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Intersecting Facts and Theories about 9/11

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The attacks of September 11th 2001 have resulted in significant changes both in the geopolitical order of nations and in the lives of billions of citizens across the planet. From two wars and growing instability across the Middle East, to the powers that states are exercising upon each other and their citizens, to your removal of tennis shoes at the airport security gate, the forces unleashed on that dark day are still reverberating throughout the world.

In the immediate weeks and months following 9/11, we felt a near-universal sense of horror and intense desire for effective response against the perpetrators of the attacks. We also felt a sense of urgency, as another wave of terror seemed possible at any time. The anthrax scare reinforced the imperative that all other restraining considerations should be swept aside in the interests of protecting lives, and regular terror alerts kept apprehension palpable among policy-makers and the public. The psychology of most citizens across the world's most powerful nation became focused: Islamic terrorism was the new evil, and it demanded an unprecedented response. Aggressive wars were launched, billions in new defense contracts signed, sweeping legislation empowering the executive approved, global and domestic surveillance operations unleashed, and a War President was born.

In this climate there was neither political space nor institutional leadership for a proper forensic examination of what actually happened on September 11th. It would take extended lobbying by increasingly exasperated family members of victims before any official investigation would be undertaken. Nonetheless, prior to, during, and after the tenure of the 9/11 Commission a growing network of researchers developed an increasingly comprehensive map of the situation preceding, during, and following 9/11.

While the researchers involved in this truly *independent* investigation are of varying discipline and credentials, the best of them have done a highly competent job of: (1) employing only credible sources to assemble as complete a picture of 9/11-related facts as is possible without access to classified material, and (2) conservatively synthesizing the implications of these facts in comparison to the conclusions of the 9/11 Commission investigation. The best of these researchers have reached a disturbing conclusion: the events of 9/11 were the result of either passive complicity among certain elements within the Bush administration and the terrorists, or, more likely, a self-inflicted wound on the nation orchestrated by such elements to create a new reality in geopolitical affairs.

One of the challenges in comprehending the circumstances of 9/11 is the sheer volume of material spanning two decades that must be studied for one to become comfortable reaching any conclusions. Intelligent people new to this controversy feel a sense of drowning when they begin to study what happened on 9/11. Having explored this subject deeply, I thought it might be useful to create a summary accessible to larger numbers of people. That is the purpose of what follows.

In the chart below, forty-two facts of significance are listed, intersecting three possible theories about the nature of 9/11. The three alternative theories considered are:

1. the official conspiracy theory in which nineteen Islamic radicals caught the US off guard;
2. the theory that elements within the Bush administration knew of the impending attacks and allowed them to happen; and
3. the theory that such officials architected the attacks and caused them to happen.
4. Based upon the details behind the facts, I have assigned each fact a degree of compatibility—**sensible**, **plausible**, or **suspicious**—to each theory. Below the table are summaries of the reasoning employed to assign compatibility, along with references for interested readers I conclude with responses to four objections that might be raised to this analysis.

Sensible		19 hijackers caught us off guard	Let it happen	Create new reality
Plausible				
Suspicious				
1	Origin of Al-Qaeda from CIA-backed Mujahedeen			
2	Angry Islamists want to kill Americans			
3	Previous terror attacks attributed to al-Qaeda			
4	Historical relationship of Bush officials and clandestine operations			
5	Similarity between PNAC agenda and 9/11 aftermath			
6	Bill Clinton's failure to neutralize bin Laden			
7	George W. Bush's negligence in dealing with bin Laden			
8	Some alleged hijackers may have flight trained at U.S. military bases			
9	Lack of response to warnings from 11 countries about attacks			
10	Lack of response to warnings from U.S. agents about attacks			
11	Cheney's early 2001 assignment over counter-terrorism and war games			
12	Rumsfeld's mid 2001 assignment over NORAD response to hijackings			
13	WTC security anomalies			
14	Plan for invasion of Afghanistan in place on 9/10			
15	Allegedly devout Muslim hijackers out partying prior to 9/11			
16	Options trading in days preceding 9/11			
17	Jeb Bush's preparation for Florida State of Emergency			
18	Funder of Atta meeting with top U.S. officials during week of 9/11			
19	Wargames underway simulating hijacked airlines			
20	Slow Bush and Secret Service response to attacks			
21	Third large airplane in restricted airspace over Manhattan during attacks			
22	Lack of Pentagon response to incoming aerial threat			
23	Failure of air defense to intercept hijackings			
24	Demolition-like collapse of WTC 1, 2 and 7			
25	Anomalies surrounding Pentagon attack			
26	Molten metal at WTC site for weeks			
27	Immediate destruction of evidence at WTC sites			
28	Initiation of broad domestic surveillance programs			
29	Disappearance of Cheney for weeks			
30	Hijacker names missing from flight manifests			
31	Several alleged hijackers discovered alive and well			
32	Destruction of air traffic control tape from 9/11			
33	Sole confession of bin Laden in questionable video			
34	Shutdown of Congress by domestic military strain of anthrax			
35	Silencing of whistleblowers			
36	Resistance to 9/11 investigations			
37	Resistance to testimony under oath			
38	Promotion of key counterterrorism officials post 9/11			
39	Failure to catch bin Laden			
40	Promotion of threat psychology			
41	Lack of attention to Homeland Security hotspots			
42	Numerous obvious, key omissions from 9/11 Commission report			

Discussion of Facts and Theories

Let us briefly describe each of these facts—along a rough chronology—and the basis for assigning compatibility with the three theories proposed to explain them.

1. The Origin of al-Qaeda from the CIA-backed Mujahedeen

Working in tight collaboration with its Pakistani counterpart (ISI), the CIA launched during the 1980s a comprehensive program to cultivate thousands of radical Muslims throughout Afghanistan, as a means to draw the USSR into a quagmire and suffer a strategic Cold War defeat in this vital Central Asian territory. One of the key assets for the CIA in this campaign was Osama bin Laden. The program went so far as to involve the creation and teaching of a violence- and terror-infused curriculum to young children (who were taught to do math with graphs showing units in tanks or guns, for example). Millions of these textbooks were still in use throughout the 1990s. A large segment of the Mujahedeen eventually were reorganized by bin Laden into al-Qaeda, whose mission allegedly became the liberation of the Islamic world from Western domination.

These facts are compatible with the official conspiracy theory, though the long history between CIA, ISI, bin Laden and the Mujahedeen suggests that clandestine intelligence elements in the US—official or private—may have had closer and more enduring ties to al-Qaeda than generally believed.¹

2. Angry Islamists Want to Kill Americans

Numerous professional texts have surveyed the long history of tension between Islamic populations and Western policies. There is more than ample evidence to support a radical Islamic motive to perpetrate 9/11-level—or greater—violence.

Yet since “false flag” operations work best when general public fear of whoever is to be falsely blamed pre-exists, the existence of real and serious threats from radical Islamic elements remains compatible with theories of US complicity or causation on 9/11.²

3. Previous Terror Attacks Attributed to al-Qaeda

Numerous terror attacks throughout the 1990s were attributed to al-Qaeda. The conservative assessment here is to take the official explanations at face value and agree that al-Qaeda demonstrated the intention and capa-

bility to attack US interests, though it is useful to review the history of these events with an open mind.³

4. Historical Relationship of Bush Officials and Clandestine Operations

A common refrain heard from the left—less often from the right—in response to suspicions about the official 9/11 story goes something like this: “The Bush administration has demonstrated such incompetence on so many fronts that it strains the imagination to think they could of have pulled off something so elaborate, and kept it a secret.”

This argument ignores three key facts.

First, while George W. Bush may be intellectually challenged across the board, and while neoconservatives may have a gravely naive, overreaching geopolitical agenda, Bush officials in key national security positions have superlative experience in managing clandestine operations, and have repeatedly demonstrated ruthless, systematic, detail-oriented control over sensitive programs and information. The historical preoccupation of key officials across the Bush administration with clandestine operations—both legal and illegal—is well known to historians of the field.

Second, vastly larger programs have remained secret for decades. A few examples: the National Security Agency has a larger budget and more employees than the CIA. It was organized in 1949. This entire agency of the federal government remained completely hidden from the public until more than three decades later. One of the programs run by NSA, believed to have started in the 1940s, was Project Shamrock, through which all major transatlantic telegraph cables were tapped with the co-operation of AT&T and other communications carriers. This vast program—involving people building, installing and running equipment all over the world, and numerous others watching and translating conversations—was kept entirely secret until the 1990s. Most American citizens have never heard of this program to this day. Serious students of the US national security apparatus know how effective its systems can be in controlling information and people, and compartmentalizing information and tasks into a startlingly small number of hands.

