



THE PENTAGON'S B-MOVIE

Looking Closely at the
September 2001 Attacks

ratical.org
2023 edition

Graeme MacQuæen

Copyright © 2006-2009, 2011, 2014-2022 Graeme MacQueen

Cover art by Sadia Shahid

Copyright © 2023 rat haus reality press, all rights reserved

Source for the complete book containing all video data not included
in this edition are freely available at:

<https://ratical.org/PentagonsBMovie>.

The Pentagon's B Movie

Looking Closely at the September 11
Attacks

Graeme MacQueen

April 21, 2023

Suppose our imaginations can embrace the possibility that the 9/11 attacks were orchestrated by elements in the U.S. government. In that case what do we do next? There is no mystery. Once the imagination stops filtering out a hypothesis and allows it into the realm of the possible, it can be put to the test. Evidence and reason must now do the job. Imagination cannot settle the question of truth or falsity any more than ideology, morality, or “common sense.”

— Graeme MacQueen, 2017

Table of contents

A Note on This Printing	1
About the Author	3
Praise for The Pentagon’s B Movie collection	4
Preface and Acknowledgments	9
Post-script	12
Introduction	15
I. September 11 & Anthrax Attacks	23
1. September 11: The Pentagon’s B-Movie	25
The Filmic Nature of the September 11 Events	27
Not Just Filmic, But Exclusively Filmic	34
Our Challenge	47
2. War On Terror or War On Democracy? The Physical Intimidation of Legislatures	49
Introduction	49
Intimidating the U.S. Congress in the fall of 2001	53
A. The 9/11 Events	53
B. The 2001 Anthrax Attacks	59
Intimidating Canadian legislatures, 2013-14	62
A. The Provincial Legislature of British Columbia	62
B. The Parliament of Canada	66
Conclusions	76

Table of contents

Sources	77
11 Sep 2001	77
Anthrax	77
The Two Canadian Cases	77
3. Beyond Their Wildest Dreams: Sep 11 2001 and the United States Left	79
Introduction	79
9/11 and state officials facing imperial power	86
9/11 and public opinion	97
Conclusion	100
4. British Muslims Overwhelmingly Reject the Official 9/11 Story	103
Introduction	103
Anti-Semitism	107
Conspiracy theory and extremism	108
5. You Weren't Stupid, Mr. Brown!	113
Sources	121
6. Foreknowledge of World Trade 7's Collapse: The Challenge to the Official Hypothesis	123
Introduction	124
Foreknowledge	126
NIST's Unsatisfactory Explanation of WTC 7's Collapse	134
Evidence of Controlled Demolition: Witnesses	140
7. The Anthrax Attacks Were a False Flag Operation	147
Introduction	147
The Anthrax Attacks: A Refresher	151
The Failure of the FBI's Hypothesis	152
The Lone Nut	155

Table of contents

Restoring the Missing Connections	156
(1) Locations	156
(2) Crop-dusters	158
Restoring the Missing Motives	161
Breadcrumbs and Blockheads	169
8. False Flag Terror and the Passage of the Patriot Act, 2001	171
II. False Flag Analyses	185
9. JFK 55 Years On: Casting Light on the JFK Assassination as well as 9/11 and Other 21st Century Crimes	187
Introduction	188
The Grassy Knoll	190
The Magic Bullet	193
Political Implications of Grassy Knolls and Magic Bullets	195
10. Martin Luther King: The Saint Honored by the Government that Shot Him in the Face	197
11. One Year After Canada's October 22nd Shootings: We Need a Public Inquiry	205
Notes	212
12. Remember Pearl Harbor: Provoking Japan, Provoking North Korea	213
13. Triggering War: The Urgent Need to Understand Catalytic Events that Initiate War	225
Sources	234

Table of contents

14. Pipe Bombs: Frantic Denunciations of the False Flag	
Concept	235
Sources	240
15. The Betrayal of India: A Close Look at the 2008 Mumbai Terror Attacks	241
III. 9/11 Primary Source Evidence	251
16. 118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers	255
Introduction	255
The Body of Evidence	257
The Surprising Collapses	259
Hypotheses	260
Testing the Hypotheses through Observation	261
Evidence Supporting Sets of Hypotheses	265
Failure to Mention Explosions: the Argument from Silence	268
The Quality of the Cases	269
The Changing of Minds	270
The Oral Histories, the 9/11 Commission Report, and the NIST Report	272
Conclusions	275
Appendix A: List of Explosion Cases by Category	275
EXPLOSION CASES (TERM): 83 CASES	275
BLOW UP CASES (TERM): 19 CASES	277
BOMB CASES (TERM): 31 CASES	277
IMPLOSION CASES (TERM): 10 CASES	278
DEMOLITION CASES (DESCRIPTION): 20 CASES	278
OTHER CASES (DESCRIPTION): 10 CASES	278
Appendix B: Explosion Cases, Alphabetical: Text and Context	279

Appendix C: Non-Explosion Cases by Category: Text and	
Context: 10 Cases	325
DENIAL OF EXPLOSION: 2 CASES	325
PANCAKING (TERM): 7 CASES	326
PANCAKING (DESCRIPTION): 1 CASE	329
17. Eyewitness Evidence of Explosions in the Twin Towers	331
The explosion hypothesis was common on 9/11	335
There is strong eyewitness evidence supporting the explosion hypothesis	338
Quality	339
Quantity	348
Identification	352
Power	352
Pattern	353
Eyewitness evidence was ignored/suppressed by the 9/11 Commission and NIST	353
18. Sonic Booms in the Collapse of the Twin Towers?	357
Letter to the editors, Journal of 9/11 Studies, June 11, 2007 .	357
Conclusion	362
19. Waiting for Seven: WTC 7 Collapse Warnings in the FDNY Oral Histories	363
Abstract	363
Appendix A	380
Appendix B	381
Appendix C	383
Appendix D	388
Appendix E	391
20. The Missing Jolt: A Simple Refutation of the NIST-Bazant Collapse Hypothesis	393
Introduction	394

Table of contents

NIST’s Hypothesis of Total Collapse	395
The Necessary Jolt	399
Testing for Deceleration	401
Findings	411
Conclusions	413
AUTHORS	414
APPENDIX A	414
APPENDIX B	419
APPENDIX C	420
APPENDIX D	421
APPENDIX E	425
21. Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?	427
Abstract	427
Introduction	428
Timeline	431
What did LDEO do to come up with three extra sec- onds?	434
Toward Reliable Times for Collapse Initiation and Debris Strike	435
Seismic Evidence	448
NIST, FEMA and LDEO Establish the Context:	448
Accidental Seismometers:	450
The Case of the NY1 Video Camera*	456
Preliminary Conclusions:	461
Direct Corroboration	462
Indirect Corroboration: the Sounds of Collapse	473
Conclusions	477
APPENDIX A	480
APPENDIX B	481
APPENDIX C	481
APPENDIX D	492

22. How 36 Reporters Brought Us the Twin Towers' Explosive Demolition on 9/11	519
Television Coverage Compiled	522
Table 1: Television Coverage Compiled	523
Criteria for Defining 'Explosion' Versus 'Non-Explosion'	
Reporters	524
Eyewitness Reporting	524
Narrative Reporting	525
Source-based Reporting	527
Non-Explosion Reporters	528
Numerical Analysis of 'Explosion' and 'Non-Explosion'	
Reporters	529
Table 2A: Eyewitness Reporting by Explosion Reporters	530
Table 2B: Narrative Reporting by Explosion Reporters	531
Table 2C: Source-based Reporting by Explosion Re-	
porters	533
Table 2D: Non-Explosion Reporters	533
How Reporters Reported the Twin Towers' Destruction . .	534
Conclusion	535
Appendix A: Statements by 36 Explosion Reporters	535
1. George Stephanopoulos, ABC	536
2. Cynthia McFadden, ABC	536
3. Harold Dow, CBS	537
4. Tom Flynn, CBS	537
5. Mika Brzezinski, CBS	537
6. Pat Dawson, NBC	537
7. Anne Thompson, NBC	538
8. Aaron Brown, CNN	539
9. Rose Arce, CNN	540
10. Patty Sabga, CNN	541
11. Alan Dodds Frank, CNN	541
12. David Lee Miller, Fox News	541
13. Rick Leventhal, Fox News	542

Table of contents

14. Ashleigh Banfield, MSNBC	543
15. Rick Sanchez, MSNBC	545
16. John Bussey, CNBC Contributor, Wall Street Journal Reporter	546
17. Ron Insana, CNBC	547
18. Bob Pisani, CNBC	548
19. N.J. Burkett, WABC	548
20. Michelle Charlesworth, WABC	548
21. Nina Pineda, WABC	548
22. Cheryl Fiandaca, WABC	550
23. Joe Torres, WABC	550
24. Carol Marin, CBS Reporter appearing on WCBS .	551
25. John Slattery, WCBS	552
26. Marcella Palmer, WCBS	552
27. Vince DeMentri, WCBS	552
28. Walter Perez, WNBC	552
29. Kristen Shaughnessy, NY1	553
30. Andrew Siff, NY1	554
31. John Schiumo, NY1	554
32. Andrew Kirtzman, NY1	555
33. Jack Kelley, USA Today	555
34. First Unidentified Reporter at Giuliani and Pataki Press Conference	556
35. Marcia Kramer, WCBS, at Giuliani and Pataki Press Conference	556
36. Second Unidentified Reporter at Giuliani and Pataki Press Conference	557
Appendix B: Statements by Four Non-Explosion Reporters	557
1. Don Dahler, ABC	557
2. Drew Millhon, ABC	559
3. Bob Bazell, NBC	559
4. John Zito, MSNBC	560

Appendix C: Borderline Cases	560
1. Minah Kathuria, NBC	560
2. Brian Palmer, CNN	561
3. Maria Bartiromo, CNBC	561
23. The Triumph of the Official Narrative: How the TV Networks Hid the Twin Towers' Explosive Demolition on 9/11	565
Introduction	566
Our Argument	567
Numerical Analysis of Statements by News Anchors and Experts Articulating the Explosion Hypothesis	569
Table 1: Television Coverage Compiled	570
Table 2: Explosion Hypothesis Mentions by Network	570
↑ Table 3: Explosion Hypothesis Mentions by Time	571
Strategy One for Accomplishing the Triumph of the Official Narrative: An "Expert" Visits a News Anchor	572
↑ CNBC	572
↑ CNN	578
↑ CBS and ABC	582
Strategy Two for Accomplishing the Triumph of the Official Narrative: The War on Terror and Bin Laden Narratives	586
↑ (a) The War on Terror Narrative	589
↑ (b) The Bin Laden Narrative	603
↑ How the Stories Worked to Favor One Hypothesis of the Destruction of the Twin Towers	606
↑ How the Stories Suited the U.S. Temperament	607
↑ Narrative versus Evidence	607
Conclusion	608
24. Appendix A: Statements by News Anchors and Guests, and Lower Third Captions	611

Table of contents

IV. Postscript	613
Postscript	615

A Note on This Printing

This volume should be seen as a companion to the complete “digital book” at <https://ratical.org/PentagonsBMovie>.

The large number of videos referred to in these essays inevitably makes a PDF version incomplete. In addition, numerous gaps and formatting errors remain from the conversion to PDF format. Nevertheless, we hope that by providing the collection “in one place” this volume makes Graeme MacQueen’s essays more easily accessible.

Printing date: April 21, 2023. Please check back for updates.

About the Author



Figure 1.: The author at the Toronto Hearings, 2011

Graeme MacQueen received his Ph.D. in Buddhist Studies from Harvard University and taught in the Religious Studies Department of McMaster University for 30 years. While at McMaster he became founding Director of the Centre for Peace Studies at McMaster, after which he helped develop the B.A. program in Peace Studies and oversaw the development of peace-building projects in Sri Lanka, Gaza, Croatia and Afghanistan. He was a member of the organizing committee of the Toronto Hearings held on the 10th anniversary of 9/11, was a member of the international 9/11 Consensus Panel, and was co-editor of *The Journal of 9/11 Studies*.

Praise for The Pentagon's B Movie collection

We have been told that the truth will set us free. Less emphasized is how the truth will stalk, haunt and disquiet us along the way. Few of us really have the tenacity to dwell for any length of time with those sorts of truths. Doing so is like dwelling in deep waters where it's dark, cold, and the temptation to surface too quickly threatens us with a kind of spiritual bends. Fewer of us still try to give elusive truths their full account under the scrutiny of peers and public. Among these fewest of few, Graeme MacQueen stands out, making this remarkable collection of essays, spanning 15 years of epochal shifts in world affairs, one for the bookshelf of the ages.

Matthew Witt has a Ph.D. in urban studies from Portland State University and since 2001 has been [Professor of Public Administration, University of La Verne, California](#).

As I reflect on how I managed to penetrate the multi-layered shield of propaganda concealing the crimes of 9/11, I realize that two things were most important for me. On the one hand, there was the physical evidence, such as the free fall of Building 7, and, on the other hand, there were the writings and lectures of Graeme MacQueen.

Graeme MacQueen clothed the skeleton of physical evidence with a living body. His rigorous approach to evaluating available evidence is an outstanding example of the overwhelming power of science.

Ansgar Schneider, [physicist and mathematician](#), Dr. rer. nat. [Universität Göttingen](#), au-

Praise for The Pentagon's B Movie collection

thor of *Stigmatisierung statt Aufklärung* (Eng)
and *Generation 9/11* (Eng).

To read these works from across the years is to revisit an era of overwhelming darkness, to make our way again through the choking clouds of demolished concrete and disintegrated flesh. But this time we have a guide who lights our way.

There is no more incisive writer on the origins and upkeep of the Global War on Terror than Graeme MacQueen. Wielding elegant prose and irresistible logic, he parses eyewitness accounts and scientific absurdities, “failures of imagination” and National Security special effects. He is equal parts journalist, philosopher, media critic and political historian. Archivist *par excellence* Dave Ratcliffe has made these essential essays available just when we need them most, as the world comes to grips with yet another hideous agenda from the “pitiless oligarchs” that author them.

Read Graeme MacQueen and take strength.

John Kirby, director, *The American Ruling Class* and the forthcoming *Four Died Trying*.

Dr. Graeme MacQueen is one of the most knowledgeable researchers I know on the events of 9/11 and their sequelae. Besides his own deep, original research, he contributed tirelessly and effectively to the unique consensus project, the 9/11 Consensus Panel, from 2011 to 2018.

Elizabeth Woodworth, professional librarian and co-author of *9/11 Unmasked*; co-founder with Dr. David Ray Griffin of the 23-member *Consensus 9/11 Panel*.

About the Author

This volume draws together sixteen years of research documenting and analysing the multiple anomalies which lie at the heart of the official 9/11 narrative and other related events. The abundance of evidence presented here leads us toward dark and unpalatable truths about the events of 11 September 2001, and the extent to which our democracies have been subverted by nefarious actors. We are living through an age dominated by propaganda, deception and coercion. MacQueen's contribution, characterised by tenacity, integrity and intellectual rigour, provides us with the possibility of escape.

Piers Robinson, co-director, [Organisation for Propaganda Studies](#) and former Chair in Politics, Society and Political Journalism, University of Sheffield.

This new digital book from Graeme MacQueen is a most welcome addition to the body of knowledge about the crimes of 9/11 and related events. MacQueen's unique perspective and his careful analysis of events, processes, and language allow possible explanations for such historic events to be evaluated equitably and intelligently. The articles collected here demonstrate how future events of historic and political impact must be analyzed if we are to understand the truth behind crimes that facilitate war and government overreach.

Kevin Ryan, chemist, author of *Another Nineteen: Investigating Legitimate 9/11 Suspects*, Editor of *The Journal of 9/11 Studies*.

Graeme MacQueen is one of the foremost and consistent critics of the official narratives of 9/11. This event,

under-investigated still today, remains a key landmark in the evolution of neocon orthodoxy and its global footprint. To unpack 9/11 is to stoke a fire beneath the ramparts of the orthodoxy of uncritical silence that pervades almost the entirety of western mainstream media and universities.

Oliver Boyd-Barrett, *media analyst, author, Professor Emeritus of Media and Communication at Bowling Green State University, Ohio.*

MacQueen's work leaves future generations of researchers a legacy of profound importance. His meticulous analysis enables deeper understanding and ultimately the re-interpretation of pivotal but fraudulent events that were used to shape narratives and so to mind control (a mostly western) public into today's increasingly dystopian reality. His broad sweep of work is a wonderfully accessible and honest account of some of the most important events of recent decades; events such as 911 whose corollary has been further escalation of death and conflict as, for example, the 'War on Terror.' Since witnessing him deliver his analysis of New York firefighters speaking of 'explosions' in the Twin Towers, and reading 'The Toronto Hearings', I have great admiration for his work.

