the Leahy letter in order to pin-point precisely where, when, and from whom these bio-agents had originated." He further stated that "the trail of genetic evidence would have led directly back to a secret but officially sponsored US government bio-warfare program that was illegal and criminal, in violation of the Biological Weapons Convention and the revised Biological Weapons Anti-Terrorism Act of 1989...I believe the FBI knows exactly who was behind these terrorist anthrax attacks...and that the culprits were US government-related scientists involved in a criminal US government bio warfare program that violated both the BWC and US government domestic legislation implementing the same." (24)

Boyle concluded his clinical critique of FBI shenanigans by noting that "as part of this ongoing cover-up, the FBI went out and retained every independent life-scientist it could locate as part of its fictitious investigation, and then swore them all to secrecy so that they cannot publicly comment on the investigation or give their expert opinion to the American people about who really was behind these terrorist anthrax attacks upon the American Congress. This probably explains the FBI-imposed deafening silence of the US life-scientist community on the terrorist anthrax attacks - except for a few courageous and independently-minded individuals such as Professor King of MIT (mentioned above) and Dr Rosenberg (co-author of a paper to be discussed below)" (25)

THE FBI SEARCH FOR "A LONE WOLF"

With the growing realisation that neither Iraq nor al-Qaeda were behind the letters, the FBI began to search for a disgruntled lone wolf perpetrator within the US. An early suspect, Steven Hatfill, was a biochemical expert who worked for a private defence

contractor, that is until he lost his security clearance in March 2002, possibly due his involvement in "special operations of an unspecified nature" in Africa in the 1980s. (26). In August 2002, Attorney General John Ashcroft named Hatfill as a "person of interest" and he was then investigated aggressively and publicly by the FBI. Hatfill denied any involvement, stating that "this assassination of my character appears to be part of a government-run effort to show the American people that it is proceeding vigorously and successfully with the anthrax investigation." (27) He sued the Justice Department for libel and eventually received \$4.6 million in compensation.

The FBI then moved its attention to Dr Bruce Ivins, who had been working on an anthrax vaccine at the US Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases (USAMRIID) at Fort Detrick in Maryland. By 2008, the FBI had decided that Ivins was guilty, but he was never charged as he committed suicide in July 2008. Somewhat surprisingly, as reported by *Wall Street Journal* journalist, Edward Epstein, "no autopsy was performed and there was no suicide note." (28).

Journalist Brad Friedman noted, in a *Guardian* article, that there was little doubt that Ivins was a troubled man. He was being hounded by investigators who showed photos of anthrax victims to his daughter and told her "your father did this." The FBI also attempted to bribe his son with \$2.5million to turn against his father. (29) Such pressure tactics would no doubt have caused distress to anyone, but whether it was enough to induce him to end his life is open to question. Furthermore, notwithstanding the circumstantial evidence linking Ivins to the attacks (to be discussed below), it's also worth considering an email he sent to a colleague in January 2008. in which he stated that "Dick Cheney scares me. The Patriot Act is so unconstitutional it's not even funny, [it] is dreadful. What happened to rights, freedoms and liberties? I'm voting for Obama!" (30) It's hard to see how the writer of this email could also be the same person who targeted Leahy and Daschle to ensure the swift passage of the very same Patriot Act.

Furthermore, Ivins "was a registered Democrat, according to the Fredrick County, MD, Board of Elections. He had been registered there since 1982 and records indicate that he voted in "every election since 1996," including Democratic primaries, according to the official who responded to a request from West Virginia-based radio host Bob Kincaid." (31). Given his liberal views, is it likely he would have sent the anthrax spores to Democratic senators?