Third, the official 9/11 story asks us to believe that only a couple of dozen poorly trained Islamic radicals deftly maneuvered through the world’s most powerful intelligence gathering and military machine. How much easier might it have been for a similar number of people to do so, employing many unknowing others for secondary, compartmented tasks, if

those handful with full knowledge of the plan also knew every aspect of the US intelligence and military machine, and were in key positions governing its activities and responses?

The historical association between Bush officials, government and private intelligence networks, and clandestine operations argues against the notion that incompetence allowed 9/11 to occur, and therefore this fact must raise suspicion.⁴

5. Similarity between the PNAC Agenda and the 9/11 Aftermath

The degree of forethought that may have gone into the events of 9/11 is suggested by the similarity of its aftermath to the geopolitical agenda set forth by the neoconservative think tank, Project for a New American Century, in its 2000 manifesto: “Rebuilding America’s Defenses: Strategies, Forces and Resources for a New Century.”

This document was written for George W. Bush’s team before the 2000 Presidential election. It was commissioned by future Vice President Cheney, future Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, future Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, Florida Governor Jeb Bush (Bush’s brother), and future Vice President Cheney’s Chief of Staff Lewis Libby.

The explicit statements concerning the utility of a “new Pearl Harbor” and the central roles played by Afghanistan and Iraq in configuring a new world order in which American supremacy is unchallengeable, are strikingly prescient of what was fortuitously made feasible by 9/11.

Few would argue that we would be in Afghanistan and Iraq today had the attacks of 9/11 never occurred. It is therefore reasonable to be suspicious of the spectacularly convenient conformance between the PNAC manifesto, the rise to power of those who wrote the document and 9/11’s absolutely essential role in facilitating its implementation.⁵

6. Bill Clinton’s Failure to Neutralize bin Laden

Some commentators have assigned much of the blame for 9/11 on the Clinton administration, for failing to deal with the bin Laden threat more effectively. It is empirically true that Clinton’s team did not neutralize bin Laden. As references demonstrate, the reasons for that failure remain unclear, thus this failure can reasonably be assessed as compatible with any of the three theories proposed.⁶

7. George W. Bush's Negligence in Dealing with bin Laden

The performance of George W. Bush's administration in dealing with bin Laden is more troubling. The record clearly indicates that the administration took few concrete steps to strengthen counter-terrorism despite what CIA Director George Tenet called an intelligence community "with its hair on fire" from the frequency and credibility of warnings.

Several steps were taken that can be interpreted as obstructing pre-existing counter-terrorism plans and capabilities. For example, prior to 9/11, the Bush administration instructed intelligence officials to back off Saudi Arabia, discontinued plans made under Clinton for employing submarines and Predator drones to hunt for al-Qaeda leaders, suspended US co-operation in a pre-existing effort to track international terrorist financing networks, refused to seek a FISA warrant to hack into a suspect's computer, translated key communications late and mistranslated others, and ignored repeated, urgent warnings about impending attacks.

Indeed, the White House's Counterterrorism and Security Group chaired by Cheney, which met two or three times a week under Clinton, rarely convened under Bush prior to 9/11.⁷

8. Some Alleged Hijackers May Have Flight Trained at US Military Bases

According to *Newsweek* and *The Washington Post* in stories published days after 9/11, between three and five of the alleged hijackers may have received training at US military installations in the years leading up to 2001. In fact, three of the registrants with names matching alleged hijackers used the same address at the Pensacola Naval Air Station (known as the "cradle of US Naval aviation") eliminating the possibility of mere similarity of names as an explanation for this troubling coincidence.

Other alleged terrorists trained at a Florida flight school that many in the region believe had been utilized by the CIA. It has been alleged that Jeb Bush ordered records removed from its offices within twenty-four hours of the attacks . . . a rather speedy police action since the government allegedly had not connected the dots prior to 9/11. It has also been alleged that the owner of the flight school—Rudi Dekkers, constantly in trouble with the law—was deported by the INS prior to his possible testimony to the 9/11 Commission.⁸

9. Lack of Response to Warnings from Eleven Countries about Attacks

Among the most damning of pre-9/11 evidence raising suspicion of the official theory is the multitude of high-level, at times urgent, warnings supplied to the US by the intelligence services of other nations. These warnings often included specific targets or methods of attack, and in one case included names of four of the alleged hijackers. Among the countries communicating relevant threat intelligence to the U.S prior to 9/11: Great Britain, Russia, Germany, Afghanistan, Egypt, Jordan and Israel. For example, astonishingly, Russian President Vladimir Putin publicly stated on Fox News in 2002 that he ordered his intelligence agencies to alert the US in the summer of 2001 that suicide pilots were training for attacks on US targets. It is interesting that two countries in the best position to know about the impending attacks—Pakistan and Saudi Arabia—apparently forwarded no warnings at all.

In any case, the repeated claims by Bush administration officials to the effect that “no one ever imagined this kind of thing could happen” are entirely incompatible with the seniority, volume, and specificity of international warnings received in months prior to 9/11.⁹

10. Lack of Response to Warnings from US Agents about Attacks

The record of domestic warnings from field agents of the FBI and CIA (and other civilians) is lengthy and troubling, particularly when juxtaposed with contemporaneous intelligence received from abroad. As but two examples, an agent at the Phoenix office of the FBI wrote an extensive memo outlining the “inordinate” number of suspicious individuals taking flight training courses in Arizona, who he suspected were linked to al-Qaeda. Agents in the Minneapolis office of the FBI were so frustrated that they became suspicious of a mole at headquarters because of the obstacles put in their path. They were attempting—unsuccessfully—to gain approval from higher ups to obtain a FISA search warrant for Moussaoui’s computer.

Other agents have tried in recent years to go public as whistleblowers—describing strangely negligent behavior of certain officials prior to 9/11—and have been gagged by court order under the State Secrets privilege.¹⁰

11. Cheney's Early 2001 Assignment over Counter-terrorism and War Games

On May 8th 2001, President Bush appointed Dick Cheney to head the new Office of National Preparedness, with responsibility to co-ordinate all federal programs to respond to an attack on the homeland. Cheney was given power over “all federal programs dealing with weapons of mass destruction consequence management within the Departments of Defense, Health and Human Services, Justice, and Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency, and other federal agencies . . .” This covered “training and planning” which had to be “seamlessly integrated, harmonious and comprehensive” in order to “maximize effectiveness.” This position would afford Cheney the total legal authority to manage a 9/11-type situation as it unfolded. As it turned out, he would need such power and appeared very comfortable exercising it. As former terrorism czar Richard Clarke wrote in *Against All Enemies*, “I was amazed at the speed of the decisions coming from Cheney and, through him, from Bush.” According to most reports, this Office was just beginning to hire staff members a few days prior to 9/11.

Again, in the context of the warnings from home and abroad, the long alleged history of a bin Laden threat and the longer history of key Bush officials' preoccupation with global threat management, the administration's pre-9/11 behavior suggests neglect and obstruction of obvious, urgent, loudly-called-for defensive measures and yet refined, thorough advance calculation and planning for offensive measures in the war on terrorism to come.¹¹

12. Rumsfeld's Mid-2001 Assignment over NORAD Response to Hijackings

Less than one month later, another link of the chain of command was set in place relevant to later events on 9/11. Except for “immediate responses” that do not require “potentially lethal support” all requests for military assistance during hijackings were to be approved only by the Secretary of Defense, a change to a protocol which for years had allowed lower-level military commanders the authority to respond to requests from FAA for military assistance. Effectively, the entire chain of command under Rumsfeld was stripped of the ability to approval potentially lethal assistance in the specific event of a hijacking or derelict airborne object.

On its own this alteration of protocol would not justify suspicion. In the context of the rest of the pattern of behavior among key officials before and after 9/11, this fact must be deemed troubling.¹²

13. WTC Security Anomalies

A number of strange facts fall under the heading of WTC security anomalies. Among them:

- George W. Bush's brother was a Director and his cousin was the CEO of the security firm responsible for the design of the electronic security network of the World Trade Center prior to and during 9/11;
- Numerous phone threats of bombs placed WTC on high alert in weeks prior to 9/11;
- Employees of WTC reported rare "power-down" alerts in days leading up to 9/11 in which power was shut down to various floors for maintenance work, rendering security controls and video cameras inoperative; many workers were seen entering and leaving the buildings;
- At least one security guard at WTC reported the abrupt removal of explosive-sniffing dogs five days prior to 9/11;
- John O'Neill quit his job as FBI counterterrorism expert in part because of obstruction of his investigations of al-Qaeda and became head of WTC security, starting in late August 2001; he was killed three weeks later in the attacks.¹³

14. Plan for Invasion of Afghanistan in Place on 9/10

A plan for the invasion of Afghanistan had been in preparation for months and reached the White House for President Bush's signature during the week before 9/11. This conforms to the activities of US officials in the region, who in meetings during the summer of 2001 made it known to the Taliban government that it must choose whether to receive a "carpet of bombs" or a "carpet of gold" during negotiations over the construction of a pipeline through the country. Former Pakistani Foreign Secretary Niaz Naik later said he was told by American officials—again, prior to 9/11—that military action to overthrow the Taliban was planned to "take place before the snows started falling in Afghanistan, by the middle of October at the latest."