Dr Lucy Morgan Edwards spent the years before and after 911 in Afghanistan and is a former Political Advisor to the EU Ambassador and Author of *The Afghan Solution; the inside story of Abdul Haq, the CIA and how Western hubris lost Afghanistan.*

Those responsible for the crimes of 9/11 could not have

About the Author

anticipated the extraordinary commitment of Graeme MacQueen and others like him to interrogate the official story promoted by the Bush White House. Today it is fashionable for purportedly educated people to sneer and scoff about “conspiracy theories.” Regarding 9/11, many simply do not know the facts. Others, however, appear afraid to confront the smoldering reality that this meticulous work has done so much to uncover.

Sean Sweeney, Director, International Program for Labor, Climate and Environment, School of Labor and Urban Studies, City University of New York

Preface and Acknowledgments



Figure 2.: 2006: Graeme MacQueen as he began his 9/11 research

In 2022 I found myself facing an illness that threatened to end not only my research and writing but my life. With encouragement from Ted Walter—in whose debt I remain—I decided to pull together, for the first time, the articles and essays related to 9/11 that I had written since 2006. I was surprised to find that I had 23 pieces. I wondered how I might make them available.

I considered the idea of a digital volume, which might bear the

Preface and Acknowledgments

weight of Internet links, video clips and the like. Jim Douglass, from whom I have received such powerful inspiration over many years, encouraged me in this direction. We agreed that if anyone could bring this project to fruition it would be David Ratcliffe.

I suggested the idea to David and he immediately offered his services. Without him this volume would not exist. Dave: I offer you my profound gratitude.

I then asked Ed Curtin if he would write the Introduction to the volume. He at once agreed to take on the job. For this and so many other gifts, Ed, I thank you.

When I think of the years of sweat and tears that went into these articles, I am surprised to see how little of myself comes through. When I have allowed a space for feelings, I have tended to put in the anger and to forget to put in the love. How strange. Without the love there would be no anger.

Such few traces of autobiography as can be found here are mainly in the brief introductions to each piece, where the reader may hear that “I thought x or y,” “I was influenced by this or that event.” I don’t think apology for this self-indulgence is necessary.

Despite the hints of autobiography, I have chosen to organize the book by theme rather than by date. My densest writings were my earliest. I do not regret having adopted this tone—at the time the movement needed academic writing—but it seemed to me an unnecessarily stiff way to start this volume. So I decided to put the more accessible articles toward the beginning and the more challenging pieces in Section 3. Anyone who wants to read the articles in the order in which they were written can easily do so. We have included dates of publication in the Table of Contents.

If I were to try to thank all the people who supported me during my decades-long opposition to war I would fill many pages. If I concentrate on the inspiration and comradeship I needed to complete these particular pieces relating to the events of the fall of 2001 I may be able to manage the list.

Preface and Acknowledgments

First, I thank my family. Some 9/11 dissidents have to contend with criticism from their families. I have been extremely fortunate to have received full support from my wife Sharon and daughter Jessica, my sisters Meg and Lorna, and my brother Ken.

Second, I thank, in alphabetical order, my 9/11-related role models and friends.

I thank Kevin Barrett, Ji Won Baxter, Josh Benninger of the White Rose Coffee House, Catte Black of the *Off Guardian*, Carol Brouillet and David Chandler.

Michel Chossudovsky of *Global Research* was a constant supporter of me and of my writings.

I thank Jon Cole, Diana Collier of *Clarity Press*, James Corbett, Ed Curtin, Elias Davidsson, Paul Dekar, Barry Deutsch, Kee Dewdney, Jim Douglass, Stan Eaman and Tod Fletcher.

I thank Richard Gage for his kindness to me and for his great contribution to the movement.

I thank Johan Galtung and James Gourley.

David Ray Griffin helped me find myself in this movement, and without his encouragement I certainly would not have written my book on the anthrax attacks. He was a great man. His soul goes marching on.

I thank Libby Handros, Niels Harrit, Jim Hoffman, Herbert Jenkins, Steven Jones.

I thank my friend and colleague, Michael Keefer, for the sharing of ideas and the hours of laughter.

I thank John Kirby and Barry Kissin.

Atif Kubursi has been a supremely brave and loyal friend, and he has stuck with me through hard times.

I thank Marilyn Langlois, and I thank the members of the Lawyers' Committee for 9/11 Inquiry with whom I worked on the anthrax petition to the U.S. Congress.

I thank Kathleen MacKay, energy worker and meditation teacher extraordinaire, and I thank Kevin MacKay for his brilliance and his

Preface and Acknowledgments

devotion to social justice.

Fellow Canadians Laurie Manwell, Paul McArthur, Ray McGinnis and John McMurtry helped penetrate the gloom of mainstream Canadian thinking on 9/11, and they showed their friendship to me in many ways.

I thank Allan Merrill, Mark Crispin Miller, Jane Mulkewich, Martha Nalband, Geoffrey O'Neill, members of the "Propaganda in Focus" group, Gary Purdy, David Ratcliffe, Antonio Carlos Silva Rosa of *Transcend Media Service*, and Sean Sweeney.

Kevin Ryan, editor of *Journal of 9/11 Studies* and close friend, has been an inspiration for years, both for his insight and for his bravery.

I thank Vincent Salandria, my dear friends Jack and Joanna Santa Barbara, Ralph Schoenman, Heiko Schöing, Peter Dale Scott, Frances Shure, Andy Steele, Sean Sweeney, Tony Szamboti, Jarl von Arlyon, Mark Vorobej, Ted Walter, Mark Welch (my partner in the struggle for "freedom of information" in Canada), Matthew Witt and Donald Woodside.

Special gratitude I offer to fellow Canadians Elizabeth Woodworth, of the 9/11 Consensus Panel, Barrie Zwicker and Adnan Zuberi. We have shared information; we have supported each other; we have laughed hard.

Some of those named here have passed on, and the rest know that behind the blandness of this list lie humour, occasional conflict, deep connection, days of action, affection and tenderness.

Post-script

I am a strong believer in comparing—and tracing the connections between—fraudulent events of the sort discussed in this volume. Some will wonder why, therefore, I do not discuss the "pandemic," the "vaccine" and related recent exercises. Although I have read quite widely in these developing events, and developed an assessment (see the article, "The Anthrax Attacks Were a False Flag

Preface and Acknowledgments

Operation”), I have made no original contribution to the understanding of these events and it seems unlikely that I will be able to do so. I will have to leave the comparative and historical work to others.

All mistakes in this volume are my own. Likewise my own, and not to be blamed on the above-listed individuals, is my view of the Covid-19 event.

Introduction

by Edward Curtin



Graeme MacQueen's work is a testament to a man devoted to the search for truth and the freedom and peace that ensue from its discovery. I think it is surely not an accident that he is a Buddhist scholar and a former professor of religious and peace studies. In this regard, he reminds me of two other inspired theologians who carry the message of love and peace into the political realm where their extraordinary writing has given great hope to those yearning for truth and justice: [James W. Douglass](#) and [David Ray Griffin](#), the former the great JFK scholar and the latter the author of a dozen or so groundbreaking books on the events of September 11, 2001.

Introduction

In this book, which is a primer on government propaganda, Graeme continues to teach how illusions must be punctured and the veil of government secrecy parted, lessons gleaned from the core of the world's religions. That the truth will set us free is the essence of these teachings. Yet truth is a hard taskmaster and requires great courage, fortitude, and determination, which Graeme possesses in abundance, both in his person and in his writing.

Exposing the lies of the official versions of September 11, 2001, the anthrax attacks, etc. takes guts, for it causes conflict with family, friends, and authorities. It brands one a "conspiracy theorist" who has lost his reason. In Graeme's case this is hilarious, for you will nowhere find a writer who is less doctrinaire and who sticks more closely to evidence. In fact, I, an impetuous type, have sometimes found his approach a bit too cautious, but I have always come around to see the value in it and to trust that his conclusions are based on rigorous logic and evidence.

Sometimes a photograph can reveal a person's soul. I think the photo of Graeme that precedes his preface, taken in 2006 when he first embarked on his writing about the official lies of September 11, 2001, truly shows his spirit. Although in his late fifties, he looks very boyish, a bit of a rake, but with the countenance of a man deeply disturbed by what he is seeing through the eidola of official propaganda. There is a trace of both sorrow and determination in his eyes. His behatted head suggests a man ready to fish for truth in the deepest depths of an ocean of lies.

As a Buddhist scholar who has long known that creative writing and speech come freely from a state of mind different from, and higher than, the normal, I think it is self-evident that his inspired writing in this book is the result of a mind clarified by the realization that the inner and outer cannot be divorced, that life and death are one, and that looking out involves looking in.

For it seems to me self-evident, that those who oppose the consensus reality of a cruel and violent social order are also trying to

redeem themselves from the profound tricks the ego plays on us all, while they probe the deceptions of official propaganda. And while Graeme does not explicitly state the connections between his religious writing and research and the political analyses in this book, it is evident that his work makes manifest that “Reality” is one whole, and that the isolated individual self that separates the personal from the political has led to a badly broken world.

About a decade ago, I had the privilege of being asked to [review his brilliant book](#), *The 2001 Anthrax Deception*, that forms the basis for a few of the chapters in this collection. We became great friends. And if I have yet to say anything about the content of *The Pentagon’s B-Movie*, it is because while it is obvious that books are written by human beings (although this is changing with AI), who those authors really are is often elided.

“Great men do not play stage tricks with the doctrines of life and death: only little men do that,” wrote John Ruskin. As a compelling exposé of official stage tricks, Graeme is great, but you would never hear it from him.

He is humble and self-deprecating in the extreme. His laugh and sense of humor is contagious, although his writing only reflects this in a sentence here or there. But I have learned that those without a sense of humor or the ability to laugh at themselves are not to be trusted. Egos block the door to truth. And even as he has battled very serious illness over recent years, Graeme’s laughter on the subject of death is to me a sign of a man pure of heart and grateful for his life in all its complexity.

The articles in this collection were written over a span of sixteen years. Divided into three sections, they intersect to form a devastating critique of multiple matters, such as the government assassinations of JFK and MLK, various false flag events, but most especially September 11, 2001 and the subsequent anthrax attacks. It is impossible to read them sequentially and not be convinced of their truths. Each in its turn, reinforces the adage that “the emperor has no

Introduction

clothes.” More so, by stripping away every claim of the official narratives step-by-step, we see the emperor skinless as well, a skeleton caught dead to rights with its lethal lies conclusively exposed.

In many ways, the opening chapter, “9/11: The Pentagon’s B-Movie,” a tour-de-force, serves to foreshadow many of the themes that follow, concluding with “The Triumph of the Official Narrative: How the TV Networks Hid the Twin Towers Explosive Demolition on 9/11” with co-author Ted Walter.

Graeme makes clear from the start that it is the moving images of television and film that are central to the official propaganda. This is Plato’s allegory of the cave updated where shadows on the wall are used to delude people into not seeing what obviously happened if they turned toward the light. As **he writes**:

This “9/11 movie” reveals itself to careful investigators as scripted, directed and produced by the U.S. national security state. The movie does not represent the real world. It violates the rules operative in the real world, including the laws of physics. Audiences will remain in thrall to the spectacle and violence of the War on Terror only as long as they remain mesmerized by the B-movie of 9/11.

But as he knows, B-movies are often popular, especially when they are of the horror genre with their ability to traumatize the viewers, even when they might suspect they are being taken for a ride. One enters a monster film with belief suspended and often leaves it forgetting it was an illusion, for the movie has penetrated deep into one’s psyche. “Only when people sense the genuine danger,” he tells us, “and leave behind fiction and special effects will they be in a position to deal with the real monster that confronts us.” This demands seeing the evil and pitiless oligarchy responsible for 9/11 as the monsters they are.

Such truth can only be distinguished from the shadows when the audience leaves the theater of the absurd, exits into the light, and snaps out of the hypnotic state. Many never do, especially because the movies are not confined to movie theaters anymore. They are integral to modern day-to-day screen life. The moving images in people's heads often supplant reality, as Graeme **makes clear**:

But imagine what would happen if audiences remained convinced by the suspension of the laws of physics after they left the theatre? This, it seems to me, is what has happened with the events of September 11, 2001. Many people are still deceived by the special effects. They are still captured by the *movie* of 9/11.

And since the only way to exit from such horrors is mental, one often needs a wise guide. Graeme is that guide.

This book will jolt you back to reality with its concluding chapters where TV video news reports are used to show how the official narrative was quickly fashioned after initial television reports clearly showed that the buildings were blown up from within. **MacQueen again**:

Our conclusion was that evidence-free claims, combined with repetition and a dramatic yarn, were the major mechanisms used. We also found that the evident precision and coordination demonstrate the existence of—yes, we should acknowledge it—**an extremely ambitious and detailed conspiracy**. [my emphasis]

In conclusion, I would be remiss if I didn't mention how Graeme uses the concept of imagination as a probe to understand how it can be used to manipulate images by propagandists, particularly through moving images, but also how it can be used as a first step in undermining those official narratives. In this regard his castigation of leftists

Introduction

— Noam Chomsky Alexander Cockburn, Chris Hedges, et al. — and leftist media for their acceptance of the official lies of the JFK assassination and September 11, is significant. These people, by their overt or covert support of the government’s propaganda, have been key cogs in its success. **Graeme writes:**

Indeed, much of the Western left leadership and associated media not only trusted the FBI while ignoring Furtado, Chavez, the Venezuelan National Assembly and Fidel Castro; they also, through silence and ridicule, worked to prevent serious public discussion of the 9/11 controversy.

Among the U.S. left media that kept the silence, partially or wholly, are:

- Monthly Review
- Common Dreams
- Huffington Post
- Counterpunch
- The Nation
- The Real News
- Democracy Now!
- Z Magazine
- The Progressive
- Mother Jones
- Altnet.org
- MoveOn.org

Thus all these leftists, no matter what they say in their defense, bear great moral responsibility for the so-called War on Terror, the Patriot Act, the invasion of Iraq, the deaths of Muslims, etc., all of which emanate from the insider attacks of September 11 and the subsequent anthrax attacks. With leftists like these, the CIA’s courting of “the compatible left” (a term coined by the CIA’s Cord Meyer), begun in the 1950s, has achieved its greatest success. The pacification

of the liberal/left bourgeoisie has been extremely successful and continues to the present day.

There is no need for me to tell you more about the material in this great book. Just read it. As an adjunct to Graeme's fundamental book, *The 2001 Anthrax Deception*, this work tears off the veil of lies that has become the normative order for so many over the past few decades.

Whether this work frees many from the official lies or not, it is clear that Graeme has fulfilled his destiny to set us all free, if we so choose.

He pulls no punches and shows how September 11, 2001 and the anthrax attacks are an integrated inside job, serving to reinforce each other. You can ask no more of anyone.

He is an exemplar of a beautiful human being and a writer of profound importance.

This collection confirms that.

[Edward Curtin](#) is a writer (poet, journalist, novelist) and researcher beyond a cage of categories, a former professor of sociology and theology, and the author of *Seeking Truth in a Country of Lies*, among much else.

Part I.

**September 11 & Anthrax
Attacks**

1. September 11: The Pentagon's B-Movie

This essay, which has given its title to the book, asserts that 9/11 was a dramatic, filmed production and that this production was under the control of the Pentagon (and associated agencies), not al-Qaeda.

The essay is informal, but some of the material from the Fire Department of New York is here made public for the first time.

The essay was published in [Global Research](#), 31 August 2017

The events that took place in the United States on September 11, 2001 were real and they were extremely violent. As David Griffin has recently shown in detail, they also had catastrophic real-life consequences for both the United States and the world.¹

But these events were also deeply filmic (like a film) and they were presented to us through a narrative we now know to be fictional. This “9/11 movie” reveals itself to

¹*Bush and Cheney: How They Ruined America and the World* (Northampton, MA: Olive Branch Press, 2017) See Also: David Ray Griffin: [Why I Wrote Another 9/11 Book](#), *Journal of 9/11 Studies*, September 2016

1. *September 11: The Pentagon's B-Movie*



Figure 1.1.: September 11, 2001

careful investigators as scripted, directed and produced by the U.S. national security state. The movie does not represent the real world. It violates the rules operative in the real world, including the laws of physics. Audiences will remain in thrall to the spectacle and violence of the War on Terror only as long as they remain mesmerized by the B-movie of 9/11.