EVIDENCE AGAINST BRUCE IVINS

So, what was the evidence incriminating Ivins? Leonard Cole (32) refers to Jeffrey Taylor, Attorney for the District of Columbia, who presented seven items of presumed evidence, summarising the governments contention of Ivin's guilt:

- 1) The first was the genetically unique connection between the anthrax spores in the letters and those that Ivins had developed and maintained in his laboratory at the US Army Medical Research Institute in Fort Detrick, Maryland.
- 2) Ivins was one of few scientists with the knowledge to produce the highly-concentrated pure spores used in the attacks.
- 3) His work record showed that prior to the letters being posted, Ivins had uncharacteristically worked alone in his laboratory late into the night.
- 4) Ivins had made threats in recent group therapy sessions to kill people who had wronged him.
- 5) He had a history of mental health problems. In mid-2001, he e-mailed a co-worker, stating that he had paranoid, delusional thoughts, possibly triggered by the failure of an

anthrax vaccine that he was working on at the time.

6) He was a prolific writer to Congress and the media (the targets of the anthrax letters) and often used false names to disguise his identity as the sender. Investigators had found 68 letters to such entities in his house in November 2007.

7) The pre-stamped envelopes used in the attacks contained printing defects that limited the time and locations of their availability, having been sold only in late 2001 in Maryland and Virginia post offices, including the one in Frederick, Maryland, where Ivins maintained a post box.

When Taylor was challenged by reporters over the lack of direct evidence. He "acknowledged that much of the evidence was circumstantial, but that it was compelling and, he believed, would have proved the case beyond a reasonable doubt."

With respect to Ivins' handwriting and the anthrax letters, Taylor stated that "we examined handwriting samples but then there was no comparison made or a specific identification of the handwriting...we did not have a scientifically valid conclusion that we thought would lead us to be able to admit that in evidence." Leonard Cole was clearly surprised by this statement, and wrote that "the absence of a comparison of handwriting samples seems curious." (33)

When Taylor was asked about what motive Ivins may have had, his conjectured response was that Ivins was apparently concerned about the closing down of the vaccination program he was working on and that by sending anthrax through the post, he believed he could create "a situation where people all of a sudden realize the need to have this vaccine." This view was later challenged by Ivins' attorney, Paul Kemp, who described it as speculative, a considerable understatement, while also noting that there was no evidence that Ivins had purchased the envelopes with the specific defects or that he travelled to Princeton to post them. (34)

In relation to point 3 above, Dr Henry Heine, a former supervisor of Ivins at USAMRIID, said that the FBI estimate of thirty four hours of his unaccounted for time, in which they considered he was able to prepare the anthrax spores, was "more than 8,000 hours short of what he would have needed to grow the anthrax" from the liquid version kept at the facility. Furthermore, he added that such a laboratory procedure would not have been possible without attracting the attention of his colleagues. (35)

Shortly after the death of Ivins, there was a House and Senate Judiciary Committee Hearing into "Amerithrax" (the FBI investigation) in September 2008, during which FBI Director, Robert Mueller was questioned. His testimony did not convince Congressman Rush Holt (Chair of the Congressional Select Intelligence Oversight Panel) who, as noted by Cole, "emphatically rejects the notion that the case has been resolved. Maybe Irvins was the perpetrator, he said, but it may also be that he is not the culprit or not the sole culprit." Cole also quotes Patrick Leahy who supported Holt's reservations stating that "I do not believe in any way, shape or manner that he is the only person involved in this attack on Congress and the American people...I believe there are others involved, whether as accessories or accessories after the fact. I believe there are others who can be charged with murder." (36)

WHAT OTHER AGENCIES COULD HAVE BEEN INVOLVED?

Holt declared his intention to hold his own hearings into the attacks with Attorney Barry Kissin responding to his invitation for new evidence. Kissin noted that Congressman

Nadler had asked an extremely challenging question to Mueller during the hearing. Namely, why the FBI had ruled out other facilities that (unlike Ft. Detrick) actually have the equipment and personnel to prepare dry, silica-coated anthrax. These facilities are: 1) the US Army's Dugway Proving Ground and 2) the Battelle Corporation, the private CIA contractor that conducts substantial research into highly complex strains of anthrax. Kissin showed that either of these facilities could have been the culprits behind the attacks. After invoking generalities to assure Nadler that the FBI had traced the anthrax back to Bruce Ivins' vial (which didn't answer the question), Mueller's responded that: "I don't know the answers to those questions as to how we eliminated Dugway and Battelle. I'll have to get back to you at some point."