That pre-9/11 prediction was exactly correct.¹⁴

15. Allegedly Devout Muslim Hijackers out Partying Prior to 9/11

Ringleader Mohamed Atta and other alleged hijackers were frequently seen in the US and the Philippines partying—drinking heavily, using drugs, cavorting with women and spending considerable money. This portrait is incompatible with the official narrative in which the hijackers are portrayed as devout Muslims preparing to meet their maker, but is compatible with the notion that some or all of the alleged hijackers were not devout Muslims but were directly or indirectly serving as assets or patsies for elements within the Bush administration.¹⁵

16. Options Trading in Days Preceding 9/11

During the first ten days of September and beginning possibly earlier, unusually high levels of “put options” were placed on the stocks of American and United airlines and corporate tenants of the World Trade Center. The 9/11 Commission later concludes “The SEC and the FBI, aided by other agencies and the securities industry, devoted enormous resources to investigating this issue, including securing the co-operation of many foreign governments. These investigators have found that the apparently suspicious trading consistently proved innocuous.” Though known to government investigators, the identities of the parties placing these put options have never been revealed. There should be no reason why such identities must remain concealed if the official story is true.

According to Dylan Ratigan of *Bloomberg Business News*, “This would be one of the most extraordinary coincidences in the history of mankind if it was a coincidence.”¹⁶

17. Jeb Bush’s Preparation for Florida State of Emergency

On September 7th 2001, George W. Bush’s brother and Florida Governor Jeb Bush signed Florida Executive Order No. 01-261 which states, in part:

I hereby delegate to The Adjutant General of the State of Florida all necessary authority, within approved budgetary appropriations or grants, to order members of the Florida National Guard into active service . . . for the purpose of training to support law-enforcement personnel and emergency-management personnel in the event of civil disturbances . . .

This order effectively placed the Florida National Guard, a unit of the federal US Army, in service of Florida law enforcement and the Florida Emergency Management department four days prior to 9/11.

On the morning of September 11th, Jeb Bush signed Florida Executive Order No. 01-262 immediately after the second WTC tower fell, making Florida the first state in the US to declare a “State of Emergency”—even before New York and Washington D.C.:

I hereby declare that a state of emergency exists in the State of Florida . . . The authority to suspend the effect of any statute or rule governing the conduct of state business, and the further authority to suspend the effect of any order or rule of any governmental entity . . . The authority to seize and utilize any and all real or personal property as needed to meet this emergency . . . The authority to order the evacuation of any or all persons from any location in the State of Florida, and the authority to regulate the movement of any or all persons to or from any location in the State; The authority to regulate the return of the evacuees to their home communities . . . I hereby order the Adjutant General to activate the Florida National Guard for the duration of this emergency.

This latter move may be plausible given the presence of the President of the United States in the state during surprise attacks by terrorists. In the context of complicity theories, however, it is quite sensible that these two orders—*numerically back-to-back, four days apart, one before and one on 9/11*—were put in place in case the plan went awry and it became necessary to take extraordinary measures to protect one or both Bushes from their own government or citizenry.

Under complicity theories, the additional sightings of suspicious Middle Eastern men stalking President Bush in Sarasota Florida earlier that morning—driving a large van and requesting entrance to the resort where he was staying—might have provided later evidence for and a means to trigger a state of emergency, if it became necessary.¹⁷

18. Funder of Atta Meeting with Top US Officials during Week of 9/11

At the moment of the attacks, Pakistan’s ISI Director Lt. Gen. Mahmoud Ahmad was at a breakfast meeting at the Capitol with the chairmen of the House and Senate Intelligence Committees, Senator Bob Graham (D) and Representative Porter Goss (R) (Goss is a ten-year veteran of the CIA’s clandestine operations wing). The meeting is said to have lasted at least until the second plane hit the WTC. Graham and Goss later co-head the

joint House-Senate investigation into the 9/11 attacks, which made headlines for saying there was no “smoking gun” of Bush’s knowledge before 9/11. Senator Graham should have been aware of a report made to his staff the previous month that one of Mahmoud’s subordinates had told a US undercover agent that the WTC would be destroyed. Evidence suggests that attendee Mahmoud had previously ordered that \$100,000 be sent to hijacker Mohamed Atta. Also present at the meeting were Senator Jon Kyl (R) and the Pakistani ambassador to the US, Maleeha Lodhi. All or most of the people in this meeting had previously met in Pakistan just a few weeks earlier. Senator Graham said of the meeting: “We were talking about terrorism, specifically terrorism generated from Afghanistan.” The *New York Times* reported that bin Laden was specifically discussed.

In an interview with ABC News the FBI confirmed that the alleged 9/11 ringleader, Mohammed Atta, had been financed from unnamed sources in Pakistan:

As to September 11th, federal authorities have told ABC News they have now tracked more than \$100,000 from banks in Pakistan, to two banks in Florida, to accounts held by suspected hijack ring leader, Mohammed Atta. As well . . . *Time Magazine* is reporting that some of that money came in the days just before the attack and can be traced directly to people connected to Osama bin Laden. It’s all part of what has been a successful FBI effort so far to close in on the hijackers’ high commander, the money men, the planners, and the mastermind.

Less than two weeks later, *Agence France Presse* and *The Times of India*, quoting an official Indian intelligence report, confirmed the money used to finance the 9/11 attacks had been “wired to WTC hijacker Mohammed Atta from Pakistan, by Ahmad Umar Sheikh, at the instance of [ISI Chief] General Mahmoud [Ahmad].” Officials in Pakistan and the US later claimed that the Indian intelligence report was propaganda intended to create tension between the US and Pakistan. But according to the AFP (quoting the Indian intelligence source): “The evidence we have supplied to the US is of a much wider range and depth than just one piece of paper linking a rogue general to some misplaced act of terrorism.”

The ISI chief who was meeting with top US intelligence figures in the days leading to and on the morning of 9/11, who is alleged to have previously ordered the transfer of \$100,000 to Mohamed Atta, was fired less than thirty days later.¹⁸

19. Wargames Conducted on 9/11 Simulating Hijackings

In the days leading up to and including 9/11, the US military was conducting between four and six war game exercises and operations involving aircraft from or in the northeastern US. At least one of those exercises involved the simulation of hijacked aircraft, and others sent northeast fighters to Canada for scenarios involving invasion by Russian aircraft. In some such exercises, fake aircraft signals were “inserted” into the air traffic control systems of NORAD and the FAA in order to test the response protocols of the air traffic and air defense network.

In other such exercises, real aircraft were piloted by war gamers as if they were hijacked and flown to test all aspects of the civil-military response process, including scrambled jets.

Some researchers have suggested that Cheney was the lead authority involved in these exercises on 9/11. That’s an important question, but is less relevant a factor than the degree to which such exercises degraded the response capacity of FAA and NORAD on 9/11. Numerous officials across the FAA and military are recorded on transcripts from 9/11 asking if “this is real world or exercise.” One key figure in the air defense command involved in the exercise is quoted on NORAD tapes as saying “the hijack’s not supposed to be for another hour.” Another stated: “I’ve never seen so much real-world stuff happen during an exercise.”

In the context of this analysis, these are shocking revelations. It appears certain that fake or real hijacking signals were injected into the air defense network on 9/11, and thus the failure to get fighters off the ground and to the right places in time to make a difference becomes sensible.

On their own, such exercises would not raise suspicion. Juxtaposed with the other facts, they do.¹⁹

20. Slow Bush and Secret Service Response to Attacks

As the US military was conducting operations and exercises involving aircraft from or in the northeast, and while real planes were striking the World Trade Center, President Bush was reading a story about a pet goat to schoolchildren in Florida. He was informed of the second plane strike at 9:07 a.m. The Commander in Chief of the US armed forces then proceeded to do nothing for seven minutes.

It is interesting to actually sit oneself down and wait out seven minutes with the notion in mind that you have just been informed that the country you are responsible to protect has just been attacked. Bush was informed of the first strike before even entering the classroom; he later

stated or misstated that he watched the first strike on television outside the classroom—something that would have been impossible unless secret cameras were rolling, since the first public video of the first plane strike did not emerge until September 12th. Either way, we must keep in mind that, under the official theory, there was no advance knowledge of the scale of the day's events; there may have been scores of hijacked airlines, biological or nuclear weapons, or any other number of possible immediate threats facing the nation.