The Filmic Nature of the September 11 Events

Many people caught a whiff of Hollywood on September 11, 2001. According to **Lawrence Wright** (screenwriter of *The Siege*),

It was about an hour after the first trade centre came down that I began to make the connection with the movie, this haunting feeling at the beginning this looks like a movie, and then I thought it looks like my movie.²

Steve De Souza (screenwriter, *Die Hard I and II*) has said:

Well it did look like a movie. It looked like a movie poster. It looked like one of my movie posters.³

The 9/11 attacks were filmic in at least the following ways:

- Given the complex and coordinated nature of these attacks, they had been *scripted* and given a timeline in advance;
- given the need to make decisions as the attacks progressed (for example, when an aircraft went off course or was delayed), it is clear that there was a *director*;

²“September 11: A Warning from Hollywood,” *BBC Panorama* (BBC, March 24, 2002). [WBM]

³*Ibid.*

1. September 11: The Pentagon's B-Movie

- given the overall vision, the need for funds, resources and international coordination over a period of years, it is obvious that there had been a *producer*;
- given the numerous roles played in this event (for example, by the “hijackers”), there were undoubtedly *actors*.

In addition, the event included the key dramatic elements of conflict, violence and spectacle.⁴ The entire production was filmed from several angles, and the films, sometimes in the rough and sometimes cleverly edited, were shown many, many times all over the world.

Official U.S. sources rapidly acknowledged the remarkably filmic nature of these events. In October, 2001 some two dozen Hollywood writers and directors were assembled “to brainstorm with Pentagon advisers and officials in an anonymous building in L.A.”⁵ [The Army's Institute for Creative Technologies](#) was the lead organization.⁶ The assembled group was assumed to have relevant expertise and was asked to brainstorm about what future attacks might look like so that the Pentagon could be prepared. (“We want some left-field, off-the-wall ideas; say the craziest thing that comes into your mind”).⁷

While the bare fact of this consultation was widely reported by news media, further details about the three-day consultation have been hard to come by. Reporters have had their FOIA requests denied.⁸

Beneath this consultation lay the “failure of imagination” hypothesis. Although the hypothesis emerged almost immediately after

⁴Spectacle, the visual aspect of dramatic action, was included in Aristotle's *Poetics* as an essential element of drama. As for conflict and violence, see Lew Hunter, *Lew Hunter's Screenwriting 434* (New York: Perigee, 1993), pp. 19, 22 ff. See Also: Guy Debord's *The Society of the Spectacle* and *Comments on the Society of the Spectacle*

⁵“Hollywood: The Pentagon's New Advisor,” *BBC Panorama* (BBC, 2002) [WBM]; Sharon Weinberger, “Hollywood's Secret Meet,” *Wired*, March 16, 2007.

⁶Weinberger, “Hollywood's Secret Meet.”

⁷“Hollywood: The Pentagon's New Advisor.” [WBM]

⁸Weinberger, “Hollywood's Secret Meet.”



Figure 1.2.: The poster for the movie “Die Hard”

1. September 11: The Pentagon's B-Movie

September 11, it was given especially clear expression in a BBC Panorama programme aired on March 24, 2002.⁹ **Steve Bradshaw** interviewed representatives of Hollywood and of national security institutions. The Pentagon, we were supposed to believe, is a typical large bureaucracy characterized by inertia. It is unable to imagine, and to rapidly respond to, new and emerging threats. It is stuck in the past. It is also afraid to irritate the general population by appearing to be politically incorrect—by looking, in this case, at Islam as a threat. Fortunately, there are two sets of people with imagination and courage: a small number of people within the national security apparatus who were trying to warn the Pentagon but were ignored, and Hollywood screenwriters and directors, who had imagination, who had some contact with the national security dissidents, and who had the courage to risk being called Islamophobic.¹⁰

So the planes of September 11, when they burst on the scene, confirmed the imaginative prescience of Hollywood, supported the courageous faction of the national security apparatus, and embarrassed the national security bureaucracy, which had to lower itself in October, 2001 to meet with the purveyors of fiction in order to stimulate its sclerotic brain.

This failure of imagination hypothesis was supported by statements by **George W. Bush**¹¹ and, even more famously, by **Condoleezza Rice**:

I don't think anybody could have predicted that these people would 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.¹²

⁹"September 11: A Warning from Hollywood."

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹George W. Bush, "President Addresses the Nation in Prime Time Press Conference," (U.S. government archives, April 13, 2004). [WBM]

¹²Condoleezza Rice, "Press Briefing by National Security Advisor Dr. Condoleezza

The Filmic Nature of the September 11 Events

The hypothesis became more or less official when it was adopted by the 9/11 Commission in its report on the attacks.¹³

Of course, given the filmic nature of 9/11, it is clear that, according to these official U.S. sources, there was another group—beyond Hollywood and a few national security malcontents—that had imagination, namely al-Qaeda.

Robert Altman (director of *MASH*, *McCabe and Mrs. Miller* and many other films) said in 2002 that Hollywood was to blame for the 9/11 events.

The movies set the pattern, and these people have copied the movies. Nobody would have thought to commit an atrocity like that unless they'd seen it in a movie.¹⁴

Presumably, by “these people” Altman meant al-Qaeda. Perhaps it was while munching popcorn and watching a Hollywood movie that **Osama bin Laden** and his high-level companions got the idea for 9/11? This is possible. But would it not make sense to ask if it is true that the Pentagon has no imagination, and that it was incapable of picturing attacks like those of the fall of 2001?

Collaboration between Hollywood and U.S. government agencies goes back at least as far as WW II. Indeed, a [1943 memo from the OSS](#) (forerunner of the CIA) noted that,

The motion picture is one of the most powerful propaganda weapons at the disposal of the United States.¹⁵

Rice,” (U.S. government archives, May 16, 2002). [WBM]

¹³Alec Russell, “9/11 Report Condemns ‘failure of Imagination,’” *The Telegraph*, July 23, 2004. [WBM]

¹⁴Sean Alfano, “Altman says Hollywood ‘created atmosphere’ for September 11,” *The Guardian*, October 18, 2001. [WBM]

¹⁵“The Motion Picture As A Weapon of Psychological Warfare.” Matthew Alford, *National Security Cinema: The Shocking New Evidence of Government Control in Hollywood* (Drum Roll Books, 2017), p. 31. The document itself can be found on [the Internet](#).

1. September 11: The Pentagon's B-Movie

Many Hollywood films and TV programs have, therefore, been supported by the Pentagon, and some have been supported by the CIA. Such support can be crucial for films that require U.S. military assets such as planes and helicopters. But support is not automatic. The script must first be approved, and emendations may be demanded by the national security agency in question. In a recent book on this subject (*National Security Cinema: The Shocking New Evidence of Government Control in Hollywood*), authors **Tom Secker** and **Matthew Alford** list 814 films and 1133 TV titles that received DOD support.¹⁶

Since many of these films are highly imaginative constructions, how can it be that the national security agencies that have helped bring them to fruition have remained trapped in their grey, unimaginative world? Presumably, we are to believe that it is the nature of a bureaucracy to restrict these imaginative insights to one part of the organization—say, the Army's [Institute for Creative Technologies](#)—while neglecting to disseminate them to other parts of the national security state. But is this true?

Those familiar with the [History Commons research project on 9/11](#) will know that it is not true at all. Here are 16 titles from that project ([selected from a much longer list](#)) that refer to pre-9/11 exercises and simulations by U.S. government agencies:¹⁷

- November 7, 1982: [Port Authority Practices for Plane Crashing into the WTC](#)
- 1998-September 10, 2001: [NORAD Operations Center Runs Five 'Hijack Training Events' Each Month](#)
- 1998-2001: [Secret Service Simulates Planes Crashing into the White House](#)
- October 14, 1998: ['Poised Response' Exercise Prepares for Bin Laden Attack on Washington](#)

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷"[History Commons: Military Exercises Up to 9/11](#)," Complete 911 Timeline.

The Filmic Nature of the September 11 Events

- Between 1999 and September 11, 2001: NORAD Practices Live-Fly Mock Shootdown of a Poison-Filled Jet
- Between September 1999 and September 10, 2001: NORAD Exercises Simulate Plane Crashes into US Buildings; One of Them Is the World Trade Center
- November 6, 1999: NORAD Conducts Exercise Scenario Based around Hijackers Planning to Crash Plane into UN Headquarters in New York
- June 5, 2000: NORAD Exercise Simulates Hijackers Planning to Crash Planes into White House and Statue of Liberty
- October 16-23, 2000: NORAD Exercise Includes Scenarios of Attempted Suicide Plane Crashes into UN Headquarters in New York
- May 2001: Medics Train for Airplane Hitting Pentagon
- June 1-2, 2001: Military Conducts Exercises Based on Scenario in which Cruise Missiles Are Launched against US [“Osama bin Laden is pictured on the cover of the proposal for the exercise”]
- July 2001: NORAD Plans a Mock Simultaneous Hijacking Threat from inside the US
- Early August 2001: Mass Casualty Exercise at the Pentagon Includes a Plane Hitting the Building
- August 4, 2001: Air Defense Exercise Involves the Scenario of Bin Laden Using a Drone Aircraft to Attack Washington
- September 6, 2001: NORAD Exercise Includes Terrorist Hijackers Threatening to Blow Up Airliner
- September 9, 2001: NEADS Exercise Includes Scenario with Terrorist Hijackers Targeting New York

It is not necessary to find an exercise here that perfectly matches the attacks of the fall of 2001. The point is that there is far too much imagination and far too much similarity to the actual attacks of the fall of 2001 to support the “failure of imagination” hypothesis. Hollywood participants in the October, 2001 brainstorming exercise, who thought they were being tapped for their imagination, were conned.

1. September 11: The Pentagon's B-Movie

Who was better prepared, through both imagination and logistical capacity, to carry out the attacks of the fall of 2001—Bin Laden's group or the U.S. national security state? The latter had been practising steadily, in relevant scripted training operations, for years, and it had the power and resources to bring the imaginative scenarios to reality. Al-Qaeda was not remotely its match.

Not Just Filmic, But Exclusively Filmic

If this business of the filmic nature of the September 11 attacks involved only Hollywood scriptwriters we might be tempted to regard it as nothing but a minor distraction. But what we find is that even members of the Fire Department of New York, risking their lives at the scene, were shocked by the filmic nature of what they witnessed.¹⁸

EMS **Chief Walter Kowalczyk**: “I thought I was at an event at Universal Studios, on the side, watching a movie being taped.”

EMT **Peter Cachia**: “I remembered hearing Lieutenant D’Avila coming over the radio and saying Central be advised, a second plane just went into the second tower. We ran out and we saw the second plane. It was like watching a movie. It really was.”

Chief Steve Grabher: “I looked over my shoulder and you could see the whole top of the south tower leaning towards us. It looked like it was coming over. You could

¹⁸*The New York Times*, having obtained the World Trade Center Task Force interviews from the City of New York through a lawsuit, hosts the documents on its website. The interviews are in the form of separate PDF files. Each file is identified by the interviewee's name. “[World Trade Center Task Force Interviews](#)” (City of New York, 2002 2001).



Figure 1.3.: The violent destruction of the North Tower

1. September 11: The Pentagon's B-Movie

see the windows pop out just like in the picture, looked like a movie. I saw one floor of windows pop out, like poof, poof. I saw one and a half floors pop out.”

EMT **Michael Mejias**: “The building started collapsing, the north tower started collapsing. It tipped down first and then the thing fell within itself. It was an amazing sight to see. It was really unbelievable. I thought I was watching a movie with special effects.”

Fire Marshal **Steven Mosiello**: “As I’m looking up at this stuff that’s going on up there now, I just like — I’m saying to myself I’ve seen this in a movie. My whole recollection is going back to a movie or something I saw. I just saw this before.”

Firefighter **Edward Kennedy**: “... it looked like a bomb, of course, had gone off, almost like a nuclear bomb. That’s all I could think of. I’ve never been at war. I equated it to being like when I saw something like when I was a kid and I saw Godzilla in the movies or something, when he crushes those buildings and stuff like that, that’s what it looked like to me.”

Firefighter **Tiernach Cassidy**: “I’m standing on top of the rig between the bucket and the cab, between the ladder and the cab. People were blessing themselves in this gloominess of going down. It was like out of a movie. I couldn’t believe what was going on.”

Firefighter **Daniel Lynch**: “I just recall that those first — those first minutes from the time that sound started, the rumbling started to occur and the dust started to fall and then stopped to get gear and equipment from the

fire truck and then continue down to West Street and getting there and seeing the crushed fire trucks, crushed cars, vehicles on fire. It was like a movie set.”

Battalion **Chief Brian Dixon**: “Then like a Godzilla movie, everybody that had been standing in that little park there across from One Liberty Plaza and had been just looking up and watching the north tower burn just started running eastbound like they were being chased by someone.”

EMP **Peter Constantine**: “Then, you started to run, your [sic] helping people, helping them run. You saw it, it was amazing ... like out of a movie, you know, the cloud’s just chasing you. As you look back, you see it engulf people.”

EMS **Captain Frank D’Amato**: “... as I turned on Albany I looked over my shoulder and I saw the big cloud of dust that was already on the ground like just making its way down the block, just like a movie.”

EMT **Russell Harris**: “The first thing came in my mind was the movie Armageddon, and this was reality, with the black smoke 30 floors high, debris falling everywhere.... Because I have never seen anything like that in 21 years of emergency work.”

EMT **Christopher Kagenaar**: “Then as soon as we got over there, as soon as we got off of the Brooklyn Bridge, the people were running like it was a Godzilla movie, and we had to stop there for a while. People were overcome, were shaken, were scared ...”

1. September 11: The Pentagon's B-Movie

Paramedic **Robert Ruiz**: “But I ran and ran, and finally I could see the light. When I got to where the tunnel was, I’m looking everywhere. It was just like that movie the day after with the atomic bomb. They drop it and nobody’s left and I’m the only one.”

Rosario Terranova: “I remember seeing the rubble, seeing the rubble fall and actually start to chase down the street, and, you know, it’s strange because you wouldn’t expect — you wouldn’t expect debris to do that, but it literally traveled, like, you would see these movies with like a tidal wave that flows through the streets and hits down any path it can.”

These comments, selected from a wider set of similar comments, are intriguing, but what is their significance? As we examine them closely we recognize that the September 11 event was not just filmic but exclusively filmic. By this I mean that the narrative presented to us by authorities could not have unfolded outside of a film.

Since at least as early as 1902, when the French film *A Trip to the Moon* (*Le Voyage dans la Lune*) took its viewers into space, audiences have been enjoying the ability of movies to deliver dramatic action through special effects, and especially by suspending, fictionally, the laws of physics. This is part of the power of film and there is nothing inherently wrong with it. But it is important to know when we are in the theatre and when we are not.

In the original 1933 film, *King Kong*, director **Merian Cooper** was determined to make the appearance of his monster dramatically powerful, and to this end was prepared to change the monster’s size repeatedly to fit particular scenes.

“I was a great believer in constantly changing Kong’s height to fit the settings and the illusions. He’s different in almost every shot; sometimes he’s only 18 feet (5.5 m)

tall and sometimes 60 feet (18.3 m) or larger.... but I felt confident that if the scenes moved with excitement and beauty, the audience would accept any height that fitted into the scene.”¹⁹

Cooper understood what mattered in a movie. But imagine what would happen if audiences remained convinced by the suspension of the laws of physics after they left the theatre? This, it seems to me, is what has happened with the events of September 11, 2001. Many people are still deceived by the special effects. They are still captured by the *movie* of 9/11.

Consider two of the most traumatizing elements in the attacks, the disappearance of the Twin Towers and the ensuing debris cloud.

The destruction of the Twin Towers stunned first responders. Their previous experiences, including experiences with high-rise fires, did not lead them to suspect these buildings would come down.

Lieutenant Warren Smith: “I’ve worked in Manhattan my whole career in high rises and everything else ... you looked back, all you see—you know how fast those buildings came down ... it just doesn’t click that these buildings can come down ... you just couldn’t believe that those buildings could come down ... there’s no history of these buildings falling down.”²⁰

EMS **Captain Mark Stone:** “whoever in their right mind would have thought that the World Trade Center would ever fall down ... Nobody in the world, nobody ever would ever have thought those buildings were coming down.”²¹

¹⁹From an interview with Cooper quoted in “King Kong,” *Wikipedia*, accessed August 6, 2017.

²⁰“World Trade Center Task Force Interviews.” See note 18.

²¹*Ibid.* See note 18.

1. September 11: The Pentagon's B-Movie

Investigations over the last 16 years have demonstrated that the first responders' surprise was justified. The explanations offered by official U.S. agencies have been shown to violate basic laws of physics.²²

Awed by the spectacle of the Twin Towers coming down, and by the later fall of World Trade 7, we are supposed to forget our high school physics. We are not supposed to notice that the official explanations given to us leave these spectacles every bit as peculiar as King Kong's ever-changing size.