It took the FBI seven months to respond to Nadler's request: "The FBI was able to track the transfer of sub samples from the flask located at USAMRIID to two other facilities. Using various methods, the FBI investigated the two facilities that received samples from the parent flask and eliminated individuals from those facilities as suspects because, even if a laboratory facility had the equipment and personnel to make anthrax powder, this powder would not match the spores in the mailed envelopes if that lab had never received a transfer of anthrax from the parent flask." (37)

At this point, the reader might scratch their head at such nonsensical word-play and as Kissin pointed out, "on its face, the FBI's response is absurd. The response literally says that after identifying "two facilities" that received samples of anthrax from the USAMRIID (Bruce Ivins') flask, these facilities were excluded as possible sources of the attack anthrax because they "never received" anthrax from said flask. Could it be that the FBI had lost the plot or was this a disingenuous response, carried out to try and exasperate and stifle any further questioning over this issue?"

Kissin further noted that "Bruce Ivins' 'Reference Material Receipt Record' with respect to the anthrax designated RMR-1029 was posted on the internet. The original copy of said record is in the custody of the FBI. Said record documents that during the summer of 2001, Bruce Ivins sent samples of RMR-1029 to both Battelle and Dugway.....Given that both Battelle and Dugway had RMR-1029, Battelle and Dugway are no less incriminated than Bruce Ivins by the science underlying Amerithrax."

MacQueen has emphasised that "Kissin argued that one of the chief suspects in the attacks ought to be Battelle Memorial Institute, the largest R&D (Research and Development) company in the world, which regularly does work for the CIA and the US military and was involved in anthrax weaponisation projects that began in the second half of the 1990s. He noted that Battelle had the facilities for working with dry anthrax spores, while USAMRIID did not... Kissin also showed how, throughout the anthrax investigation, the FBI had taken steps to keep Battelle's name out of the discussion." (38).

On 5 August 2008, a week after the death of Ivins, Richard Spertzel, who worked as a chief UNSCOM inspector, and had also worked at Fort Detrick for 18 years, where he served as Deputy Commander of USAMRIID, published an op-ed in *The Wall Street Journal* entitled "Bruce Ivins Wasn't the Anthrax Culprit." He wrote:

"Let's start with the anthrax in the letters to Sens. Tom Daschle and Patrick Leahy. The spores could not have been produced at USAMRIID, where Ivins worked, without many other people being aware of it. Furthermore, the equipment to make such a product does not exist at the Institute. The multiple disciplines and technologies required to make the anthrax in this case do not exist at USAMRIID. Inhalation studies are conducted at the Institute, but they are done using liquid preparations, not powdered products. The FBI spent between 12 and 18 months trying "to reverse engineer" (make a replica of) the anthrax in the letters sent to Messrs. Daschle and Leahy without success,

according to FBI news releases.” Another nail in the coffin for the theory that Ivins could have engineered anthrax spores in his spare time at work.

THE FBI NOT VINDICATED BY SCIENTIFIC REVIEWS

Hoping to be vindicated in its scientific methodology of how it had proven Ivins' culpability, the FBI asked the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) to review its findings, which submitted its final report in 2011. Its remit was quite limited as it was not authorised to examine any of the relevant anthrax spores or equipment used in its preparation, but was restricted to reviewing reports by others, as well as interviewing a number of relevant witnesses.