As unusual as it seems for the Commander in Chief to have waited at least seven minutes before even getting up, the behavior of the Secret Service around him is at least as unfathomable. The man they were sworn to protect with their lives was in a pre-announced public place on television during an attack in which airplanes were being used to strike symbols of US power. For all anyone allegedly knew, the President himself was a target. They did not yank him out of the chair and pull him into the limousine and rush him to Air Force One.

This strange lack of response is more sensible under the complicity theories in which at least Bush and possibly some others in his entourage were aware of what was going to happen that day, knew that the classroom was in no danger from the attacks and that Vice President Cheney had things under control back in the White House.²⁰

21. Third Large Airplane in Restricted Airspace over Manhattan During Attacks

Commercial jets are prohibited from flying at low altitudes around the borough of Manhattan. Of course, two planes violated that rule on 9/11 to tragic effect. However video, photographic and eyewitness testimony has clearly placed a third commercial-size jet aircraft circling at low altitude while the first tower is burning and continuing as the second tower is struck. No such plane is mentioned in the 9/11 Commission report or in any official investigation. If it was a commercial jet, it was flying illegally, its pilot was taking risks flying close to billowing clouds of smoke and was presenting an obvious target for the fighters that would arrive too late. It is not plausible that this third plane was a commercial passenger flight.

The complicity theories resolve the mystery of the third aircraft: it was most likely involved in the operation, perhaps providing observational data or offering a flying platform nearby to manage part of the attack—a platform that could get in and get out quickly and relatively discretely. It would

also explain Bush's statement that he saw the first plane strike the WTC before the rest of the world could have.

Note that the author of the article revealing the third plane claims that he has received threats against himself and his family for having written the article (referenced below). The author reported that the source of these threats suggested that he drop out of the 9/11 research project and that his article should "go away."²¹

22. Failure of Air Defense to Intercept Hijackers

An excellent summary of the failure of the US air defense network is available at the reference cited below, excerpted here:

It is standard operating procedure to scramble jet fighters whenever a jetliner goes off course or radio contact with it is lost. Between September 2000 and June 2001, interceptors were scrambled 67 times. In the year 2000 jets were scrambled 129 times.

There are several elements involved in domestic air defense. FAA's air traffic control system continuously monitors air traffic and notifies NORAD of deviations of any aircraft from their flight-paths or loss of radio contact. NORAD monitors air and space traffic continuously and is prepared to react immediately to threats and emergencies. It has the authority to order units from the Air National Guard, the Air Force, or other armed services to scramble fighters in pursuit of jetliners in trouble.

The air defense network had, on September 11th, predictable and effective procedures for dealing with just such an attack. Yet it failed to respond in a timely manner until after the attack was over, more than an hour and a half after it had started. The official timeline describes a series of events and mode of response in which the delays are spread out into a number of areas. There are failures upon failures, in what might be described as a strategy of layered failures, or failure in depth. The failures can be divided into four types.

Failures to report: Based on the official timeline, the FAA response times for reporting the deviating aircraft were many times longer than the prescribed times. [The "official" timeline has shifted several times, thus shifting blame back and forth between FAA and NORAD; the overall lack of response is what's relevant]

Failures to scramble: NORAD, once notified of the off-course aircraft, failed to scramble jets from the nearest bases.

Failures to intercept: Once airborne, interceptors failed to reach their targets because they flew at small fractions of their top speeds.

Failures to redeploy: Fighters that were airborne and within interception range of the deviating aircraft were not redeployed to pursue them.

Had there not been multiple failures of each type, one or more parts of the attack could have been thwarted. NORAD had time to protect the World Trade Center even given the unbelievably late time, 8:40, when it claims to have first been notified. It had time to protect the South Tower and Washington even given its bizarre choice of bases to scramble. And it still had ample opportunity to protect both New York City and Washington even if it insisted that all interceptors fly subsonic, simply by redeploying airborne fighters.

The details behind each of these failures—including the precise timelines, actions, and locations of air defense network activity—are a matter of public record and can be explored at the referenced source. Particularly suspicious is the fact that the first four fighters scrambled on 9/11 were initially sent and held over the Atlantic before being told where to fly. They were given shoot-down orders only after all four planes had crashed.

The co-chairmen of the 9/11 Commission have recently released a new book, *Without Precedent*, which states in this regard: “Fog of war could explain why some people were confused on the day of 9/11, but it could not explain why all of the after-action reports, accident investigations and public testimony by FAA and NORAD officials advanced an account of 9/11 that was untrue.”²²

23. Lack of Pentagon Response to Incoming Aerial Threat

After two planes had struck the World Trade Center, one would think that there would be near-instant response to a third threat. The Pentagon became aware that Flight 77 had been hijacked no later than when it learned that its transponder was turned off at 8:56 a.m. According to the official narrative, it crashed into the Pentagon at 9:37 a.m., leaving it approaching the nation’s nerve center for forty minutes with no fighter response able to

intervene. The Pentagon was well prepared for aerial attacks, with batteries of anti-aircraft guns surrounding the headquarters of the world's most powerful military. They did not fire a shot that day.

Norman Mineta, Secretary of Transportation at the time, revealed the extent of knowledge of the threat to the Pentagon, and in so doing may have revealed Cheney's role in the events of that day, during testimony to the 9/11 Commission regarding events in the White House Situation Room that morning:

During the time that the airplane was coming [towards] 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!?"

Regardless of what those orders were (to shoot it down? to leave it alone?) this statement is startling because it reveals the degree of situational awareness in the Situation Room. Given the state of affairs at that time on 9/11, it is extremely difficult for the official story to account for the fact that the Pentagon was struck by anything, and that no fighter or anti-aircraft device could intercept a hijacked airliner forty minutes after it became a known threat, almost an hour after the first plane struck the World Trade Center.²³

24. Demolition-like Collapse of WTC 1, 2, and 7

Of all the facts discussed in this survey, the nature of the collapse of three World Trade Center buildings ranks among the most significant. There are several mysteries about these collapses:

- Never in the history of modern civilization has a steel-framed skyscraper collapsed due to fire;
- The fires in the buildings were much shorter-lived than other fires that have damaged skyscrapers in the past;
- The World Trade Center buildings were built to very high standards; they were highly redundant structures intentionally designed to withstand the direct impact of a commercial jetliner and much larger fires;

- Scores of firefighters, police, workers, outside witnesses and journalists reported hearing explosive detonations throughout the buildings just before and during their collapse;
- There is clear visible evidence of ‘squibs’ (demolition explosions) on the sides of the towers during their collapse;
- Towers 1 and 2 fell to the ground within one and three seconds of free-fall velocity, something that is physically impossible if the floors of the buildings are meeting—let alone overcoming—the resistance of intact steel and concrete structure throughout their fall;
- The concrete of the towers is pulverized to a fine dust, something that would not occur if the floors of the towers simply “pancaked” upon each other;
- The towers fell almost perfectly into their own footprints;
- The buildings had been transferred from public to private ownership only a few weeks earlier, and their new owner took out insurance that specifically included acts of terrorism.

The case of World Trade Center 7 is most revealing:

- It was never struck by an airplane;
- The fires inside (allegedly due to falling debris from the collapse of the other towers) were relatively small;
- It fell at exactly free-fall velocity; without controlled demolition this is impossible according to the laws of physics;
- It fell symmetrically into its footprint;
- Its owner is on videotape saying he suggested to fire officials that the building be “pulled”—jargon for controlled demolition; shortly after that suggestion, it collapsed in precisely the manner of a controlled demolition;
- It housed offices of the CIA and New York’s emergency management center, among others;
- Evidence of explosive compounds has been found in at least one of the few remaining pieces of once-molten iron that were not illegally destroyed;

- The collapse of WTC 7 was never addressed by the 9/11 Commission.