So this central dramatic element, as edited for TV, interpreted by ponderous official voices, and played repeatedly for a world audience, belonged to the *9/11 movie*. Behind the scenes the director had ordered that explosive charges be set in the buildings.

Well over one hundred members of the Fire Department of New York witnessed explosions at the beginning of the so-called collapses of the Twin Towers.²³ Their testimony fits with the controlled demolition hypothesis and does not fit with the script of the *9/11 movie*. Since promotion of the government's movie would have been difficult if these voices were heard, they were suppressed.

The second deeply impressive event of September 11, which appears repeatedly in the FDNY musings about the filmic nature of what they witnessed, was the cloud of material that rushed through the streets of Manhattan in the wake of the destruction of each of the Towers. Several films are mentioned by name in this connection, including those featuring Godzilla, King of Monsters, created for Japanese films less than ten years after the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as a deliberately provocative meditation on

²²The best summary in recent years is Ted Walter, *BEYOND MISINFORMATION: What Science Says About the Destruction of World Trade Center Buildings 1, 2, and 7*, PDF copy (Berkeley, California: Architects & Engineers for 9/11 Truth, Inc., 2015).

²³Graeme MacQueen, "118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers," *Journal of 9/11 Studies*, August 2006.

the forces of the nuclear age.²⁴

The FDNY World Trade Center Task Force interviews give a lively sense of what it felt like to be trapped in this debris cloud.²⁵

EMT **Renaë O'Carroll**: I'm about ten feet in front of it, running, actually sprinting because I'm an athlete and I'm running ... Ash came around another building in front of me, and it caught me in front of me and in back of me, and everything was pitch-black. Where it hit me from the front and the back, it actually lifted me off the ground and threw me. It was like someone picked me up and just threw me on the ground.

Everything was pitch-black. You couldn't see anything. All I saw was big bolts of fire, fire balls. I could feel the heat around me. It was pitch-black. I couldn't see anything at all. My lungs, my airways, everything filled up with ash. I couldn't breathe."

Timothy Burke: "All of a sudden the noises stopped, the sound of the building falling stopped. We all turned around and it was dark now. We really couldn't see ... The cloud was in there. All eating the cloud, whatever it was like, very thick. I keep saying it was like a 3 dimensional object. It wasn't smoke. It was like everything. It was like a sand storm." Firefighter

EMT **Mary Merced**: "So I'm running, and people are running in front of me. They stop. They turn around. I think everything's over with. So I stop, all of a sudden the thing is coming at us. It was like in dark hell, like

²⁴Tim Martin, "Godzilla: Why the Japanese Original Is No Joke," *The Telegraph*, May 15, 2014.

²⁵"World Trade Center Task Force Interviews." See note 18.

1. September 11: The Pentagon's B-Movie

a nuclear blizzard. I couldn't explain it. You couldn't see in front of you. You couldn't breathe. You're inhaling. You're coughing. You're running. You can't see anything.”

Paramedic **Louis Cook**: “You still can't see it because it's dark as a mother. You can't breathe. It's so heavy with smoke and dust and ash.

I can't breathe. I have, for lack of a better term, dust impaction in my ears, in my nose. I was coughing it out of my mouth. It felt like I had a baseball in my mouth. I was just picking it out with my fingers.



Figure 1.4.: People on 9/11 running from the debris cloud

As is clear from these testimonies, words like “smoke” and “dust” do not do justice to the cloud in which people were trapped. That is because *the clouds were the Towers*. Each Tower was converted in less than 20 seconds from a powerful, massive structure over 415 metres (1362 feet) high into cut steel and pulverized matter. While the

steel lay on the ground, much of the remainder was rapidly propelled through the streets of Manhattan.

Just as the dramatic tale of building destruction involved deception, so did the equally dramatic tale of this engulfing cloud. This cloud was not the result of a gravitational collapse caused by Muslim terrorists flying planes into buildings. It was the result of an explosive building demolition.

That this cloud could not have been caused in the manner claimed by the official narrative has been argued several times, beginning at least as early as 2003.²⁶ The demonstrations are independent of the proofs of explosive destruction of the buildings.

Credible scientists have calculated the amount of potential gravitational energy in the Twin Towers—the only major form of energy available, according to the official narrative, at the time of the “collapse” since the energy contributed at that point by the fires was minimal and indirect—and have compared it to the amount of energy that would have been required to create the pulverized debris cloud.

Professor emeritus of civil engineering, **Robert Korol**, has recently discussed this issue.²⁷ He has calculated the gravitational

²⁶The earliest attempt I know of is by Jim Hoffman. See “The North Tower’s Dust Cloud: Analysis of Energy Requirements for the Expansion of the Dust Cloud Following the Collapse of 1 World Trade Center, Version 3.1,” *9-11 Research*, October 16, 2003. [WBM / WBM, v3.1]

²⁷Walter, *BEYOND MISINFORMATION: What Science Says About the Destruction of World Trade Center Buildings 1, 2, and 7*. See Chapter 3, note 13:

The calculation of the energy required to pulverize the concrete and dismember the structures of WTC 1 and WTC 2, and the gravitational potential energy contained in each building, is based upon the following calculations and assumptions:

Gravitational Potential Energy Contained in Each Building (i.e. Total Building Mass): 2.765 mega kilograms [single floor mass of upper 12 floors (see *Some Misunderstandings Related to WTC Collapse Analysis*), which equates to 2.765×10^6 joules x 105 [number of floors (5 floors are subtracted from 110 floors to account for 5-story debris pile)] x 1.05 [to account for increasing

1. September 11: The Pentagon's B-Movie

potential energy of each of the Towers at 508.4×10^9 joules. He has calculated the energy required to pulverize the concrete of each Tower at 857.5×10^9 joules; the energy to destroy the perimeter

mass of lower floors due to increasing thickness of columns] x 9.81 [gravitational constant] x 170 [the distance in meters to the center of gravity of the building above the 5th [floor] = 508.4×10^9 joules of gravitational potential energy.

Energy Required to Pulverize Concrete: Estimates vary based on kind of concrete, assumed ratio of loading area to slab area, and assumed size of dust particles generated. Based upon scenarios detailed in a 2012 publication “Energy absorption potential of light weight concrete floors,” *Can J of Civ Eng* pp. 1193-1201, authored by R. M. Korol and K.S. Sivakumaran, an estimate of 857.5×10^9 joules is obtained.

Energy Required to Destroy Perimeter Columns: 120 [number of perimeter columns assumed to fail by mid-height hinge plastic bending] x 9.11×10^6 joules [energy required to cause mid-height hinge plastic bending] x 105 [number of floors] + 120 [number of perimeter columns assumed to fail by crushing] x 8.348×10^6 [energy required to cause crushing] x 105 [number of floors] = 219×10^9 joules. The energy values noted above are based on two publications by Korol and Sivakumaran: “[Reassessing the Plastic Hinge Model for Energy Dissipation of Axially Loaded Columns](#)” (*J of Structures*, 2014, 7 pages) and “[Energy Dissipation Potential of Square Tubular Steel Columns Subjected to Axial Compression](#)” (*Inter. Review of Civ. Eng.*, 2011, pp. 46-51).

Energy Required to Destroy Core Columns: 47 [number of core columns, all assumed to fail by mid-height hinge plastic bending] x 36,070 joules [energy required to cause mid-height hinge plastic bending] x 105 [number of floors] = 178×10^9 joules.

Total Energy Required to Pulverize the Concrete and Dismember the Steel Structures (i.e. the sum of the three previous calculations): $(857.5 + 219 + 178) \times 10^9$ joules = $1,254.5 \times 10^9$ joules, or 1,255 gigajoules.

Full references to Korol's articles can be found at Adnan Zuberi's compilation accompanying “[9/11 in the Academic Community: Academia's Treatment of Critical Perspectives on 9/11—Documentary](#)”: [Academic Papers](#)

columns at 219×10^9 joules; and the energy to destroy the core columns at 178×10^9 joules. The total energy required for the concrete and columns is $1,254.5 \times 10^9$ joules.

Simply put, these figures suggest that it would have taken about two and a half times the amount of energy available through gravity to have destroyed the Towers as witnessed.

Professor Korol's calculations are based on experimental work he has done in the laboratory, the results of which have been published in peer-reviewed journals. He has pulverized concrete. He has buckled and crushed columns. He has measured the force required in each case. His calculations with respect to the Twin Towers are extremely conservative in that they do not attempt to include all forms of destruction attested, such as pulverizing of walls, furniture and human bodies.

If, moreover, we were to add to his calculations the energy required to propel the pulverized buildings in all directions through the streets of Manhattan, as some authors have done, we would find the impossibility of the official narrative even more striking.²⁸ The comment by the FDNY's Terranova, quoted earlier—"you wouldn't expect debris to do that—" is an understatement.

We cannot avoid the conclusion that the gravity-caused debris cloud was exclusively filmic just like King Kong's fluctuating height. Both honoured the rules of dramatic action by violating the laws of physics.

The apparently fanciful references to Godzilla by first responders are actually perceptive. Gravity was aided by an extremely muscular destructive force. But in Godzilla movies the monster is visible, while the monster of the 9/11 movie was invisible and must be made visible through investigation.

²⁸Hoffman, "The North Tower's Dust Cloud: Analysis of Energy Requirements for the Expansion of the Dust Cloud Following the Collapse of 1 World Trade Center, Version 3.1.,"; Reijo Yli-Karjanmaa, "Energetic Examination of the Collapse of the North Tower of the WTC, Version 3.1," June 18, 2005.

1. September 11: The Pentagon's B-Movie



Figure 1.5.: A poster for the 1956 movie *Godzilla, King of the Monsters!*

Our Challenge

In the 1958 trailer for the B-movie, *The Blob*, film-goers are shown sitting in a theatre as a horror movie begins.²⁹ They are frightened, but only in the distant way that film audiences allow themselves to feel frightened by fictional representations. Then we notice the monster (“the Blob”) oozing into the theatre itself. As the movie-goers wake up to this reality and sense the real danger, they tear their eyes from the screen and run from the theatre.

As audiences today watch the War on Terror, hypnotized by the extremist evil-doers, a pitiless oligarchy creeps unseen into the room. Our challenge is to break the spell of the B-movie of 9/11. Only when people sense the genuine danger and leave behind fiction and special effects will they be in a position to deal with the real monster that confronts us.

Images in this article are from the author.

²⁹ *Trailer, The Blob*, 1958.

2. War On Terror or War On Democracy? The Physical Intimidation of Legislatures

The process of weakening democracies, not only through terrorizing citizens but by directly intimidating their elected representatives, was a key characteristic of the attacks (9/11 and anthrax) of the fall of 2001 and of the ensuing “War on Terror”.

Examples are drawn from the US and Canada.

This is the text of a talk given at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, on Nov. 18, 2015, and then edited for publication in *Truth and Shadows*.

Introduction

Good evening. I have two sets of introductory comments.

First, my aim tonight is not to prove each of my assertions with a wealth of evidence but to survey four cases briefly in order to reveal a *pattern*. If you feel I may be on to something it will be up to you to look at these cases in more detail.

Secondly, as a Canadian addressing other Canadians, I want to note that I am aware of the taboos this talk is violating. I will be

2. *War On Terror or War On Democracy? The Physical Intimidation of Legislatures*



Figure 2.1.: U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell holding up vial of simulated anthrax at UN Security Council meeting as he makes the case for the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

making claims, and pointing out patterns, that are unwelcome in mainstream society today in Canada. The taboos are held in place with heavy silence and with ridicule, and they are, in my opinion, crucial to the maintenance of the War on Terror.

The taboos are strong in the media, the universities, and in all sectors of government. Since my theme today has to do with legislatures, and since we have just experienced a federal election in Canada, I will give two recent examples from the political arena.

Although the two examples concern the Liberal Party, I am not implying this party is alone in its observance of this taboo. As far as I can discover the taboo is found in all of Canada's major political parties.

While the election campaign was in full swing there was much searching through the records of all candidates (their social media records, for example) by opposing parties for material that could be used to discredit them. It turned out that two Liberal candidates had at one point in the past expressed skepticism about the official account of 9/11. The discovery of this material immediately created a crisis. Both candidates quickly made formal public statements:

(a) "I want to be extremely clear. I do not question any aspects of what occurred during the tragic events on September 11th, 2001. Let there be no doubt about it."

Maria Manna, Liberal candidate in British Columbia

(b) "Let's be crystal clear: I have never and do not question the events which took place on Sept. 11, 2001."

David Graham, Liberal candidate in Quebec

These are peculiar statements. They do not seem to have been written independently and they verge on the incomprehensible. What, after all, does it mean to say you do not question an event? The verb "question" would normally mean in such a context "to doubt." But how can we doubt an event? An event is what it is. Perhaps the writer of these statements is using the verb to mean, "to have questions about." But surely the candidates are not bragging that they have no questions about the events of that day? Over one-third of Canadians and Americans, as revealed by numerous polls, have serious questions about the events of the day. Why would their representatives have no questions? How could it be a virtue to have no questions? Have the candidates studied these events deeply and resolved all questions? Even the National Institute of Standards and Technology, which produced the most detailed official account of the destruction of the World Trade Center, has admitted that it has been left with questions about these collapses. Perhaps Ms. Manna and Mr. Graham should explain to NIST how they have resolved all the confusions?

Or do these candidates mean they do not have any doubts about *the official account* of the events of 9/11? This would be a different statement altogether. And in this case, which account are they actually referring to? The Canadian government has no independent account of what happened on that day. A citizen's petition for an independent investigation was rejected with contempt by Steven Blaney, the Minister of Public Safety under the Conservative government. So, is

2. *War On Terror or War On Democracy? The Physical Intimidation of Legislatures*

it the U.S. government's account that the candidates are affirming? This account, to the extent that there is a single account, is the ultimate responsibility of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which was charged with investigating the crime. But do Ms. Manna and Mr. Graham even know what the FBI's position is? Do they know, for example, that the FBI never even charged Osama bin Laden with the crimes of 9/11 because they had insufficient evidence? Do they know that the 9/11 Commission, tasked with writing a public report on the events of 9/11, made extensive use of the weakest of claims—claims made under torture?

Frankly, I do not think these candidates' assertions have anything to do with evidence or reason. I believe they are best understood as loyalty oaths. I think they mean something like this: "As far as this founding event in the War on Terror is concerned, we promise to accept as true, without investigation or critical inquiry, whatever Canadian authorities accept as true. If Canadian authorities, without conducting an investigation, have faith in statements made under torture and in unsupported claims made by a foreign intelligence agency, then we will share that faith."

These loyalty oaths suggest that anyone who raises questions about the claims made by this foreign intelligence agency, and supported by acts that violate international law, will be excluded from the Canadian Parliament. Such people will not be permitted to represent the Canadian people or to help steer this country into the future. What a staggering notion.

The loyalty oaths I have been discussing serve well to introduce today's talk because my theme is the bullying of legislatures in North America. But I wish to go beyond the sort of bullying indicated in loyalty oaths. I want to look at an even more gross form of bullying, the use of physical threat.

My basic claim is simple: physical intimidation of elected representatives, as suggested in the four instances I will discuss, is a core feature of the War on Terror. And this is a direct attack on represen-

tative democracy.

Intimidating the U.S. Congress in the fall of 2001

A. The 9/11 Events

I begin with the attacks of September 11, 2001, crucial to the War on Terror.

Most of you remember these events and are aware of how shocking they were to the general population in North America. But perhaps you do not all recall the nature of the shock delivered to Congress.

Democrat Tom Daschle, who was Senate Majority Leader on September 11, 2001, recalls being at the Capitol with other members of Congress when the assaults on the Twin Towers took place. He watched them on television like most Americans, as stunned and puzzled as anyone. But his television viewing was interrupted when a guard ran into the room and announced that there was a plane headed toward the Capitol and that an immediate evacuation of the building was necessary. This was, says Daschle, the first time in history the entire U.S. Capitol had been evacuated. There appears to have been no clear protocol. Daschle says it was a scene of “total chaos.” Elected representatives, both senators and members of the House, fled in confusion. Many had difficulty getting reliable information about what was happening and did not know what to do or where to go. *This was a frightened and intimidated legislature.*

Later in the day, when things in Washington had settled down somewhat, many of those who had fled reassembled on the steps of the Capitol building. A few brief speeches were made, after which, as we can see and hear in precious video footage, members of Congress broke into a singing of God Bless America, followed by emotional embraces.

A powerful feeling of unity is evident in the record of this event.

2. *War On Terror or War On Democracy? The Physical Intimidation of Legislators*

Tom Daschle said that he had never in his life experienced the sense of unity he felt on September 11, 2001. Like others on the steps of the Capitol that evening, he seems to have been almost euphoric. We were, he says, one family.