The NAS was further restricted from carrying out a full investigation in a number of ways. For example, they found out late that there was a considerable amount of relevant but classified material that they would not be able to view. Furthermore, although the NAS asked the FBI to provide written evidence of how they drew their scientific conclusions, the FBI failed to provide any. Notwithstanding this clear (and very unscientific) obstruction, MacQueen has shown how the NAS committee's findings weakened the FBI case against Ivins. Most significantly, the FBI claim that the deadly spores that were let loose shortly after 9/11 could be traced back to Ivins' flask of RMR-1029, which was kept under his care at USAMRIID. The NAS committee did not rule this out as a possibility, but pointed out that the posted anthrax spores could have come from a different source altogether. It concluded that "although the FBI's scientific data provided leads as to the origin of anthrax spores in the letters, the committee found that the data did not rule out other possible sources." (Such as Dugway and Battelle mentioned above). The NAS committee ultimately decided that the evidence against Ivins was inconclusive. (39)

MORE EVIDENCE AGAINST THE FBI CASE

A 2012 article written by Martin Hugh-Jones, Barbara Rosenberg (mentioned earlier) and Stuart Jacobsen, published by the *Journal of Bioterrorism and Biodefense*. reached an even more damning assessment of the FBI's handling of the scientific evidence than the NAS Report. Notably the FBI had referred to the lead author, Hugh-Jones, in the FBI's Amerithrax Investigative Summary as a "renowned anthrax expert." (40)

These authors argued that:

"The presence, shown by FBI analysis, of the two extraneous elements, tin and silicon, together in the attack spores favours the silicone micro encapsulation hypothesis. Micro encapsulation, a process that would require special expertise and sophisticated facilities, could explain the presence, location and amounts of both elements. At least two government programs, at DARPA and Dugway, had projects requiring microencapsulated pathogens or simulants. Both Dugway and Battelle, a sub-contractor there, had access to *Bacillus anthracis* from the presumptive parental flask RMR 1029. Both had the expertise to make anthrax spore powders, both – and perhaps other government supported laboratories as well – could have made the attack spores legally for institutions conducting biodefense activities that required microencapsulated spores."

Hugh-Jones et al further state that (long quote from this important article to follow):

"Many US agencies were involved in biological antiterrorism activities at the time of the anthrax attacks. The Chemical and Biological Defence Program initiated in FY 2000

a “broad CB countermeasures program to enhance ability to recognize, prevent, respond to, mitigate, and recover from a CB terrorist incident”. There had already been an epidemic of hoax anthrax letters. CIA scientists possessed Ames anthrax and were working with other government agencies and outside contractors [including Battelle] in the defensive biowarfare program; former biological weaponeer Bill Patrick wrote a classified paper about anthrax sent by mail, dated February 1999, for SAIC (Science Applications International Corporation) under CIA contract. Nonetheless, the CIA issued a statement that they were unaware of any project to assess the impact of anthrax sent through the mail; similarly, the FBI claimed to have been blindsided by a letter attack.

Both the Dugway laboratory and Battelle Memorial Institute, a sub-contractor at Dugway, had extensive experience in making Bacillus spore powders; both had access to Bacillus anthracis genetically matching the attack spores; both could have made the attack spores legally for institutions conducting biodefense activities that required microencapsulated spores.

The evidence indicates that live, microencapsulated Bacillus anthracis spore powders probably existed legitimately at the time of the attacks and were the likely sources of the anthrax in the attack letters. A number of individuals would have had access to such materials, whether legally or illegally. For the letter-sender(s), the presence of additives in the powders would have been irrelevant. For the FBI, a real investigation of the presence of additives may have been impossible without ‘off-limits’ intrusion into classified biodefense matters." (41)

MacQueen has suggested that the above view of Hugh-Jones et al that Dugway and Battelle may have made the anthrax spores "legally" and "legitimately" is "actually controversial. I doubt that Boyle would agree, and I'm pretty sure the scientists at USAMRIID would not agree." (42)

Notwithstanding this issue, MacQueen has emphasised, "these weaponized spores would presumably have been accessible to deep insiders in US intelligence and military structures, but they would not have been accessible to Irvins." (43)