These facts all bluntly conflict with the official theory of 9/11. These facts are completely consistent with controlled demolition of WTC 1, 2 and 7.²⁴

25. Anomalies Surrounding Pentagon Attack

Researchers have accumulated a number of unanswered questions concerning the attack on the Pentagon, suggesting that an airplane may not have struck, or may not have been the only thing to strike, the headquarters of the US military:

- There are conflicting eyewitness reports about what was seen striking the building; some calling it a large jet aircraft, others describing a smaller plane-like vehicle (a description that fits certain types of missiles used by the US military);
- The debris on the ground did not include identifiable large pieces of a commercial jet that would be expected in the debris, such as two giant engines; the official story suggests they were vaporized, which is physically impossible at impact temperatures;
- The pattern of damage on the outside of the building does not match the shape and size of a 757;
- The damage into the core of the Pentagon reaches too far, in the form it takes, to be explained by the relatively lightweight, hollow body of a 757; the damage pattern to the reinforced concrete wall of the inner “C-Ring” is a perfectly round, small hole that is consistent with the kinds of shaped charges used in missiles;
- Several surveillance videos recording the impact area of the Pentagon were confiscated by the FBI immediately after the event and have never been released;
- The piloting of Flight 77 during its descent to the Pentagon has been universally described by trained pilots as “extremely challenging for an expert” and seemingly outside the capabilities of a hijacker described by his flight trainer as unfit to fly a Cessna;
- The flight plan appears designed to limit damage to the Pentagon, rather than maximize it: the angle of the attack is low, the side of

the building hit was recently rebuilt, hardened, partially occupied and 180° from Donald Rumsfeld's office;

- A military cargo plane was seen following Flight 77; the same plane wound up seventeen miles from the crash site of Flight 93.

Some researchers place great weight on these anomalies, suggesting that the physical evidence—or lack thereof—at the Pentagon site is the “smoking gun” of 9/11. I do not share that opinion, as other evidence addressed in this study is far less ambiguous. Cumulatively, however, these observations raise suspicion of the official account, particularly in light of surrounding facts.²⁵

26. Molten Metal at WTC Site for Weeks

From a scientific point of view, one of the most troubling mysteries about the destruction of the World Trade Center towers was the molten metal seen throughout the wreckage not only immediately after their collapse, but for weeks and weeks afterward. Collapsing concrete and steel does not create circumstances—even with fires burning—in which molten iron drips through the wreckage at many levels forming pools below, as the photographic, video and witness testimony clearly confirms existed. On the other hand, controlled demolition involves cutting hundreds of steel beams with specially designed high-temperature explosives, creating pools of molten iron that can persist and even spread (if sheltered in an “oven” of debris) for weeks.²⁶

27. Immediate Destruction of Evidence at WTC Sites

Conveniently, a bio-terror exercise had been scheduled for 9/12 in lower Manhattan, which meant that officials from various agencies had arrived earlier. They were then put to work at WTC on 9/11. As Mayor Rudolph Giuliani later testifies, “hundreds of people . . . from FEMA, from the federal government, from the state, from the State Emergency Management Office” had come to New York to take part in the exercise. Giuliani stated that the equipment for the exercise was in place on 9/11, so when his emergency operations center (in WTC-7) collapsed, he moved his emergency operations center to the site of the planned bio-terror exercise.

Immediately after the collapse of the towers, federal agents and police secured the WTC area. Contrary to federal and state laws concerning crime scenes, the debris from WTC was never subjected to a forensic investigation. Over subsequent weeks and months, thousands of tons of steel

beams were evacuated from the site to the port in secured conveyors—with GPS devices tracking every vehicle—and then shipped to Asia to be melted and reused for other construction. Thus, the most crucial physical evidence to reveal the causes of the collapse of the towers was intentionally and illegally destroyed without public examination. At least one of the few pieces of once-molten metal that somehow got around this process has been examined. Residue was discovered consistent with the use of the kind of explosive used in controlled demolition.

The journal *Fire Engineering* boldly editorialized:

Respected members of the fire protection engineering community are beginning to raise red flags, and a resonating theory has emerged: The structural damage from the planes and the explosive ignition of jet fuel in themselves were not enough to bring down the towers. . . .

Fire Engineering has good reason to believe that the “official investigation” blessed by FEMA and run by the American Society of Civil Engineers is a half-baked farce that may already have been commandeered by political forces whose primary interests, to put it mildly, lie far afield of full disclosure. Except for the marginal benefit obtained from a three-day, visual walk-through of evidence sites conducted by ASCE investigation committee members—described by one close source as a “tourist trip”—no one’s checking the evidence for anything.

Some citizens are taking to the streets to protest the investigation sellout. Sally Regenhard, for one, wants to know why and how the building fell as it did upon her unfortunate son Christian, an FDNY probationary firefighter. And so do we.

Clearly, there are burning questions that need answers. Based on the incident’s magnitude alone, a full-throttle, fully resourced, forensic investigation is imperative. More important, from a moral standpoint, [are considerations] for the safety of present and future generations.

That’s a strong statement from real experts that has been ignored by the 9/11 Commission, the Bush administration and the mainstream media.²⁷

28. Initiation of Broad Domestic Surveillance Programs

As we all now know, several secret domestic surveillance programs were initiated shortly after 9/11. It is quite sensible that such programs would

be initiated under any of the three theories. If the official narrative is true, then it is not unreasonable for the executive branch to desire the ability to map networks of potential terrorists inside the US, including suspect US citizens, and listen in on their communications.

However, it is not sensible that such programs would be vigorously concealed from legally-mandated, secret judicial and congressional oversight. The totality and vigor of their concealment become more sensible under the complicity theories, whereby an ultra-secret program must exist to spy not only on terrorists, but on those involved in or on course to reveal official complicity in 9/11. Serious students of national security are very well aware that those involved in highly sensitive operations routinely “sign away” their right to privacy and expect all of their communications to be tapped. Others who might represent a threat of disclosure of officials involved in 9/11—like journalists and investigators—have not signed away such rights, though most of us would not be surprised to find our names on the watch list of one or more of these surveillance programs.

Further recent developments reinforce suspicion on this point. Recently-drafted “compromise” legislation would permit the FISA court to review the *constitutionality* of these surveillance programs, rather than requiring review of *each individual target* as is the case today. If that legislation passes, it will permit the administration to *avoid any external oversight of the identities of individuals targeted for invasive spying*. That is exactly what would be required by a program designed to “protect the national security” of a criminal administration.²⁸

29. Disappearance of Cheney for Weeks

After the 9/11 attacks and continuing for several weeks, Vice President Cheney was rarely seen and was reported to be shifting among undisclosed locations as a contingency in case further attacks took out President Bush or otherwise demanded initiation of “continuity of government” plans for an alternate chain of command.

This is plausible under all three theories, but becomes imperative under complicity theories. In an operation as illegal as the one contemplated under those theories, the risk of exposure or even coup from within the government would be high and palpable.

If we accept, solely for the sake of discussion, that one of the complicity theories is true, then Cheney was almost certainly the key leader of the operation. It would be several weeks before he would have felt sufficiently

informed of the aftershocks and information tributaries from 9/11 to come back into administrative routine.

30. Hijacker Names Missing from Flight Manifests

The official passenger manifests from American and United airlines for the four 9/11 flights contained no names identified as hijackers. This fact has never been explained.²⁹

31. Several Alleged Hijackers Discovered Alive and Well

Several alleged hijackers were found to be alive overseas. They and their families saw their pictures on television and in newspapers in days following the attacks, and began talking to the press, which extensively covered this anomaly. Several reported that their passports were stolen. On September 20th, the London *Times* reported, “Five of the hijackers were using stolen identities, and investigators are studying the possibility that the entire suicide squad consisted of impostors.”

After all of this, on September 27th, FBI Director Mueller stated merely, “We are fairly certain of a number of them,” according to the next day’s *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*.

This matter becomes suspicious because of the combination of two factors: the absence of hijacker names on flight manifests, and the failure of the FBI to supply any alternative names to those provided just after 9/11. If not them, who? Surely, if the official story is true, a forensic examination of the history of how the intelligence community acquired the names in the first place would lead to one or more new, real identities.³⁰

32. Destruction of Air Traffic Control Tape from 9/11

Shortly before noon on 9/11, about sixteen people at the New York Air Route Traffic Control Center recorded their version of the response to the 9/11 attack. At least six were air traffic controllers who dealt with two of the hijacked airliners. But officials at the center never told higher-ups about the tape. Around this time, a quality-assurance manager, whose name has not been released, crushes the cassette recording in his hand, shreds the tape, and drops the pieces into different trashcans. This manager later asserted that keeping the tape would have been a violation of union rules and accident procedures. When he destroyed the tape, he had already received an email from the FAA instructing officials to safeguard all records that specifically stated, “If a question arises whether or not you should retain data, **Retain It.**” Most, but not all, of the air traffic controllers involved

made written statements about three weeks after 9/11, but it isn't clear how these might differ from what was on the tape. The unidentified manager was later said to have been disciplined for this incident, though it isn't clear how.

Let us give the official theory the benefit of the doubt and characterize this event as plausible. It is certainly sensible with the two alternative theories.³¹

33. Shutdown of Congress by Domestic Military Strain of Anthrax

In early October 2001 four letters containing anthrax were mailed to NBC, the *New York Post*, and Democratic senators Tom Daschle and Patrick Leahy. Twenty-three people were infected and five people died. Panic swept the nation. On October 16th the Senate office buildings were shut down, followed by the House of Representatives, after twenty-eight congressional staffers tested positive for exposure to anthrax. A number of hoax letters containing harmless powder also turned up.