I draw your attention to the emergence of a pattern that is common in societies experiencing danger and that characterizes affected populations in the War on Terror.

First, there is the sense of *threat*. The population then goes through a phase of intense, felt *unity*.

Party loyalties and ideological divides are cast aside. There are solemn declarations, there is singing, there is the calling down of blessings on the nation, there is hugging and there are tears.

I am not mocking members of Congress, or any other group that unites under threat. This seems to be an aspect of our nature as human beings. But bear in mind that while these social adjustments may help a society gear up for a response to an attack, they can also leave a population vulnerable to manipulation. At such moments dissent is discouraged and critical thinking is in short supply. Passion and calls for loyalty are the order of the day.

The consequences can be very serious.

The photograph of George W. Bush and Tom Daschle, top Republican and top Democrat, embracing shortly after 9/11, tells the story. The act is a symbolic statement of unity, but like many symbolic statements it tells us a tale with very practical implications.

The U.S. Constitution gives to Congress the power to declare war. Aware of the desirability of involving Congress, the White House immediately took advantage of the shock delivered by 9/11 and asked Congress for a bill explicitly allowing the President to use armed force in response to the attacks. Tom Daschle was one of the few people who could have stopped such a bill. The Democrats had a majority in Senate and he, as Senate Majority Leader, could have urged them to vote as a bloc against the bill. But the hug indicates, the sense of being one family, the feeling of unity, was strong. Not only



Figure 2.2.: Bush (Republican, President) embracing Daschle (Democrat, Senate Majority Leader).

2. *War On Terror or War On Democracy? The Physical Intimidation of Legislators*

did Daschle not rise to the occasion and oppose such a bill, *he immediately offered to put it forward, thus guaranteeing its acceptance.*

This extremely dangerous legislation, “Authorization for Use of Military Force, 2001” was proposed to and passed by both House and Senate on September 14, 2001. There was only one vote against the bill—by Barbara Lee, later Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus. The bill provided cover for the immediate invasion and occupation of Afghanistan and simultaneous preparations for the invasion of Iraq. It also handed to Bush the power to decide who was responsible for the 9/11 attacks.

Remember: people who want war may purposely create a sense of threat and a feeling of unity. And they will typically do so in order to achieve a particular *reaction*. This is the triad I am drawing your attention to: Threat, Unity, Reaction.

The reaction may express itself outwardly in foreign policy or inwardly in domestic policy. Frequently, the outward and inward moves are simultaneous. Outwardly, the enraged nation throws itself on the nation or group it decides was responsible for the attack. Inwardly, the population agrees that this is a time for unity, not a time for debate and dissent but for gathering as one people, with the surrender of individual freedoms and civil rights as needed to mobilize for violence.

We do not need to speculate about whether this condition was achieved in the American people on 9/11. A poll was initiated on that very day, in the evening of 9/11. (*Washington Post-ABC*). According to those who conducted the poll, nearly nine in ten Americans supported military action against whoever was responsible for the attacks and two out of three Americans were willing to surrender civil liberties to fight terrorism.

Now, you may be thinking, what’s the big deal? The threat-unity-response triad makes sense: an attacked group unites and, when united, acts to deal with a serious threat. The triad is compatible with the official story of 9/11 and does not by itself mean that dissenters

are right and that the day's events were an inside operation.

You would be right in thinking that I have said nothing to this point that indicates the official story of 9/11 is false. My preliminary aim has been simply to point to the triad, which becomes visible again and again in the War on Terror—and to emphasize how populations *and their elected representatives* may, at such times, be vulnerable to manipulation.

Now, if we wish to go further and ask if 9/11 was a fraud we will need to look at the evidence. This is not difficult: fourteen years of research by a wide variety of people has given us plenty of evidence. In today's talk, however, I am discussing four events, and I have little time to discuss details of 9/11. So let me restrict myself to a few brief comments.

Many of you will know, if you have looked into this issue even superficially, that the destruction of the World Trade Center, and especially of three buildings (WTC 1, 2 and 7), is regarded by many of us as providing the strongest evidence against the official account. I realize that many people “tune out” when building collapses are discussed (inner voice: “What do I know about buildings? My God, I hope they aren't going to ask me to remember my high school physics!”). But there are very good reasons to pay attention to the destruction of these buildings. Covert operations are typically characterized not only by lying, but by the laying down of false trails and the creation of pseudo-mysteries and diversion. So complex and contradictory is the evidence encountered that it is very often difficult to *prove* an event was based on deception even when we feel sure this is the case. When we do get such proof it makes sense to try to persuade people to look at it. The destruction of the WTC buildings is one such instance. In my view the official explanations of their destruction have been *proven* to be false. If you wish to read an admirable summary of the evidence against the official account of the WTC destruction, I refer you to a recent publication that can be obtained from the website of Architects & Engineers for 9/11 Truth.

2. War On Terror or War On Democracy? The Physical Intimidation of Legislators

It is entitled, *Beyond Misinformation: What Science Says About the Destruction of World Trade Center Buildings 1, 2, and 7*.

As this publication makes clear, the official account of the destruction of these buildings is based on repeated violations of the laws of physics and of basic principles of scientific investigation and thought. In contrast, the hypothesis that the three buildings were brought down by planted explosives and other agents of destruction is robustly supported. Evidence against the official account and in favor of the dissident account is copious, varied, and mutually corroborating.

But if these three buildings were brought down not by plane strikes but by controlled demolition, through preparations made well before the attacks, this means that the entire official narrative is false and the founding event in the War on Terror is a fraud. Moreover, since discovering that the official account is false is not actually difficult, we must assume that the U.S. government agencies that promote the fraudulent event, including the FBI, are aware of the fraud and have been engaged in a major cover-up. They are, at the very least, accessories after the fact.

Let me sum up my observations and claims to this point:

1. Observation: there is a taboo in place in Canada (as in the U.S.) that punishes people, including members of Parliament, who raise questions about the FBI account of 9/11.
2. Observation: a familiar pattern of human history becomes clear to those who study the 9/11 event: *threat* leads to feelings of *unity*, and feelings of unity facilitate and shape the *reaction*: (a) the sacrifice civil rights at home and (b) a willingness to use force against a perceived enemy.
3. Observation: In the case of the 9/11 event in the U.S. the reaction phase encouraged (a) a willingness at home to surrender traditional rights and freedoms and (b) a willingness to use military force abroad.

4. Claim: the 9/11 attacks were not carried out by Islamic extremists but were managed from within the U.S. to manipulate the population and to intimidate the U.S. Congress into supporting the reaction desired by the perpetrators.

B. The 2001 Anthrax Attacks

Very shortly after the 9/11 attacks there was a second set of attacks in the U.S. Envelopes containing deadly anthrax spores were sent through the mail.

This set of attacks appeared at the time to be the second punch in a one-two punch attack. After all, the attacks began a mere week after 9/11 and the perpetrators clearly wanted to be seen as the same Muslim extremists who had carried out the first attack.

Here, for example, is the letter sent to Senator Tom Daschle:

Note the date, 9/11, at the top. Note the attempt to look like a Muslim extremist. Most of the U.S. population assumed this was, indeed, a second blow by the same Muslim extremists alleged to have carried out the 9/11 attacks. We know this from a poll carried out in mid-October, 2001.

What were the effects of the anthrax attacks and who was the perpetrator?

The main effect was to keep up the momentum established by the 9/11 attacks. The external aspect of the reaction to 9/11 was directed toward those thought responsible: this reaction supported the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan. The first bombs were dropped on Afghanistan on October 7, 2001, two days after the first death in the U.S. from anthrax. The anthrax attacks kept al-Qaeda and Afghanistan in the crosshairs.

And as October of 2001 progressed another possible perpetrator appeared on the scene. According to this hypothesis al-Qaeda was providing the foot-soldiers—the people who wrote the letters and mailed them—but the sophisticated anthrax spores had to have been

2. *War On Terror or War On Democracy? The Physical Intimidation of Legislators*

produced by a state, which was collaborating with al-Qaeda in this deadly attack.

The enemy state was said to be Iraq.

The Iraq hypothesis flourished briefly in October and November of 2001 in partnership with the al-Qaeda hypothesis. During that period, as the invasion of Afghanistan proceeded, support was given to preparations for the invasion of Iraq.

But I spoke earlier of a pattern, and the pattern includes not only attack on enemy states but also sacrifice of civil rights at home. Here is where the anthrax attacks scored their biggest victory. Attorney General John Ashcroft had introduced what would later be called the Patriot Act shortly after 9/11 and had made it clear to Congress that he wanted it passed immediately. But there was resistance. Both the population at large and Congress began to recover from the 9/11 attacks, and as they did so their willingness to sacrifice civil rights began to diminish. The anthrax attacks saved the day for Ashcroft by ensuring that both population and Congress remained sufficiently intimidated to accept the Patriot act. The act was passed on October 26, 2001. The connection between its passage and the anthrax attacks is very clear.

There were two powerful Democratic senators whose actions were slowing down passage of the Patriot Act. One was Tom Daschle, whom I have mentioned previously. The second was Patrick Leahy, Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee. Anthrax letters were sent out to Daschle and Leahy immediately after they resisted a deadline for passage of the bill proposed by Vice-President Dick Cheney.

How odd that al-Qaeda and Iraq would have had a special hatred of Democratic senators who slowed down the Patriot Act!

But, of course, the anthrax letters were not sent by al-Qaeda and Iraq. According to what we have since learned, no Muslim had anything whatsoever to do with the attacks.

If you want to know more about this topic, please read my book, *The 2001 Anthrax Deception*. Since the publication of that book there

have been further developments, including the emergence of a highly placed FBI whistle-blower, that have supported the book's claims.

What do we know about the perpetrators? Studies of the physical characteristics of the anthrax spores quickly ruled out al-Qaeda and Iraq as sources of these spores and showed that the anthrax came from a highly secure laboratory within the U.S. military-industrial complex. *This is not controversial, having been acknowledged by the FBI, the White House and the Department of Homeland Security.*

So the perpetrators were not Muslim extremists but they pretended to be, and whoever they were they had access to the heart of the U.S. intelligence and military community. It is, therefore, clear that the anthrax attacks were an "inside job" and a "false flag operation."

The true perpetrators are still at large, the FBI having led the public on a multi-year wild goose chase.

As far as the intimidation of Congress is concerned, the process started with 9/11 but was continued by means of the anthrax attacks. Concrete barricades and yellow crime scene tape marked off the Capitol. Congress members were told by the FBI not to wear their Congressional pins publicly or to use their Congressional license plates. They were told they must hide their identities as elected representatives.

When Tom Daschle's office received an anthrax letter in mid-October the stuff was so sophisticated it contaminated the whole building. The Hart Senate building was closed down for several months while it was cleaned. Some senators remained without computer access and proper office space as the Patriot Act was being pushed through. The anthrax attacks ensured that the passage of the Patriot Act took place in an atmosphere of urgent and ongoing threat to Congress.

Now, note that the lies pushed in October-November of 2001 to frame Afghanistan and Iraq for the anthrax attacks (Iraq as sponsor, al-Qaeda as client) belonged to the same repository of lies that was

2. *War On Terror or War On Democracy? The Physical Intimidation of Legislatures*

used over a period of years to justify the 2003 attack on Iraq. The two main deceptions were (a) that Iraq had “weapons of mass destruction” and (b) that Iraq was a sponsor of al-Qaeda.

The Centre for Public Integrity in the U.S. did a study a few years ago of these two sets of false statements. The study found that during the two years following 9/11 top Bush officials made 935 false statements on these two topics.

When Colin Powell gave his deceptive performance before the UN Security Council just before the 2003 invasion of Iraq, holding up his little vial of simulated anthrax, he was still making these two sets of false statements and he was still warning the world that Iraq might attack the U.S. with anthrax.

Intimidating Canadian legislatures, 2013-14

I now turn to a different country and to a time nearer the present. I have two incidents in Canada to discuss, the first situated in 2013 and the second in 2014.

A. The Provincial Legislature of British Columbia

In 2013 Canadians learned that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police had arrested two Muslims for attempting to set off three bombs on the grounds of the British Columbia legislature on Canada Day, July 1.

This event seemed to have confirmed dramatically the fears on which the War on Terror feeds: Islamic terrorism, as a threat to democracy both symbolic and real, is alive and well in North America.

But let us look more closely at the perpetrators.

The couple arrested, John Nuttall and Amanda Korody, had allegedly self-converted to Islam in 2011. According to Ian Mulgrew, journalist for the *Vancouver Sun* who attended the lengthy trial,

“These new Muslim converts ‘discovered’ Islam in a Lower Mainland camouflage store while on a walkabout in an alcoholic haze.” Nuttall and Korody were not members of a Muslim community; in fact, we have been told that when they began talking about the need for jihad members of the B.C. Muslim community promptly reported them to police.

Mulgrew has described Nuttall and Korody as “impoverished, troubled drug addicts.”

After they were brought to the attention of police Nuttall and Korody “were befriended by an [RCMP] officer pretending to be an Arab businessman with extremist connections. Over the following months, he encouraged their Islamic militance and introduced them to other Mounties acting as jihadis.” Mulgrew refers to this exercise as a “stage-managed operation.” More than 240 members of the RCMP were involved in this exercise.

“Over the following months, the [RCMP] corporal [posing as their Muslim friend] encouraged their extremism, bought Nuttall a suit...paid him for meaningless jobs, gave him money for groceries, all the while pressing him to formulate a viable terrorist plot.”

On the audiotapes of police interactions with Nuttall, the RCMP mole can at one point be heard berating Nuttall for his “poorly researched plan to hijack a Via Rail passenger train in Victoria that no longer exists.” (The remarks are by Canadian Press journalist Gordon Omand.)

The evidence consistently suggests that Nuttall had been indulging in fantasies. His plans were not rooted in the real world. What was the RCMP response on learning this? On the undercover audiotapes the police mole, after criticizing him for his poor research, can be heard saying to Nuttall: “I’m here to make what you have in your head come true.”

In other words, people cannot be arrested in Canada for having violent fantasies, but the RCMP is permitted to turn these fantasies into reality so that an arrest can be made and the victim fed to the

2. *War On Terror or War On Democracy? The Physical Intimidation of Legislators*

ever-hungry War on Terror.

Each of us may have our moment of special anger as we read the records of this case. My moment came when I read about Nuttall having an awakening of conscience in the weeks before the planting of the bombs.

“Until a couple of days ago, I didn’t clue in that people were going to die. I’ve never killed anybody. I’m not a murderer.”

At another point Nuttall says clearly that he needs spiritual counseling.

“I want to know in my heart that I did the right thing—I need some spiritual guidance.”

The RCMP mole, anxious to discourage these signs of an awakening of conscience, replies: “What’s this spiritual guidance going to give you?”

Nuttall says: “This is about my soul were talking about, my wife’s soul.”

“All of us,” intones the costumed RCMP officer, “we have our own destiny...Allah chooses it for us, we don’t choose it for ourselves.”

Here is the essence of entrapment. A citizen shows clear signs of being ready to back away from a not yet committed crime but the police, instead of encouraging this tendency, work to beguile, seduce, and trap the citizen into the commission of this crime.

But there was more. A frightening little videotape was found in which Nuttall and Korody, with faces hidden, exhorted people to carry out jihad and expressed inclinations toward martyrdom.

But who urged the couple to make the video? Who helped at every stage in its creation? Who filmed it? Who even supplied the black banner used as a backdrop? Why, the RCMP. The film was an RCMP production.

Neither the entrapment of this couple, nor even the assistance in making a martyrdom video, involves creativity on the part of the RCMP. Canada’s federal police have for some years been aping the FBI, which has a long record of such operations and has made them

central to the War on Terror. Those of you who wish to look into this should read Trevor Aaronson's book, *The Terror Factory: Inside the FBI's Manufactured War on Terrorism*. If you do not have time to read the book, please watch Aaronson's TED talk on the internet.

In the end, RCMP operatives convinced Nuttall to concentrate on a practical weapon, something he might actually be able to manage. They suggested he build pressure-cooker bombs and gave him advice on how to do it. They assured him they would supply the required explosive substance—to which he had no access.

Then they drove Nuttall around Victoria and found him a nice place to put the bombs—*behind the bushes on the grounds of the B.C. legislature*.

This case is so outrageous that even mainstream media have carried angry criticism of the RCMP. Journalist Ian Mulgrew has said: "this operation is redolent of a make-work project by the Mounties and the federal justice department to bolster the rhetoric of the prime minister."