Finally, in December 2014, a report by Congress's watchdog agency, the Government Accountability Office (GAO), mirrored the findings of the NAS. GAO's chief scientist, Timothy Persons, noted that contractors hired by the FBI to test and evaluate the anthrax spores relied on poorly designed sampling and statistical methods, and that the FBI needed better science and measurement in order to be more conclusive. (44) Following this report, Representative Rush Holt, whose concerns had led to the study by GAO, concluded that its publication “confirms what I have often said—that the FBI’s definitive conclusions about the accuracy of their scientific findings in the Amerithrax case are not, in fact, definitive,” (45)

WHISTLEBLOWER SILENCED

Last, but not least, a further nail in the coffin of "Amerithrax" was provided by Richard Lambert, the FBI agent who led the investigation between 2002-06, (after which time he transferred to Knoxville to run the FBI office there until his retirement in 2012). He had left "Amerithrax" after sending a report to the FBI'S Deputy Director in July 2006 in which he complained that his attempts to run a successful investigation had been marked by intransigence, apathy and error from all sides. After leaving the FBI, Lambert held a security job at the Energy Department's Oak Ridge National Laboratory. However, on November 8, 2012, Lambert received an email from Patrick Kelley, an

FBI attorney and ethics official. The email accused Lambert of violating 18 U.S.C.207 (c), which bars some former federal employees from contacting current ones for a year after leaving their jobs. The email found its way into the hands of the FBI and UT-Battelle. On June 10, 2013, UT-Battelle fired Lambert and his security clearance was revoked. Lambert alleges that the email was retaliation for his role in shedding light on the troubled anthrax investigation.

On April 2, 2015, Lambert filed a four-count complaint against the Attorney General, the FBI Director, the Department of Justice, the FBI, unnamed DOJ and FBI officials, and Patrick Kelley. A five-count amended complaint followed on June 2. The Court dismissed the first four counts in February 2016, leaving only Lambert's Bivens action against Kelley. The fifth count was then dismissed on the grounds that it was time-barred having exceeded the one year period for bringing a complaint. While Lambert argued that the year should commence from the time of his complaint, the court stipulated that the year commenced from the point of him being fired. He then counter-argued that the case should be heard in Washington DC (which had a three year time period for bringing forward a case) as Lambert contended that what mattered was where the events occurred that underpinned the suit. He argued that most of the events underpinning his suit happened in D.C., where Kelley had his office. Kelley countered that Tennessee law applies because that's where the Court was sitting. Suffice to say, Lambert's case was dismissed in January 2017, ostensibly because he sought to commence legal proceedings in April 2015, which was more than a year after he was fired in June 2013 and therefore barred by Tennessee's statute of limitations and that he was similarly barred by DC's three year statute. It is significant that Lambert had stated in his original lawsuit that while Ivins may have been the anthrax mailer, the circumstantial case against him would not have been enough to convict him. He also claimed that there was a "wealth" of contrary evidence "which the FBI continues to conceal from Congress and the American people." He further described the case against Ivins as being a "highly selective presentation of the facts" and that there are "genuine doubts" about him being the lone wolf perpetrator. Unfortunately, he was prevented from having the opportunity to present his evidence in a public court hearing. (46)

BRUCE IVINS - A CONVENIENT SCAPEGOAT?

From the above, we may conclude that the scientific and forensic arguments that Ivins was a "lone wolf" perpetrator are clearly very weak to the point of being mere conjecture. USAMRIID did not have the facilities for converting liquid anthrax into dry spores, and that even if it did, it would have required Ivins to have had up to 8000 hours of unobserved time to make the conversion. This is totally implausible as we saw from the evidence of Dr Heine, who was Ivins' supervisor.