Initially it was suspected that either al-Qaeda or Iraq were behind the anthrax letters. However, further investigation led the US government to conclude that, "everything seems to lean toward a domestic source . . . Nothing seems to fit with an overseas terrorist type operation." In August 2002, the FBI named Steven Hatfill, a bio-weapons researcher who worked for the US government, as a "person of interest" in the case. Though he underwent intense scrutiny by the FBI, he was never charged with any crime. As of early 2007, no one else has been charged in relation to the anthrax letter attacks.

Later research determined that the biological strain of the anthrax used in 2001 was developed by the US military, and that it had been cultured no more than two years earlier.

The anthrax scare had the effect of shutting down the legislative branch of government in the highly sensitive weeks following 9/11. It sent a chill down the spine of Washington D.C. and the nation as a whole. Under complicity theories, these consequences would be helpful to inhibit strategic conversation about what happened on 9/11, accelerate passage of the Patriot Act and possibly even warn other factions in the government about how far the administration might go to achieve its objectives.³²

34. Sole Confession of bin Laden Found in Questionable Video

On October 20th 2001, a video was allegedly shot of Osama bin Laden saying that al-Qaeda "instigated" the 9/11 attacks, and that 9/11 "was

revenge for our people killed in Palestine and Iraq.” The existence of this video was first revealed by the *Daily Telegraph* on November 11th, in an article which said the video was not made for public release via the al-Jazeera television network, as previous bin Laden tapes had been, but had been circulating for fourteen days among bin Laden’s supporters. The *Daily Telegraph* claimed it had obtained access to the footage in the Middle East. On November 14th, Tony Blair referred to the video in a speech before the House of Commons and claimed, “The intelligence material now leaves no doubt whatever of the guilt of bin Laden and his associates.” Yet the British government said it did not have a copy of the video, only information about it from intelligence sources. The *Daily Telegraph* noted that in four previous post-9/11 videos, bin Laden always denied responsibility for the attacks. As of this writing, the October 20th video has not been made public.

This video is allegedly different from a tape released publicly in December 2001 by the US, in which bin Laden again seemed to confirm his role in 9/11. However, a number of strange facts about this video soon emerged. For example, all previous videos had been made with the consent of bin Laden, and usually released to the Arabic television channel al-Jazeera. This video was supposedly recorded without his knowledge, found in a house in Afghanistan, and then passed to the CIA by an unknown person or group. Experts pointed out that it would be possible to fake such a video. So many people doubted the video’s authenticity that Bush soon made a statement, saying it was “preposterous for anybody to think this tape was doctored. Those who contend it’s a farce or a fake are hoping for the best about an evil man.” The German television show *Monitor* conducted an independent translation that questioned the translation given by the US military. According to Professor Gernot Rotter, scholar of Islamic and Arabic Studies at the University of Hamburg:

This tape is of such poor quality that many passages are unintelligible. And those that are intelligible have often been taken out of context, so that you can’t use that as evidence. The American translators who listened to the tape and transcribed it obviously added things that they wanted to hear in many places.

The bin Laden seen in this video looks significantly heavier, has a differently-shaped nose and beard, as can be clearly seen in a comparison of stills from earlier and later footage, including an authenticated video released just a few weeks later on al-Jazeera showing a very gaunt bin Laden.

There are reports that bin Laden had from four to ten look-alike doubles at the time.

The video was played across Western television networks as if it was an open and shut conviction of bin Laden. This lucky find arrived as the first serious questions about what happened on 9/11 began to pop up across the Internet, at a time when the administration needed unwavering public support for its bold, aggressive foreign policy and domestic legislative agenda.³³

35. Silencing of Whistleblowers

Whistleblowers on various aspects of the government's handling of 9/11 have been silenced through disciplinary action, court proceedings and, in some cases, invocation of the rarely-used State Secrets privilege. The curious case of FBI translator Sibel Edmonds is not unrepresentative.

Edmonds claims to have discovered that a co-worker was a foreign intelligence asset and was intentionally mistranslating intercepted communications among suspected terrorists. After her boss and others in the FBI failed to respond to her complaints, she wrote to the Justice Department's inspector general's office in March, 2002: "Investigations are being compromised. Incorrect or misleading translations are being sent to agents in the field. Translations are being blocked and circumvented." Edmonds was then fired and she sued the FBI. A second FBI whistleblower, John Cole, also claimed to know of security lapses in the screening and hiring of FBI translators. The supervisor who told Edmonds not to make those accusations and also encouraged her to go slow in her translations was later promoted.

Half a dozen or so cases like this, once again, suggest intention and not incompetence in the failure of the US military and intelligence community to stop 9/11 before it happened.³⁴

36. Resistance to 9/11 Investigations

In prior national crises, such as the attack on Pearl Harbor and the assassination of John F. Kennedy, investigations were empanelled within a matter of days. In the case of 9/11 the nation would have to wait a half-year for House-Senate hearings, more than a year for a formal investigation to commence, and nearly three years for a final report. The Commission closed on August 21st 2004.

President Bush and Vice President Cheney fought these hearings and investigations at every possible turn. As but one of many examples, former

Senate majority leader Tom Daschle reported on a personal phone call from Cheney in January 2002: “The vice president expressed the concern that a review of what happened on September 11th would take resources and personnel away from the effort in the war on terrorism.”

It was only after a rising uproar from families that a government-appointed “independent” commission would be established. And then, its rules were such that very few of its own members would have access to the most sensitive matters. One member, Senator Max Cleland, resigned from the commission with the words, “Bush is scamming America.”

Cleland attacked his own commission after the other members cut a deal to accept highly limited access to CIA reports to the White House that may indicate advance knowledge of the attacks on the part of the Bush administration. “This is a scam,” Cleland said. “It’s disgusting. America is being cheated.”

“As each day goes by,” Cleland said, “we learn that this government knew a whole lot more about these terrorists before September 11th than it has ever admitted. . . . Let’s chase this rabbit into the ground. They had a plan to go to war and when 9/11 happened that’s what they did; they went to war.”³⁵

37. Resistance to Testimony Under Oath

Under extreme pressure and threats of subpoena, the administration finally gave in to demands that top officials testify before the 9/11 Commission. Bush and Cheney decided to permit Condoleezza Rice to testify under oath in public, but refused to do so themselves. They agreed only to have a private conversation with members of the Commission. . . and not separately, only together.

If the official story is true, how can one explain the totality of resistance to normal investigative proceedings, particularly the resistance to testimony under oath?³⁶

38. Promotion of Key Counterterrorism Officials After 9/11

One of the more telling facts that has received unfortunately little attention from the mainstream press is that there have been no significant disciplinary actions against any US official as a result of the 9/11 investigations. One would think that an investigation into the worst attack on US soil in the history of the nation would identify not just broad categories of failure, but specifically identify people who failed their nation.

Those names are, in fact, known, just not widely published. The striking thing to realize is that a handful of officials in key points of “failure” leading up to 9/11 have since been promoted or awarded other commendations. The most prominent, of course, is CIA Director George Tenet, who was awarded the nation’s highest honor, the Medal of Freedom. If the official narrative is true, these men and women should have been fired or worse. Had 9/11 occurred on someone’s watch in a European or Asian nation, they would have resigned in disgrace.