Consider Mulgrew's statement. Let us give credit where credit is due: he is a mainstream Canadian journalist with the courage to say that the RCMP's actions in this operation are not real policing at all (he calls them "pretend policing") but a political act constructed to support the Conservative government's involvement in the War on Terror. Everything I have seen about the case supports this claim.

The fact is that in Canada today, as in the U.S., federal police and intelligence agencies have politicized both policing and the courts. They have corrupted both sets of institutions. In doing so they are driven by, and in turn are supporting, an aggressive global conflict framework, the War on Terror, that is based on lies and deception.

And let me remind you of one aspect of the 2013 stage production that is often neglected. It involved the Canadian federal police encouraging a threat to a Canadian legislature.

B. The Parliament of Canada

And now we arrive at the fourth and last case from the annals of the War on Terror to be reviewed today. This is the invasion of the Centre Block of the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa on October 22, 2014.

Senator Céline Hervieux-Payette has recalled her experience in her Senate office:

At 2:30 p.m., to cries of “Police,” my assistant opens the office’s main door. He comes face to face with soldiers aiming their machine guns at him and ordering him to put his hands in the air. One by one, our doors are opened and the soldiers point their guns at my other assistants who exit their offices, hands in the air, as if they were criminals... The door we go through is destroyed; glass has exploded all over the floor. The door across the hallway has also been knocked in. Glass litters the hallway. There are more than 50 people crammed into four offices, everyone talking to one another...

I sit near the open window. I’m breathing but stunned: parliamentarians are under the command of the military. Parliament is in the hands of the armed forces.

The persons holding the automatic weapons were almost certainly federal police officers, not members of the armed forces, but for our purposes today the distinction may not be important. Men in camouflage clothing with heavy boots, helmets, and automatic weapons would have been hard for most Canadians to identify. Let us simply say that security forces took control of Parliament. The image fits the theme of this talk very well.

But you are thinking: naturally they took control—an armed gunman was running down the hall shooting!

Yes, but let us look a bit more closely at the affair.

I want to begin by saying I do not pretend to have sorted out the facts of this attack. I am not in a position to say with confidence that the RCMP were complicit. But, in a report I have written on this incident, *The October 22, 2014, Ottawa Shooting: Why Canadians Need a Public Inquiry*, I do claim that (a) there are very serious unanswered questions about this series of incidents (I list 32 questions), (b) the RCMP have given both misleading and false information to the public and (c) in any serious inquiry the possibility of RCMP complicity would have to be considered.

The RCMP are, of course, the ones in charge of the investigation of the October 22, 2014 events. But this simply illustrates the dilemma faced by citizens in North America. The agencies charged with investigating acts of alleged Islamic terrorism have a proven record of incitement, entrapment and framing. They would, for this reason, be treated as suspects within an uncorrupted system of policing and litigation.

When we look for recognition of this obvious truth in mainstream North America media today we will seldom find it. I saw not a single person interviewed on television or radio, or quoted in mainstream newspapers, in Canada in the days after the October 22, 2014 attacks, who was willing to raise this as a serious possibility.

Drawing on the 2013 Canada Day case, we might ask our question this way: Could the 2014 impoverished drug addict from Vancouver (Zehaf-Bibeau) have been assisted by the RCMP the way the 2013 impoverished drug addict from Vancouver (Nuttall) was assisted? Could the two acts of intimidation of the people's elected representatives have belonged to the same pattern of police behavior?

Before entering into the critical questioning of the mainstream account of October 22, I draw attention to the triad we have seen before: Threat, Unity, Reaction.

Let us begin with threat. After allegedly shooting Corporal Cirillo at the War Memorial the suspect, Michael Zehaf-Bibeau, made it to the Centre Block of Parliament. The Conservative caucus, including

2. *War On Terror or War On Democracy? The Physical Intimidation of Legislators*

Mr. Harper, was assembled behind a door on one side of the central Hall of Honour, while the New Democratic Party was assembled behind a door on the other side. To the astonishment and horror of the MPs, a barrage of shooting broke out in the Hall.

Globe and Mail reporter Josh Wingrove caught the gunfire (second volley) on his Blackberry, and the showing of this video footage gave the public a dramatic sense of what MPs, hunkered down behind poorly barricaded doors off the main hall, heard at that time.

Volley one, which had occurred prior to the volley caught on this video, had roughly the same number of shots as volley two.

So MPs certainly felt threatened. The danger was emphasized by the CBC, which said on October 22 that the perpetrator may have fired 30 shots in the Hall of Honour. John Baird, then the Minister of Foreign Affairs, said on Anderson Cooper's TV show on October 23 that if Sergeant-at-Arms Kevin Vickers had not killed Zehaf-Bibeau a dozen people might have been killed.

It turned out these statements were based on fantasy. The evidence we now have suggests that the suspect, Zehaf-Bibeau, ran into Centre Block with two bullets in his rifle. His firearm was a lever-action hunting rifle—a model first produced in 1894. Zehaf-Bibeau's goals at that point are not clear, but he fired his two bullets, hitting no one (security guard Samearn Son appears to have been hit in the leg by a ricochet) and at one point he declined to shoot a security guard he was facing at point blank range. In the space between volleys he seems to have loaded one more bullet in his rifle, which he fired—again hitting no one—just before dying in a hail of bullets less than two minutes after entering the building. He did not, therefore, shoot 30 times; he shot three times. And he was in no position to kill a dozen people. Of the roughly 59 shots heard by MPs, 56 were fired by police with semi-automatic 9mm handguns.

While it is important to sort out these facts, it remains true that the *feeling* of threat experienced by MPs was intense. They heard a huge barrage of shots, could not see what was going on, and felt at

risk.

How about the next member of our triad, unity?

We have a remarkable piece of footage from the next day, October 23, fully as striking as the singing of God Bless America on the steps of the Capitol. Kevin Vickers, apparently one of the two men who killed Zehaf-Bibeau, was Sergeant-at-Arms and regularly carried the mace into Parliament. (The mace represents the authority of the Speaker and the right of the House, transmitted to it by the crown, to pass laws.) When Mr. Vickers entered Parliament with the mace on October 23 he was given a prolonged standing ovation by the House, with members of all political parties enthusiastically participating.

In addition to this particular symbolic statement of unity we saw in Canada the embraces familiar to us from the U.S. incidents of the fall of 2001. The Canadian Prime Minister signaled his trans-party solidarity with Mr. Trudeau of the Liberal Party and Mr. Mulcair of the NDP with hugs.



Figure 2.3.: Post-event hugs, October 2014: Harper and Mulcair, Harper and Trudeau.

2. *War On Terror or War On Democracy? The Physical Intimidation of Legislators*

So we had threat and we had unity. The third element is reaction, which possesses two components. Internally, citizens and their representatives are all supposed to pull together, sacrificing civil rights or having them sacrificed on their behalf. Externally, they are to fling themselves at the enemy—whoever has been assigned that role.

In Prime Minister Harper's speech on October 22 he made clear, albeit in genteel and delicate language, that he intended to move ahead on both fronts: to give more power to national security agencies at home while joining with allies in military action abroad.

This week's events are a grim reminder that Canada is not immune to the types of terrorist attacks we have seen elsewhere around the world...this will lead us to strengthen our resolve and redouble our efforts and those of our national security agencies to take all necessary steps to identify and counter threats and keep Canada safe here at home, just as it will lead us to strengthen our resolve and redouble our efforts to work with our allies around the world and fight against the terrorist organizations who brutalize those in other countries with the hope of bringing their savagery to our shores. They will have no safe haven.

The forms this reaction took are well known. Internally we had the passage of a series of bills, including the famous Bill C-51. Externally, we found the victim of the War Memorial shooting, Corporal Cirillo, quickly exploited in Iraq.

So we have the triad found in the War on Terror in its autumn, 2001 manifestation. The presence of death in the October 22 events has guaranteed that the pattern will be deeply inscribed in people's consciousness. The absence of killing in the B.C. bombers incident is, I am convinced, one of the reasons the incident has had relatively little impact in Canada. In fact, the lengthy court case associated with this incident—still not resolved as this talk is being given—has

embarrassed the RCMP at the same time the lack of casualties has left the Canadian population uninterested. The operation cannot be called a success.

Would it not be tempting for police, after such a failure, to mount an operation in which there are deaths to draw people's attention and where the perpetrator or patsy is killed in the operation so that there will never be a court case?

I am aware that I have to this point offered no evidence that the October 22, 2014 incident was planned or carried out with police complicity. Let me now, therefore, look at selected aspects of the RCMP's performance and foreknowledge. In my view these are sufficiently peculiar, even if they were the only anomalies encountered, to justify a public inquiry. For other problematic issues in the case my report may be consulted.

I begin with a question: Where did the most blatant security failure occur, which allowed the suspect to make it into a building of Parliament after shooting Mr. Cirillo at the War Memorial? The answer is that the main security failure occurred between the time he emerged from his car in front of the bollards near East Block until the time he entered the doors of Centre Block. *This zone was the responsibility of the RCMP.* As he stepped onto Parliament Hill he was no longer the responsibility of the Ottawa police, and as he entered Centre Block he became the responsibility of House of Commons security. In between the RCMP was responsible.

Now, during that brief period when he was the responsibility of the RCMP he ran from the bollards along the grass in front of the East Block, his keffiyah over the lower part of his face, his long hair flowing, and his Winchester rifle in his hands. He hijacked a black ministerial car in front of East Block. The driver got out and ran away at top speed. The suspect then got into the black car with his rifle and drove straight to Centre Block. On his way he passed two white RCMP vehicles. Neither moved to intercept him, although either one could have done so. Neither seems to have made a serious effort to

2. *War On Terror or War On Democracy? The Physical Intimidation of Legislators*

catch him or intercept him on the rest of his journey to Centre Block, although they followed him to his destination.

I am not interested in blaming the officers in these two cars. The more important issue is the fact that the RCMP has such a thin and permeable line of security, not to mention a communications system that performed very badly. Two cars between the suspect and Parliament, each with one officer, neither of whom seemed to expect anything and neither of whom appeared to have heard the 911 calls from the War Memorial? Neither of whom appears to have been able to warn the House of Commons security, who were, therefore, caught off guard when Zehaf-Bibeau burst through the door?

We now know, thanks to a CBC access to information request, that the RCMP were short by at least 29 persons in their Parliament Hill security at that time. We also know that the extra patrols in the vicinity that the RCMP had mounted in mid-October due to various incidents had been halted two days before the October 22 incident.

Am I being a Monday morning quarterback? Will you object that it is all very well to bemoan this reduction of security in retrospect but that the RCMP could not possibly have known of the danger at the time? Well, I certainly would have thought that the killing of a soldier at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu two days earlier by an apparent “terrorist” would have led to some tightening of security. But, beyond that, there were plenty of signs of danger.

We are now touching on one of the most explosive aspects of the October 22, 2014 case, namely advance warnings. If we turn to the RCMP and ask what was the stated and official position we find it set out very clearly. Commissioner Paulson said without hesitation that there had been “no advance warning.” Is this true? Consider the following list:

1. October 8, 2014

Warning: potential “knife and gun” attacks inside Canada.

Source: NBC News, crediting US intelligence sources, in turn

crediting Canadian authorities. The warning was quickly denied by Canadian authorities.

2. October 17:

Warning: “heightened state of alert”

Source: Integrated Terrorism Assessment Centre (ITAC), which is housed at the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) but has several partner organizations, including the RCMP.

3. October 17:

Warning: “violent act of terrorism”

Source: Privy Council Office (PCO), which advises the Prime Minister.

4. October 18:

Warning: ISIS considering attacks on uniformed law enforcement persons in Canada

Source: Criminal Intelligence Integrated Unit of the RCMP

5. October 21:

Warning: [We do not know what is in this report, which the RCMP has refused to release, but it was apparently based on more than the lethal October 20 event in Quebec.]

Source: National Intelligence Coordination Centre, RCMP

6. September to October, 2014, beginning about a month before the October 22 events

Warning: There was a war-gaming of “an attack in Quebec followed by an attack in another city” (CBC journalist Adrienne Arsenault called it the “precise scenario” that unfolded in October).

2. *War On Terror or War On Democracy? The Physical Intimidation of Legislatures*

Source: Adrienne Arsenault, speaking on *The National*, CBC television, October 22, 2014. According to her the participants in the war game included CSIS, the RCMP, and the National Security Task Force.

We find, in short, that there were repeated warnings beginning at least a month before October 22 and growing more intense in the five days prior to the attacks. Such warnings are not at all normal in Canada. ITAC's last similar warning had been issued about four years previously. As to the precision in timing of the warnings, Craig James, an official at the B.C. legislature, said that his office had been told "there may be a problem this week." How extraordinary. There was, indeed, a problem "this week:" there was a lethal attack on the Monday (October 20) followed by a lethal attack on the Wednesday (October 22).

But the words of Craig James raise another issue: it is not merely the timing that is peculiar but also the institutions warned. With warnings going out to legislatures in Canada, how could the most important legislature at all have been left with no warning? As journalist Michael Smyth of *The Province* put it: "our provincial politicians [in B.C.] and legislative security staff were well-briefed by the feds here, but the RCMP in Ottawa got taken by surprise? What is wrong with this picture?"

What is more, consider the peculiarity in the October NBC warning. "Knife and gun" attacks inside Canada? Such attacks are very uncommon. Yet both on October 20 and October 22 large knives were found at the crime scene. Is this a coincidence?

Finally, we have the war-games exercise, which was found to be oddly prophetic when an attack in the province of Quebec (October 20) was followed by an attack in a second city (Ottawa, Ontario). It is true that part of the war-game scenario mentioned by Arsenault (a third incident with returnees from Syria) did not manifest itself, but there were certainly efforts, which involved RCMP lies, to tie both October suspects to Syria.

So, what are we to think of Mr. Paulson's statement about "no advance warning?" Mr. Paulson was lying. Why? There are two main possibilities.

First, he may have been lying to disguise gross RCMP incompetence. To suggest this is to stay within the bounds of acceptable discourse, although even in this case there should be calls for Mr. Paulson's resignation.

But how does the incompetence theory fit with the fact that the although the PCO document of October 17 explicitly called for maintaining patrols, the RCMP, after the issuing of the PCO document, actually *halted* a series of patrols they had been making in the vicinity of Parliament Hill? And why would the RCMP, after receiving a series of clear warnings, allow themselves to remain short-staffed on the scene to the tune of at least 29 officers? Moreover, since the PCO warning explicitly called for maintaining excellent communications, how is it that the RCMP neither received nor passed on, in a timely way, effective warnings that would have prevented the suspect's assault on Centre Block?

The unspeakable possibility—the possibility that is outside the bounds of respectability and will not be mentioned by mainstream media and political representatives—is that Mr. Paulson denied receiving warnings of the attacks because the RCMP were complicit in the attacks.

It is not wise to pretend we know the truth about an incident when we do not. I do not pretend, in this talk or in my written report, to know with certainty whether the Royal Canadian Mounted Police was complicit in the October 22, 2014 attacks in Ottawa. But I do know that, given its history of complicity in establishing "terrorist" threats, as well as the serious anomalies and unanswered questions that stare us in the face when we investigate the October 22 events, the RCMP must be regarded as suspects.

Conclusions

Let me end this talk by reiterating five points.

1. There is a pattern, common enough in war and found in the War on Terror: Threat, followed by Unity, followed by Reaction, which has an internal and external dimension.

Whatever the value of this pattern to human survival at various times in our history, it can leave populations open to deception and manipulation.

2. In the War on Terror deception and manipulation are exactly what we find. There is strong evidence that legislatures of the U.S. and Canada have been subjected to physical intimidation that has facilitated both the internal projects (repressive legislation) and the external projects (invasions and occupation) of the leaders of the War on Terror.
3. A strong social taboo has been constructed that has hampered awareness of this deception and manipulation. The taboo extends through the population but is especially strong in legislatures, including the Parliament of Canada.
4. This taboo ensures that our Canadian Parliament, like the U.S. Congress, is unfit to protect citizens from the deceptions and violence of the War on Terror and is even unable to protect itself.
5. Of the four cases dealt with today, I regard complicity in the physical intimidation of legislatures by state agencies as established in three cases. In the fourth case, the events of October 22, 2014 in Canada, state-sponsored intimidation had not been established, but is a possibility that must be explored through investigation and research—formal and public if possible, but otherwise by members of civil society using all their intelligence and determination.

Sources

Since this was a public talk rather than an article it included no notes. I directed the audience to websites where they could find more information.