We have also seen that the CIA contracted company at Battelle had this facility (as did the Army at Dugway) and that the FBI have deliberately drawn attention away from these two institutions. All that is left is the weak charge that Ivins was behind the letter attacks due to mental health problems and his history of making threats to kill people who had offended him, as well as the letters he had sent to Congress and the media, as mentioned in attorney Jeffrey Taylor's summary of the evidence (points 4-6 above).

It is also worth noting that much of the evidence of his mental health issues was provided on the testimony of a social worker, Jean C. Duley, who had treated Ivins for a number of months in group therapy. However, as it turns out, Duley herself has a criminal history. A physician, bio-terror specialist, and former colleague of Ivins, Meryl Nass raised significant concern about the veracity of Duley's testimony against Ivins on

her blog devoted to the topic. However, one need look no further than an article in *The Washington Post* on 6 August 2008 to realise that the evidence she gave against Ivins in court was not worth the paper it was printed on:

"The counselor he saw for group therapy and biweekly individual sessions, who would eventually tell a judge that he was a "sociopathic, homicidal killer," had a troubled past. Jean C. Duley, who worked until recent days for Comprehensive Counseling Associates in Frederick, is licensed as an entry-level drug counselor and was, according to one of her mentors, allowed to work with clients only under supervision of a more-seasoned professional.

Shortly before she sought a "peace order" against Ivins, Duley had completed 90 days of home detention after a drunken-driving arrest in December, and she has acknowledged drug use in her past."

In the light of this history, her compromised position could have potentially put her in a position for being influenced by others, with authority over her, in order to portray Ivins in a particularly negative manner. Indeed, as *The Washington Post* article above noted, "Ivins angrily told a former colleague that he suspected his therapist was cooperating with the FBI."

There is reason to believe that Ivins had some degree of mental instability (notwithstanding his ability to maintain a highly responsible position within a military biological institute for three decades) and Taylor's evidence above is useful for making Ivins a convenient scapegoat. Nevertheless, the accusations against Ivins deflect attention from pursuing the "deep state" operatives who must, of necessity, have been complicit as well as actively involved in the duplicitous anthrax attacks. It may be that Ivins had a motive for the attacks, (implausible though it seems, in view of his support of the Democrats rather than being a right-wing Republican as well as his opposition to the Patriot Act). There is no denying that he had access to the means (flask RMR-1029), but he most certainly did not have the opportunity to convert the anthrax liquid into dry spores as shown above. For this reason alone, any attempt to prosecute him would have foundered. His suicide was therefore most convenient for the FBI, but there still remains the big question mark as to who was responsible for the anthrax letters?

Notes

- 1) Webster Griffin Tarpley, *9/11 Synthetic Terror*, Progressive Press, 2016, p378
- 2) Graeme MacQueen, *The 2001 Anthrax Deception*, Clarity Press, 2014, p107
- 3) Ibid, p110
- 4) Ibid, p114
- 5) Ibid, p72
- 6) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mohamed_Atta%27s_alleged_Prague_connection
- 7) MacQueen, p80
- 8) Ibid, p75
- 9) Ibid, p50
- 10) Ibid, p52-3
- 11) Ibid, p55
- 12) Patrick Pasin, *The FBI Accomplice of 911*, Talma Studios, p146
- 13) MacQueen, p49-50
- 14) <https://www.paulcraigroberts.org/2015/04/18/anthrax-coverup-exposed-paul-craig-roberts/>
- 15) MacQueen, p57
- 16) Francis A Boyle, *Biowarfare and Terrorism*, Clarity Press, 2005, p13
- 17) *Insight*, 10/11/01

- 18) Boyle, p40
- 19) Leonard A Cole, *The Anthrax Letters*, Skyhorse publishing, 2009, p89
- 20) Boyle, p40
- 21) Ibid, p41
- 22) Ibid, p41
- 23) Ibid, p42-3
- 24) Ibid, p43
- 25) Ibid, p44
- 26) Cole, p194
- 27) Ibid, p195
- 28) *Wall Street Journal*, 24/01/10
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