Under the complicity theories the actions of the administration are sensible. These people would not need to be consciously complicit to receive such treatment; it is only necessary that they know some uncomfortable facts that if made public might further stress the already fact-challenged official narrative of 9/11.³⁷

39. Failure to Catch bin Laden

A half-decade after 9/11, the alleged mastermind remains at large. There now exists a large body of evidence—spanning more than a decade—of repeated negligent failures to capture or kill the world’s best known terrorist. Consider three of many examples, drawn from Paul Thompson, *The Terror Timeline*:

Bin Laden gave a speech in front of about 1,000 supporters on November 10th, 2001, in the town of Jalalabad, Afghanistan. [*Christian Science Monitor*, 3/4/2002] On the night of November 13th, a convoy of 1,000 or more al-Qaeda and Taliban fighters escapes from Jalalabad and reaches the fortress of Tora Bora after hours of driving and then walking. Bin Laden is believed to be with them, riding in one of “several hundred cars” in the convoy. The US bombs the nearby Jalalabad airport, but apparently does not attack the convoy. [Knight Ridder, 10/20/2002; *Christian Science Monitor*, 3/4/2002] The Northern Alliance captures Jalalabad the next day. [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 11/14/2001]

Ismail Khan’s troops and other Northern Alliance fighters are reportedly ready to take back Pashtun areas from Taliban control at this time. Khan, governor of Herat province and one of Afghanistan’s most successful militia leaders, later maintains that “we could have captured all the Taliban and the al-Qaeda groups. We could have arrested Osama bin Laden with all of his supporters.” [*USA Today*, 1/2/2002] However, according to Khan, his forces

hold back at the request of the US, who allegedly do not want the non-Pashtun Northern Alliance to conquer Pashtun areas. British newspapers at the time report bin Laden is surrounded in a 30-mile area, but the conquest of Kandahar takes weeks without the Northern Alliance and bin Laden slips away (other accounts put him at Tora Bora). [CNN, 11/18/2001]

According to *Newsweek*, approximately 600 al-Qaeda and Taliban fighters, including many senior leaders, escape Afghanistan on this day. This is the first day of heavy bombing of the Tora Bora region (see November 16th, 2001). There are two main routes out of the Tora Bora cave complex to Pakistan. The US bombs only one route, so the 600 are able to escape without being attacked using the other route. Hundreds will continue to use the escape route for weeks, generally unbothered by US bombing or Pakistani border guards. US officials later privately admit they lost an excellent opportunity to close a trap. [*Newsweek*, 8/11/2002] On the same day, the media reports that the US is studying routes bin Laden might use to escape Tora Bora [*Los Angeles Times*, 11/16/2001], but the one escape route is not closed, and by some accounts bin Laden and others escape into Pakistan and will use this same route several weeks later (see November 28th–30th, 2001). High-ranking British officers will later privately complain, “American commanders had vetoed a proposal to guard the high-altitude trails, arguing that the risks of a firefight, in deep snow, gusting winds, and low-slung clouds, were too high.” [*New York Times*, 9/30/2002]

Other examples abound. This repeated failure is hard to square with the official story, unless the administration has chosen to eliminate bin Laden at some future date, perhaps timed to achieve a political objective. Under the complicity theories, the same conundrum persists, but an additional possibility becomes sensible: that bin Laden has some form of continuing relationship with certain official or private US intelligence elements, and has maintained it ever since he was explicitly serving US interests in the 1980s.³⁸

40. Promotion of Threat Psychology

Unquestionably, in the past five years the citizens of the United States have experienced the most intense wave of fear about homeland security since the Cuban missile crisis. This state of fear has been sustained by the con-

stant stream of threat coverage coming from mainstream media. It is also sensible—that is, understandable—in any of the three theories proposed. Regardless of whether the attacks occurred as officially described, the administration has an interest in ensuring the right balance of concern and comfort in the psychology of the public.

Under either complicity theory, however, this unending stream of fear-inducing media can be seen as creating a “terror psychosis” in the US body-politic, making Americans unwittingly complicit in the global agenda of neoconservative criminals—a necessary condition for them to remain in power to carry out a complex, long-term agenda. One future indicator that 9/11 was caused to happen by US officials would be another terrorist attack, or the capture of bin Laden, timed conveniently for the 2006 or 2008 election cycles—both of which are crucial for neoconservatives to retain control of a highly unstable situation. A major attack in Europe would fit the bill, restoring 9/11-level fear here at home, pulling European populations toward neoconservative instincts, yet affording no one the ability to blame the Bush administration for lack of homeland security.

41. Lack of Attention to Homeland Security Hotspots

One of the strange things about post-9/11 homeland security is how little work has been done to secure truly sensitive areas and infrastructure from attack. Our nuclear plants, chemical factories, electricity grid, water and rail systems and shipping ports remain vulnerable to devastating attack, and proposals to fix security holes have frequently been blocked or ignored by the Bush administration. One example, cited from the reference below:

Following 9/11, there was an urgent push to curtail some of these risks. Democratic senator Jon Corzine of New Jersey, whose state was home to nine of the 111 most vulnerable factories in the country, introduced legislation to police chemical producers; the bill passed unanimously in Senate committees and quickly garnered White House support. Named the Chemical Security Act, it sought to codify parameters for site security, ensure the safer transport of toxic materials (a single railcar filled with 33,000 gallons of chlorine could kill up to 100,000 people), and establish a timetable to shift away from the use of the most noxious chemicals. Some major chemical users have already been doing that voluntarily. In Washington, for instance, the city water treatment plant switched in 2001 from chlorine to a slightly more expensive, but less dangerous, bacteria remover. The change cost the average

D.C. water consumer fifty cents per year, but reduced the risk of terrorist hijackings by eliminating hundreds of chlorine tankers rumbling through the capital region.

The Chemical Security Act seemed set to sail through Congress. But as the memory of 9/11 grew dimmer, the petrochemical industry launched a well-co-ordinated and well-financed campaign to scuttle the bill. Led by the powerful American Petroleum Institute, lobby groups bombarded senators, members of Congress, and the White House with thousands of letters, position papers, and reports on the adverse economic impact of the Chemical Security Act. Chlorine and its derivatives went into products that accounted for forty-five percent of the nation's gross domestic product, they argued. Without chlorine components, they lamented, even the backyard gas grill would disappear. The American pastoral would be forever changed.

The White House quickly cooled toward the idea of regulating chemical security. The seven Republican senators who had endorsed the bill in committee withdrew their support. And \$5.7 million in petrochemical campaign contributions helped to ensure that Republicans took the Senate in the 2002 midterm elections and that the Chemical Security Act died without a vote. In its place, Senator James Inhofe (R-Okla.) proposed that chemical factories be allowed to police themselves and that the government have no oversight or enforcement powers over safety rules.

There are dozens of other examples of the Bush administration failing to take homeland security programs seriously. If indeed we are at serious risk of domestic terrorist attacks, then this behavior borders on criminal negligence. Concern was so severe that 9/11 Commission members came together again and issued a damning report, hoping to raise attention of policymakers. House Homeland Security Committee member Edward Markey had this to say about the report in December, 2005:

The commission report is really a blistering, scalding indictment of the Bush administration. Without question, Congress deserves some blame as well, some significant blame. Again it's a Republican House and Senate so I think they are working in coordination with the Bush White House.

But the criticism of the lack of securing of nuclear materials overseas, the lack of funding for first responders, having a coordinated communications system for a terrorist list that can be checked at any airport in the United States, the list goes on and on. The criticisms go on and on. This is four years after 9/11. The Bush administration has given a blank check to fight a war in Iraq but it's nickel and diming homeland security. That's what the 9/11 Commission has just reported.

And I think that principally the blame lies at the top at the White House.

This policy—spending hundreds of billions on wars abroad while short-changing homeland security—becomes sensible if foreign terrorists did not, in fact, take the Bush administration by surprise on 9/11. In that case, domestic security was not penetrated by foreign terrorists, but rather by domestic ones.

Regardless, we can all rest easier knowing that grandma's shoes were checked when she went through airport security. She is duly afraid, and is doing her duty.³⁹

42. Numerous Obvious, Key Omissions from the 9/11 Commission Report

The final fact discussed in this survey is the indisputable failure of the 9/11 Commission to address at least one hundred matters highly relevant to accomplishing its charter: “to prepare a full and complete account of the circumstances surrounding the September 11th 2001 terrorist attacks, including preparedness for and the immediate response to the attacks.”

Most of the inconvenient facts described above were either artfully dodged or not discussed at all by the Commission. A few of the 115 key omissions catalogued by Professor David Ray Griffin:

- The omission of the fact that Zbigniew Brzezinski in his 1997 book had said that for the United States to maintain global primacy, it needed to gain control of Central Asia, with its vast petroleum reserves, and that a new Pearl Harbor would be helpful in getting the US public to support this imperial effort;
- The omission of the fact that Unocal had declared that the Taliban could not provide adequate security for it to go ahead with its oil-and-gas pipeline from the Caspian region through Afghanistan and Pakistan;

- The omission of the report that at a meeting in July 2001, US representatives said that because the Taliban refused to agree to a US proposal that would allow the pipeline project to go forward, a war against them would begin by October;
- The omission of evidence that some key members of the Bush administration, including Donald Rumsfeld and his deputy Paul Wolfowitz, had been agitating for a war with Iraq for many years;
- The omission of notes of Rumsfeld's conversations on 9/11 showing that he was determined to use the attacks as a pretext for a war with Iraq;
- The omission of the statement by the Project for the New American Century that "the need for a substantial American force presence in the Gulf transcends the issue of the regime of Saddam Hussein";
- The omission of the fact that the Project for the New American Century, many members of which became key figures in the Bush administration, published a document in 2000 saying that "a new Pearl Harbor" would aid its goal of obtaining funding for a rapid technological transformation of the US military;
- The omission of the fact that Donald Rumsfeld, who as head of the commission on the US Space Command had recommended increased funding for it, used the attacks of 9/11 on that very evening to secure such funding;
- The failure to mention the fact that three of the men who presided over the failure to prevent the 9/11 attacks—Secretary Rumsfeld, General Richard Myers, and General Ralph Eberhart—were also three of the strongest advocates for the US Space Command;
- The omission of any mention of the FBI agents who reportedly claimed to have known the targets and dates of the attacks well in advance;
- The omission of David Schippers's claim that he had, on the basis of information provided by FBI agents about upcoming attacks in lower Manhattan, tried unsuccessfully to convey this information to Attorney General Ashcroft during the six weeks prior to 9/11 [Schippers was lead investigative counsel for the House Judiciary Committee handling the impeachment of Bill Clinton];