11 Sep 2001

Websites important for understanding the destruction of the World Trade Center:

- **Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth:** <http://ae911truth.org/>
- **Consensus 9/11: The 9/11 Best Evidence Panel:** <https://consensus911.org/>
- **The Journal of 9/11 Studies:** <http://journalof911studies.com/>
- **Beyond Misinformation: What Science Says About the Destruction of World Trade Center Buildings 1, 2, and 7,** Architects & Engineers for 9/11 Truth, 2015, 52 pp. 11 Jul 2017 archived snapshot of

Anthrax

There are several good books, but my own explores the relationship of the anthrax attacks to the 9/11 attacks more closely than other books: *THE 2001 ANTHRAX DECEPTION: The Case For a Domestic Conspiracy* (Clarity Press, 2014). This book also explores the intimidation of Congress by both sets of attacks.

The Two Canadian Cases

- Information about the Nuttall-Korody case was obtained mainly from a series of articles by *Vancouver Sun* journalist Ian Mulgrew, who attended the couple's trial and regularly posted articles about it.

2. *War On Terror or War On Democracy? The Physical Intimidation of Legislators*

- Information about the events of October 22, 2014 can be found in my report, *The October 22, 2014, Ottawa Shootings: Why Canadians Need a Public Inquiry* (3 Oct 2015, 92 pp.). The reports [bibliography](#) includes both primary and secondary sources for those wishing to learn more.

3. Beyond Their Wildest Dreams: Sep 11 2001 and the United States Left

This article, critical of the US left (and, I should have added, the Canadian left), was written with feelings of disappointment and sorrow. I criticize the left as someone who identifies with it. Those I expected to penetrate the great frauds of the fall of 2001 did not, for the most part, rise to the occasion. Friends have told me the “failure of imagination” hypothesis I put forth here is naive and that I am being too easy on the intellectuals I criticize. They may be right, but this remains the position most convincing to me.

I would like to thank [Ed Curtin](#) for his inspiration and advice.

Introduction

On November 23, 1963, the day after John F. Kennedy’s assassination, Fidel Castro gave a talk on Cuban radio and television.¹ He pulled

¹Martin Schotz, *History Will Not Absolve Us: Orwellian Control, Public Denial, and the Murder of President Kennedy* (Brookline, Massachusetts: Kurtz, Ulmer & DeLucia, 1996), Appendix II.

3. *Beyond Their Wildest Dreams: Sep 11 2001 and the United States Left*



Figure 3.1.: Former Malaysian Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohamad challenged the official narrative at the “9/11 Revisited: Seeking the Truth” conference in Kuala Lumpur in 2012.

together, as well as he could in the amount of time available to him, the evidence he had gathered from news media and other sources, and he reflected on this evidence.

The questions he posed were well chosen: they could serve as a template for those confronting complex acts of political violence.

- Were there contradictions and absurdities in the story being promoted in the U.S. media?
- Who benefitted from the assassination?
- Were intelligence agencies claiming to know more than they could legitimately know?
- Was there evidence of foreknowledge of the murder?
- What was the main ideological clash in powerful U.S. circles and how did Kennedy fit in?
- Was there a faction that had the capacity and willingness to carry out such an act?

And so on. But beneath the questions lay a central, unspoken fact: Castro was able to *imagine*—as a real possibility and not as mere fantasy—that the story being promoted by the U.S. government and media was radically false. He was able to conceive of the possibility that the killing had not been carried out by a lone gunman on the left sympathetic to Cuba and the Soviet Union, but by powerful, ultra-right forces, including forces internal to the state, in the United States. Because his conceptual framework did not exclude this hypothesis he was able to examine the evidence that favoured it. He was able to recognize the links between those wishing to overthrow the Cuban government and take more aggressive action toward the Soviet Union and those wishing to get Kennedy out of the way.

In the immediate wake of the assassination, and after the Warren Commission's report appeared in 1964, few among the elite left leadership in the U.S. shared Castro's imagination. [Vincent Salandria](#), one of key researchers and dissidents, said: "I have experienced from

3. *Beyond Their Wildest Dreams: Sep 11 2001 and the United States Left*

the beginning that the left was most unreceptive to my conception of the assassination.”²

I.F. Stone, a pillar of the American left leadership, praised the Warren Commission and consigned critics who accused the Commission of a cover-up to “the booby hatch.”³ The contrast with Castro is sharp. Speaking well before the Warren Commission’s emergence, Castro mocked the narrative it would later endorse. Several other prominent left intellectuals agreed with I. F. Stone, and declined to criticize the Warren Commission’s report.⁴

Noam Chomsky, resisting serious efforts to get him to look at the evidence, said at various times that he knew little about the affair, had little interest in it, did not regard it as important, and found the idea of a “high-level conspiracy with policy significance” to be “implausible to a quite extraordinary degree.”⁵ He would later say almost exactly the same thing about the 9/11 attacks, finding the thesis that the U.S. administration was involved in the crime “close to inconceivable,”⁶ and expressing his disinterest in the entire issue.

Not everyone on the American left accepted the FBI and Warren Commission reports uncritically. Dave Dellinger and Staughton Lynd, for example, encouraged dissident researchers.⁷ In fact, sev-

²Michael Morrissey, *Correspondence with Vincent Salandria 1993-2000* (Michael D. Morrissey, 2007), p. 436.

³Schotz, *History Will Not Absolve Us: Orwellian Control, Public Denial, and the Murder of President Kennedy*, p. 241.

⁴Schotz, *History Will Not Absolve Us: Orwellian Control, Public Denial, and the Murder of President Kennedy*, 14ff., Appendices VII [NOTE: A Summary of The Nation’s Editorial Policy from the Assassination to the Warren Report and The Truth is Too Terrible] and VIII.

⁵Morrissey, *Correspondence with Vincent Salandria 1993-2000* (Chomsky’s position is a continuing theme in the book); Schotz, *History Will Not Absolve Us: Orwellian Control, Public Denial, and the Murder of President Kennedy*, Appendix VIII; Barrie Zwicker, *Towers of Deception: The Media Cover-Up of 9/11* (Canada: New Society Publishers, 2006), chap. 5, p. 206. [isbn.nu]

⁶Zwicker, *Towers of Deception: The Media Cover-Up of 9/11*, p. 208 and throughout chapter 5.

⁷Morrissey, *Correspondence with Vincent Salandria 1993-2000*, p. 421.

eral of the leading dissident investigators, such as Vincent Salandria, Mark Lane and Sylvia Meagher, were themselves, at least by today's standards, on the left of the political spectrum. But they were not among the elite left leadership in the country and they were, to a great extent, unsupported by that leadership during the most crucial period.

Chomsky's use of the terms "implausible" and "inconceivable" has stimulated me to write the present article. I have no new evidence to bring to the debate, which is decades old now, as to how his mind and the other great minds of the U.S. left leadership could have failed to see what was obvious to so many. My approach will assume the good faith of these left leaders and will take as its point of departure Chomsky's own words. I will explore the suggestion that these intellectuals were not able to *conceive*, were not able to *imagine*, that these attacks were operations engineered by intelligence agencies and the political right in the U.S.

Why would Castro have had less difficulty than the U.S. left leadership imagining that the assassination of Kennedy had been carried out by and for the American ultra-right and the intelligence community?

What we imagine to be true in the present will surely be influenced by what we have intimately experienced in the past. Castro's imagination of what U.S. imperial powers might do was shaped by what he had witnessed them actually do, or attempt to do, to him and his country.

Castro referred in his November 23 talk not only to the economic warfare against Cuba, but to the Bay of Pigs invasion and the Cuban Missile Crisis. But, of course, the CIA's Operation Mongoose had been active in the interim between these two latter events, and he was familiar with its main lines. Perhaps he was not familiar with all its components. As far as I am aware, he did not know on November 23, 1963 of the 1962 [Operation Northwoods](#) plan, endorsed by the CIA and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to create a pretext for an invasion

3. *Beyond Their Wildest Dreams: Sep 11 2001 and the United States Left*

of Cuba through a multi-faceted false flag operation that included terrorist attacks in Miami and Washington, to be falsely blamed on Cuba.⁸ Had he been familiar with this scheme he might have cited it on November 23 to bolster his case.

Castro was certainly familiar with many plans and attempts to assassinate him, which were eventually confirmed to the U.S. public by the Church Committee's report, "Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders."⁹ But, to the best of my knowledge, he was not aware when he gave his November 23 talk of an assassination-planning meeting that had taken place the previous day. On November 22, the day Kennedy was killed, while **Castro was meeting with an intermediary** who conveyed Kennedy's hope that Cuba and the United States would soon be able to work out a mode of peaceful co-existence,¹⁰ members of the CIA were meeting with a Cuban to plot Castro's death. The would-be assassin was not only given poison to

⁸ANNEX TO APPENDIX TO ENCLOSURE A: PRETEXTS TO JUSTIFY US MILITARY INTERVENTION IN CUBA (OPERATION NORTHWOODS, pp. 137 ff.," 1962.

⁹"Interim Report: Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders," Church Committee Reports.

¹⁰Mark Lane, *Last Word: My Indictment of the CIA in the Murder of JFK* (Skyhorse Publishing, 2012), 275. [NOTE: See Also: "When Castro Heard The News," by Jean Daniel, *New Republic* (December 7, 1963), pp. 7-9, and "Unofficial Envoy: An Historic Report From Two Capitals," by Jean Daniel, *New Republic* (December 14, 1963), pp. 15-20. The story of Kennedy's quest to negotiate with Castro on a new U.S.-Cuban relationship is told by Cuba's then-UN ambassador Carlos Lechuga in his book *In the Eye of the Storm: Castro, Khrushchev, Kennedy, and the Missile Crisis* (Ocean Press, 1995) and by U.S. diplomat William Attwood in *The Reds and the Blacks; A Personal Adventure* (Harper & Row, 1967) and *The Twilight Struggle: Tales of the Cold War* (Harper & Row, 1987). See also: Document 367. Memorandum by William Attwood and Document 374. Memorandum From William Attwood to Gordon Chase of the National Security Council Staff, New York, November 8, 1963, from *FRUS, 1961-1963, Volume XI, Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath, October 1962-December 1963* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997); "Kennedy Sought Dialogue with Cuba - Initiative With Castro Aborted by Assassination, Declassified Documents Show," *The National Security Archive*, November 24, 2003.]

use in an assassination attempt; he was also promised support by the CIA for a shooting, such as was taking place at that very time in Dallas. He was assured that “CIA would give him everything he needed (telescopic sight, silencer, all the money he wanted).”¹¹

The Church committee used the term “ironic” to refer to the fact that the shooting of John Kennedy took place on the very day a Kennedy-Castro peace initiative was being countered by a CIA plan to kill Castro.¹² Why was there no discussion of the significance of the fact that the same people who were working for the overthrow of the Cuban government considered Kennedy and his peace initiatives serious obstacles to their plans?

Castro noted in his November 23 talk that Latin American rightwing forces might have been involved in the Kennedy killing. These forces, he said, had not only openly denounced Kennedy for his accommodation with Cuba but were pushing for an invasion of Cuba while simultaneously threatening a military coup in Brazil to prevent another Cuba. Castro could not know at the time what we now know, namely that the threatened coup in Brazil would indeed take place soon—on April 1, 1964. It would lead to a wave of authoritarianism and torture that would spread throughout Latin America.

If, therefore, we try to make the case that Castro’s critique of the mainstream account of Kennedy’s assassination was the result of paranoia, denial, and a delusional tendency to see conspiracies everywhere, we will have a hard row to hoe. Almost all the operations he mentioned in his talk, and several operations he did not mention, did involve conspiracies. Cuba was at the center of a set of actual and interconnected conspiracies.

¹¹“Interim Report: Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders.”

¹²*Ibid.* [page 72: “The most ironic of these plots took place on November 22, 1963—the very day that President Kennedy was shot in Dallas—when a CIA official offered a poison pen to a Cuban for use against Castro while at the same time an emissary from President Kennedy was meeting with Castro to explore the possibility of improved relations.”]

3. *Beyond Their Wildest Dreams: Sep 11 2001 and the United States Left*

I am not suggesting that because Castro *imagined* a particular scenario—ultra-right forces killing John Kennedy—it must have been true. That is not the point. The point is that only when our imagination embraces a hypothesis as possible will we seriously study that hypothesis and put it to the test.

The evidence accumulated over many years has shown, in my view, that Castro’s view of who killed John Kennedy was correct. In fact, I think the evidence presented by the first wave of researchers fifty years ago settled the matter.¹³ However, it is not my intention to try to prove this in the present article. My topic is the left imagination.

The silencing, by an elite American left, of both dissident researchers and those who have been targets of Western imperial power has reached an unprecedented level in the interpretation of the events of September 11, 2001. The inability of the Western left leadership to imagine that these events were fraudulent—that they involved, as Fidel Castro put it in 1963, people “playing a very strange role in a very strange play”—has blocked understanding not of only of 9/11 but of actual, existing imperialism and its formation and deformation of world politics.

9/11 and state officials facing imperial power

Talk about blaming the victim. Three days after 9/11 the eminent economist Celso Furtado suggested in one of

¹³Examples of first wave researchers are Salandria, Lane, Meagher, and Weisberg. Several important early articles by Salandria [11-02-64, January 1965, March 1965] are found in Schotz, *History Will Not Absolve Us: Orwellian Control, Public Denial, and the Murder of President Kennedy*, while Mark Lane’s first book was *Rush to Judgment* (New York, N.Y.: Thunder’s Mouth Press, 1992; originally 1966). Sylvia Meagher’s early book was *Accessories after the Fact: The Warren Commission, the Authorities & the Report* (New York, N.Y.: Vintage Books, 1976; originally 1967), and Harold Weisberg’s first major work was *Whitewash: The Report on the Warren Report* (1965).

Brazil's most influential newspapers that there were two explanations for the attack. One possibility, Furtado implied, was that this savage assault on America was the work of foreign terrorists, as the Americans suspected. But a more plausible explanation, he asserted, was that this disaster was a provocation carried out by the American far right to justify a takeover. He compared the attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon to the burning of the Reichstag in 1933 and the rise of the Nazis to power in Germany.¹⁴

Kenneth Maxwell wrote this paragraph in 2002. At the time he was the Nelson and David Rockefeller Senior Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. The paragraph is from an article written for the Council entitled, "[Anti-Americanism in Brazil](#)." In writing his article Maxwell clearly felt no need to give evidence or argument as he dismissed Furtado. He must have felt his readers would agree that the absurdity of Furtado's remarks was self-evident. Furtado's claim would be off their radar, beyond their imagination.

Certainly, Furtado's imagination had a wider scope than Maxwell's. Could his personal experience have had something to do with this? Furtado was more than an "eminent economist;" he was an extremely distinguished intellectual who had held the position of Minister of Planning in the Goulart government when it was overthrown in the April 1, 1964 coup in Brazil. Furtado said in a 2003 interview:

The United States was afraid of the direction we had been taking; this phase ended and we entered—as someone put it—the peace of the cemeteries, it was the era of the dictatorship. Thirty years went by without real thinking, without being able to participate in

¹⁴Kenneth Maxwell, "[Anti-Americanism in Brazil](#)," *Council on Foreign Relations*, Spring 2002.

3. *Beyond Their Wildest Dreams: Sep 11 2001 and the United States Left*

movements, with the most provocative and courageous young people being hunted down.¹⁵

Did Celso Furtado have a wild imagination when he implied there was U.S. support for the coup? Not at all. The coup was not only hoped for, but prepared for and offered support at the highest level in the U.S.¹⁶

Furtado has not been the only sceptical voice on the Latin American left. On the fifth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, the President of Venezuela, Hugo Chavez, himself a major target of U.S. imperial force, entered the public debate. The Associated Press reported on September 12, 2006:

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez said Tuesday that it's plausible that the U.S. government was involved in the Sept. 11 attacks.

Chavez did not specifically accuse the U.S. government of having a hand in the Sept. 11 attacks, but rather suggested that theories of U.S. involvement bear examination.

The Venezuelan leader, an outspoken critic of U.S. President George W. Bush, was reacting to a television report investigating a theory the Twin Towers were brought down with explosives after hijacked airplanes crashed into them in 2001.

"The hypothesis is not absurd ... that those towers could have been dynamited," Chavez said in a speech to supporters. "A building never collapses like that, unless it's with an implosion."

¹⁵"Developing Brazil Today: An Interview with Celso Furtado 'Start with the Social, Not the Economic,'" *NACLA Report on the Americas* 36, no. 5 (2003).

¹⁶"Brazil Marks 40th Anniversary of Military Coup: Declassified Documents Shed Light on U.S. Role" (The National Security Archives, The George Washington University, March 2004).