- The omission of the report that Attorney General Ashcroft was warned to stop using commercial airlines prior to 9/11;
- The omission of reports that both Mayor Willie Brown and some Pentagon officials received warnings about flying on 9/11;
- The omission of Gerald Posner's account of Abu Zubaydah's testimony, according to which three members of the Saudi royal family—all of whom later died mysteriously within an eight-day period—were funding al-Qaeda and had advance knowledge of the 9/11 attacks;
- The Commission's denial that it found any evidence of Saudi funding of al-Qaeda;
- The omission of Coleen Rowley's claim that some officials at FBI headquarters did see the memo from Phoenix agent Kenneth Williams;
- The omission of Chicago FBI agent Robert Wright's charge that FBI headquarters closed his case on a terrorist cell, then used intimidation to prevent him from publishing a book reporting his experiences;
- The omission of evidence that FBI headquarters sabotaged the attempt by Coleen Rowley and other Minneapolis agents to obtain a warrant to search Zacarias Moussaoui's computer;
- The omission of the 3.5 hours of testimony to the Commission by former FBI translator Sibel Edmonds—testimony that, according to her later public letter to Chairman Kean, revealed serious 9/11-related cover-ups by officials at FBI headquarters;
- The omission of the fact that General Mahmoud Ahmad, the head of Pakistan's intelligence agency (the ISI), was in Washington the week prior to 9/11, meeting with CIA chief George Tenet and other US officials;
- The omission of evidence that ISI chief Ahmad had ordered \$100,000 to be sent to Mohamed Atta prior to 9/11;
- The Commission's claim that it found no evidence that any foreign government, including Pakistan, had provided funding for the al-Qaeda operatives;

- The omission of the fact that President Bush and other members of his administration repeatedly spoke of the 9/11 attacks as “opportunities”.

It is this researcher’s appraisal that negligence and incompetence can explain many things about the past six years, but they can explain neither these omissions nor the failure of the Bush administration to prevent the attacks of September 11th 2001.

A future commission will have the tragic job of explaining them in great detail.⁴⁰

Possible Objections to this Analysis

Apart from inevitable, irrelevant *ad hominem* attacks—for which this researcher is a uniquely easy target by virtue of controversial, vocal stands on certain major debates in science—a number of genuinely relevant objections will be raised this analysis. Let me respond to four of them in advance.

Objection: *Your list of facts suffers from selection bias; you’ve excluded a whole laundry list of other facts that support the official theory.*

This is true. Including certain other facts would have the effect of “diluting the red with a sea of green” in the official theory column in the table above. However that would in no way mitigate the implications of this analysis. For example, the huge list of facts that establish the scope and depth of radical Islamic terror networks—explored in books cited under Fact 2 above—are compatible with the nineteen hijackers theory. But again, because false flag operations work best when there pre-exists a real or perceived threat from those to be falsely blamed, those facts remain plausible or sensible in the other two theories.

The official conspiracy theory cannot be saved by flooding away un-supportive facts with supportive ones. It can only be saved by a scientifically and journalistically credible rationalization of not one, not two, but fifteen or more central facts which systematically contradict it, and which systematically support one or both complicity theories.

Objection: *Lots of your sources come from the Internet. They can't be trusted.*

This is a common refrain from folks who do not understand how to recognize quality reporting and research online. The sources cited above are, in almost every case, highly credible. They are uniformly well documented, themselves citing only official documents and authorities, respected journals and news sources, recorded first-person testimony and other equally credible information.

This analysis cannot be refuted on grounds of non-credible sources.

Objection: *Your analysis does not have benefit of access to classified material.*

This objection sounds helpful for the official theory. However, it is not. Surely if there existed evidence more strongly incriminating those charged with the official conspiracy, its substance would have been loudly shared by the administration by now; sources and methods would not need to be compromised to reveal any such substance.

The startling paucity of evidence available to convict the alleged bin Laden-hijacker cabal is itself a suspicious fact. Hysteria and “group think” about Islamic terrorism cannot constitute incriminating evidence in a particular case.

Objection: *Too many people would have to be involved for complicity to remain secret this long after 9/11.*

This objection is the hardest one for 9/11 researchers to deal with, for the scale and audacity of the operation under either complicity theory is breathtaking. However, they are the only theories compatible with the surveyed facts.

This objection is best answered by an estimate of the minimum degree of complicity required to carry out a false flag operation in the form of 9/11. Such an operation would plausibly require, at a minimum:

- A core group of insiders, numbering a dozen or so, with full knowledge of the plan. That group would have to include at least one or two officials at each of the following institutions: the White House, NSC, FBI, CIA, Pentagon and NORAD. They would each have a very specific set of responsibilities to cause certain things to happen, and prevent other things from happening.

- A second orbit of people, numbering a hundred or so, responsible for carrying out particular aspects of the operation or providing logistical support for core insiders. Wherever possible, they would be carrying out such tasks as part of other classified or confidential programs with other objectives, genuine or artificially-created. For example, this group would include support staff running secure air defense and communications systems for the White House and Pentagon leaders. As another example, consider the people who would have placed explosives in the WTC buildings and fired them on 9/11. Demolition charges could have been placed after the 1993 bombing, or in days prior to 9/11, as part of a reasonable contingency plan that would enable city officials, or their new owner, to “pull” the towers down cleanly, in their own footprints, in the event that they were at risk of falling into other buildings as result of a future bombing. This second group would have to be closely monitored following 9/11, as they represent the most likely risks for exposure of the operation.
- A third orbit of people, numbering in the thousands, serving useful roles but would have no knowledge that anything improper is afoot. They would only discover their unwitting involvement through consideration of this kind of retrospective analysis; they would be aware only of how one facet of the official story is incompatible with their experience. This group would include people involved in war games, FAA flight control, FEMA and FBI officials on site in New York City for a bio-terror exercise, security officers keeping the WTC clear, and contractors simply following orders to transport steel beams away from a disaster zone.

Given the massive scale of intelligence agencies and clandestine operations that have been kept from the public for decades, a false flag project of 9/11 scale would be tiny by comparison. It would, however, be extremely explosive and risky, and thus every contingency conceivable in advance would be covered.

Unfortunately, this conforms to what we see from the outside looking in five years later: a coherent, interlocking set of activities and programs specifically designed to cause 9/11 to happen, make it look like we simply failed to connect the dots in time and obstruct the release of any information that suggests otherwise.

Conclusion

It is clear from this survey that a large number of vital facts about 9/11 do not conform to the official conspiracy theory, and do conform to complicity or causation theories. If that represents the truth of the matter, then an enormous range of consequences, considerations, and possible futures emerge. They will be the subject of writings by this and many other researchers.

If this intersection of facts and theories stands up, then the core of the neoconservative movement is behind one of the greatest crimes in history. In that case, I have no doubt whatsoever that those involved had the good of the world in mind in formulating and carrying out the operation. After all, the logic would have gone, a few thousand people lost is a painful but small price to pay for strategically transforming the entire geopolitical order. I have equally little doubt that they honestly believed that, by 2006, Central Asia and the Middle East would be starting down the path to an astonishing liberation of Western-style democracy and freedom, and 9/11 would have been remembered in a different way as US forces were greeted with welcome arms by repressed populations of the region. Tragically naive, but I believe they believed it.

They certainly would not have predicted the state of world affairs their actions—and inaction—have yielded. Others did predict the conflict and chaos that could be unleashed if imperial ends and means were at the core of a New American Century.

If 9/11 was a false flag operation, whether and how we restore integrity to our nation is likely to be the greatest test our democracy has ever faced. Some have suggested that confronting the truth of 9/11 will bring down not just an administration, but the republic. On the contrary, I believe that the republic will be radically strengthened: its citizens will be smarter, its laws will be respected, its transparency will be reestablished, its policies will be restructured, its relations will be restored and its honor will be reclaimed.

The process itself can be an example to the world of the true potential of democracy to overcome the most pernicious kind of evil—the evil within.

NOTES

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