“The hypothesis that is gaining strength ... is that it was the same U.S. imperial power that planned and carried out this terrible terrorist attack or act against its own people and against citizens of all over the world,” Chavez said. “Why? To justify the aggressions that immediately were unleashed on Afghanistan, on Iraq.”¹⁷

Actually, scepticism in Venezuela about the 9/11 attacks was not new. In March of 2006, for example, well known survivor and eyewitness of the September 11, 2001 attacks, William Rodriguez, had spent time with high-ranking Venezuelan officials, including Chavez, and had given talks on television and in universities in that country.¹⁸

The culmination of this Venezuelan scepticism was a statement in a legislative resolution of the country’s National Assembly. The resolution, apparently passed unanimously in the fall of 2006, referred to the 9/11 attacks as “self-inflicted.”¹⁹

In a sneering attack on the Chavez government in the *Miami Herald*, journalist Phil Gunson felt no need to support, with evidence or reason, his claim that Chavez was merely engaging in “anti-imperialist rhetoric.”²⁰ Presumably he knew the imaginations of Floridians could be trusted to block out the possibility that the insane rhetoric about 9/11 might have some truth to it.

One year later, on the sixth anniversary of the attacks, Fidel Castro, at that point ill and retired from government but still keeping up with political events, made his own conclusions known. “That painful incident,” he said, “occurred six years ago today.” “Today,” he

¹⁷“Chavez Says U.S. May Have Orchestrated 9/11: ‘Those Towers Could Have Been Dynamited,’ Says Venezuela’s President,” *Associated Press*, September 12, 2006.

¹⁸“Venezuelan Government to Launch International 9/11 Investigation: Truth Crusaders Walter and Rodriguez to Appear on Hugo Chavez’s Weekly TV Broadcast,” *Paul Joseph Watson & Alex Jones/Prison Planet.com*, March 31, 2006.

¹⁹For this information I have depended on Phil Gunson, “Chávez Attacks Bush as ‘genocidal’ Leader,” *Miami Herald*, November 9, 2006.

²⁰*Ibid.*

3. *Beyond Their Wildest Dreams: Sep 11 2001 and the United States Left*

said, “we know that the public was deliberately misinformed.” Castro listed several anomalies and omissions in the official reports. For example, he said: “The calculations with respect to the steel structures, plane impacts, the black boxes recovered and what they revealed do not coincide with the opinions of mathematicians, seismologists ... demolition experts and others.”

Referring to the attacks generally, and the attack on the Pentagon specifically, Castro said: “We were deceived, as were the rest of the planet’s inhabitants.”²¹

This was a poignant admission by the man who had grasped the falsity of the Lee Harvey Oswald story one day after Kennedy’s assassination.

Reporting on Castro’s remarks in the *Guardian*, journalist Mark Tran said: “Fidel Castro today joined the band of September 11 conspiracy theorists by accusing the US of spreading disinformation about the attacks that took place six years ago.”²²

Tran seems to have worried that the dismissive “conspiracy theorist” term might not put an end to the matter for readers of the *Guardian*, so he added two brief factual claims, one having to do with DNA evidence at the Pentagon and one having to do with a 2007 video allegedly showing Bin Laden giving an address.

The contempt for Castro’s intelligence, however, was breathtaking. Tran implied that his “facts,” which could have been found in about fifteen minutes on the Internet and which were subsequently questioned even by typically uncritical mainstream journalists, were beyond the research capabilities of the former President of Cuba.²³

²¹“The Empire and Its Lies: Reflections by the Commander in Chief,” September 11, 2007, Discursos e intervenciones del Comandante en Jefe Fidel Castro Ruz, Presidente del Consejo. de Estado de la Republica de Cuba.

²²Mark Tran, “Castro Says US Lied about 9/11 Attacks,” *Guardian*, September 12, 2007.

²³Sue Reid, “Has Osama Bin Laden Been Dead for Seven Years – and Are the U.S. and Britain Covering It up to Continue War on Terror?” *The Mail*, September 11, 2009.

Indeed, much of the Western left leadership and associated media not only trusted the FBI²⁴ while ignoring Furtado, Chavez, the Venezuelan National Assembly and Fidel Castro; they also, through silence and ridicule, worked to prevent serious public discussion of the 9/11 controversy.

Among the U.S. left media that kept the silence, partially or wholly, are:

- Monthly Review
- Common Dreams
- Huffington Post
- Counterpunch
- The Nation
- The Real News
- Democracy Now!
- Z Magazine
- The Progressive
- Mother Jones
- Altnet.org
- MoveOn.org

In the end, the most dramatic public challenge to the official account of 9/11 by a state leader did not come from the left. It came from a conservative leader who was, however, a target of U.S. imperial power. Speaking to the United Nations General Assembly on September 23, 2010, President Ahmadinejad of Iran outlined three possible hypotheses for the 9/11 attacks.²⁵ The first was the U.S. government's hypothesis—"a very powerful and complex terrorist group,

²⁴The FBI was officially in charge of the investigation of the crimes of 9/11, and the Bureau bears ultimate responsibility for the official narrative of 9/11, which was adopted uncritically by other state agencies and commissions.

²⁵Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, "Address by H.E. Dr. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Before the 65th Session of the United Nations General Assembly" [transcript](#), [C-Span film recording](#) (United Nations General Assembly, New York, N.Y., September 23, 2010).

3. *Beyond Their Wildest Dreams: Sep 11 2001 and the United States Left*

able to successfully cross all layers of the American intelligence and security, carried out the attack.” The second was the hypothesis that “some segments within the U.S. government orchestrated the attack to reverse the declining American economy and its grips on the Middle East in order also to save the Zionist regime.” The third was a somewhat weaker version of the second, namely that the assault “was carried out by a terrorist group but the American government supported and took advantage of the situation.”

Ahmadinejad implied, though he did not definitively claim, that he favoured the second hypothesis. He went on to suggest that even if waging war were an appropriate response to a terrorist attack—he did not think it was—a thorough and independent investigation should have preceded the assaults on Afghanistan and Iraq in which hundreds of thousands of people died.

He ended his discussion of 9/11 with a proposal that the UN set up an independent fact-finding group to look into the 9/11 events.

In reporting on this event, *The New York Times* noted that Ahmadinejad’s comments “prompted at least 33 delegations to walk out, including the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Costa Rica, all 27 members of the European Union and the union’s representative.”²⁶

The *Times*’ report was given to remarks that sidestepped the Iranian president’s assertions. Ahmadinejad’s remarks were made to endear himself to the world’s Muslim community, and especially to the Arab world. Ahmadinejad was playing the politician in Iran, where he had to contend with conservatives trying to “outflank him.” Ahmadinejad wanted to keep himself “at the center of global attention while deflecting attention away from his dismal domestic record.” Ahmadinejad “obviously delights in being provocative” and “seemed to go out of his way to sabotage any comments he made previously this week about Iran’s readiness for dialogue with the United States.”

²⁶Neil Macfarquhar, “U.S. Walks Out as Iran Leader Speaks,” *The New York Times*, September 23, 2010.

The possibility that Ahmadinejad might have been sincere, or that there may have been an evidential basis for his views, was not mentioned.

Meanwhile, the reported response to Ahmadinejad's talk by the United States Mission to the United Nations was harsh:

Rather than representing the aspirations and goodwill of the Iranian people, Mr. Ahmadinejad has yet again chosen to spout vile conspiracy theories and anti-Semitic slurs that are as abhorrent and delusional as they are predictable.

Where were these anti-Semitic slurs? In his talk the Iranian President condemned Israeli actions against Palestinians and included as one of the possible motives of a 9/11 inside job the saving of "the Zionist regime" by U.S. government insiders. But how is either of these an anti-Semitic slur? He said nothing in his speech, hateful or otherwise, about Jews. He did not identify Zionism, as an ideology or historical movement, with Jews as a collectivity. He did not identify the state of Israel with Jews as a collectivity. He did not say "the Jews" carried out the 9/11 attacks.

And what did the U.S. Mission mean when it said that Ahmadinejad did not represent the views of Iranians? His views on 9/11 were probably much closer to the views of Iranians than were the views of the U.S. Mission. As will be explained later, the great majority of the world's Muslims reject the official account of 9/11.

In his address to the General Assembly the following year, Ahmadinejad briefly revisited this issue, saying that, after his 2010 proposal of an investigation into 9/11, Iran was put "under pressure and threat by the government of the United States." Moreover, he said, instead of supporting a fact-finding team, the U.S. killed the alleged perpetrator of the attacks (Osama bin Laden) without bringing him to trial.²⁷

²⁷Daniel Tovrov, "Ahmadinejad United Nations Speech: Full Text Transcript," *In-*

3. *Beyond Their Wildest Dreams: Sep 11 2001 and the United States Left*

In 2012 another leader in the Muslim world made his position on 9/11 known. Dr. Mahathir Mohamad had been Prime Minister of Malaysia from 1981 to 2003 and was still in 2012 a significant power in his country and a major figure in the global south. By then he had spent considerable time discussing 9/11 with several well-known members of the U.S. movement of dissent (including William Rodriguez and David Ray Griffin)²⁸ and had indicated that he questioned the official account. But on November 19, 2012 he left no doubt about his position. In a 20-minute public address introducing a day-long international conference on 9/11 in Kuala Lumpur, he noted:

The official explanation for the destruction of the Twin Towers is still about an attack by suicidal Muslim extremists, but even among Americans this explanation is beginning to wear thin and to be questioned. In fact, certain American groups have thoroughly analyzed various aspects of the attack and destruction of the Twin Towers, the Pentagon building, and the reported crash in Pennsylvania. And their investigations reveal many aspects of the attack which cannot be explained by attributing them to attacks by terrorists—Muslims or non-Muslims.

He went on to give details of the official narrative that he found especially unconvincing, and he concluded that the 9/11 attack:

...has divided the world into Muslim and non-Muslim and sowed the seeds of suspicion and hatred between them. It has undermined the security of nations everywhere, forcing them to spend trillions of dollars on se-

ternational Business Times, September 22, 2011.

²⁸Richard Roepke, "Last Man Out on 9/11 Makes Shocking Disclosures," *COTO Report*, August 10, 2011. The information about David Ray Griffin's 30-60 minute discussion with Mahathir is from my personal correspondence with Dr. Griffin.

curity measures.... Truly, 9/11 is the worst manmade disaster for the world since the end of the two world wars. For that reason alone it is important that we seek the truth because when truth is revealed then we can really prepare to protect and secure ourselves.²⁹

There is no need to quote Western media coverage of Mahathir's remarks because, as far as I can tell, there was none—an outcome Mahathir had predicted in his talk.

Now, of course, it is possible that these current and former state officials had not seriously studied 9/11 and were simply intoxicated by anti-imperial fervour. But the evidence suggests otherwise. Those who visited Venezuela well before the public pronouncements in that country in September of 2006 noted that officials had collected books and other materials on the subject of 9/11.³⁰ And Malaysia's Mahathir had been meeting people to discuss the issue for years. There is no reason to doubt what he said in his 2012 talk: "I have thought a lot about 9/11." The dismissal of these leaders by the Western left is puzzling, to say the least.

Educator Paulo Freire, himself a victim of the 1964 coup in Brazil, pointed out years ago that when members of an oppressor class join oppressed people in their struggle for justice they may, despite the

²⁹Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, [President of the Perdana Global Peace Foundation and Former Prime Minister of Malaysia](#), beginning at 0:25 [Opens](#) the "9/11 Revisited: Seeking the Truth" Conference in Kuala Lumpur on November 19, 2012. [Additional sources of Dr Mohamad speaking on behalf of humanity are plentiful including: - [Full Intl Conference: The "New World Order" A Recipe For War or Peace!](#), Perdana Global Peace Foundation, 9 Mar 2015 (7:15:38); Dr. Mahathir Mohamed address: 15:46-38:00 and excerpts, 2:18. - [Opening Address of Tun Dr Mahathir at The Oxford Union](#), 7 Jun 2022 (film: 58:59) - [Keynote Address at the 6th International Conference of The Kuala Lumpur Forum For Thought And Civilisation](#); Theme: "Civilisational Reforms And Revivalist Endeavours In The Muslim Ummah: Foundations, Realities And Futures" - 13 Dec 2022 (17:11)]

³⁰Roepeke, "Last Man Out on 9/11 Makes Shocking Disclosures."

3. *Beyond Their Wildest Dreams: Sep 11 2001 and the United States Left*

best of intentions, bring prejudices with them, “which include a lack of confidence in the people’s ability to think...and to know.”³¹ Is it possible that the left leadership in the U.S. has fallen into this trap?

The dismissal of 9/11 sceptics has been carried out through a silence punctuated by occasional outbursts. The late Alexander Cockburn of *Counterpunch* was given to outbursts. Not content to speak of the “fundamental idiocy of the 9/11 conspiracists” and to tie them to the decline of the American left, Cockburn even took the opportunity to go beyond 9/11 and pledge allegiance once more, as he had in previous years, to the Warren Commission’s Lee Harvey Oswald hypothesis³²—a hypothesis that had, in my opinion, been shown to be absurd half a century ago.

In a January 2017 article entitled, “American Psychosis,” Chris Hedges continued the anti-dissent campaign. Crying out that, “We feel trapped in a hall of mirrors,” Hedges announced that:

The lies fly out of the White House like flocks of pigeons: Donald Trump’s election victory was a landslide. He had the largest inauguration crowds in American history... We don’t know “who really knocked down” the World Trade Center. Torture works. Mexico will pay for the wall. Conspiracy theories are fact. Scientific facts are conspiracies.³³

The hall of mirrors is real enough but Hedges’ rant offers no escape. As far as I can discover, Hedges has made no serious study of what happened at the World Trade Center on 9/11 and has, therefore, no

³¹Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, translated by Myra Bergman Ramos (New York, N.Y.: Seabury Press, 1970), 46.

³²Alexander Cockburn, “[The 9/11 Conspiracists and the Decline of the American Left](#),” *Counterpunch*, November 28, 2006. For a critique of Cockburn see Michael Keefer, “[Into the Ring with Counterpunch on 9/11: How Alexander Cockburn, Otherwise So Bright, Blanks Out on 9/11 Evidence](#),” *911Review.com*, December 4, 2006.

³³Chris Hedges, “[American Psychosis](#),” *Truthdig*, January 29, 2017.

idea who knocked down the buildings.³⁴ Moreover, he appears never to have seriously thought about what a “conspiracy theory” is and what he is denouncing when he denounces such theories. Does he really mean to suggest that the American ruling class, in pursuing its interests, never conspires?

And thus the U.S. left leadership sits in the left chamber of the hall of mirrors, complaining about conspiracy theories while closing its eyes to actual conspiracies crucial to contemporary imperialism.

9/11 and public opinion

If state leaders familiar with Western imperial power have questioned the official narrative of the September 11, 2001 attacks, what about “the people” beloved of the left?

Actually, sorting out what portion of the world’s population qualifies, according to ideological criteria, as “the people” is a difficult task—an almost metaphysical exercise. So let us ask an easier question: what, according to surveys undertaken, appears to be the level of belief and unbelief in the world with respect to the 9/11 narrative?

There have been many polls. Comparing and compiling the results is very difficult since the same questions are seldom asked, in precisely the same words, in different polls. It is, however, possible to set forth grounded estimates.

In 2008, WorldPublicOpinion.org polled over 16,000 people in 17 countries. Of the total population of 2.5 billion people represented in the survey, only 39% said they thought that Al-Qaeda was behind the 9/11 attacks.³⁵

³⁴Those interested in the destruction of the buildings may consult the website of Architects & Engineers for 9/11 Truth. And see Ted Walter, *BEYOND MISINFORMATION: What Science Says About the Destruction of World Trade Center Buildings 1, 2, and 7* (Berkeley, California: Architects & Engineers for 9/11 Truth, Inc., 2015); and Steven Jones et al., “15 Years Later: On the Physics of High-Rise Building Collapses,” *Europhysics News* 47, no. 4 (2016): 21-26

³⁵“International Poll: No Consensus On Who Was Behind 9/11” (WorldPublicOpinion.org)

3. *Beyond Their Wildest Dreams: Sep 11 2001 and the United States Left*

The belief that Al-Qaeda carried out the attacks is, I suggest, an essential component of belief in the official narrative of 9/11. If only 39% is willing to name Al-Qaeda as responsible, then a maximum of 39% can be counted as believers of the official narrative.

This WorldPublicOpinion.org poll is, for the most part, supported by other polls, suggesting that the U.S. official narrative is, globally, a minority view. If these figures are correct, of the current world population of 7.5 billion, roughly 2.9 billion people affirm the official view of 9/11 and 4.6 billion do not affirm it.

Now, of the 61% who do not affirm the official view of 9/11, a large percentage says it does not know who carried out the attacks (by implication, it does not know what the goals of the attackers were, and so on). But the number of those who think the U.S. government was behind the attacks is by no means trivial. The figure appears to be about 14% of the world's population.³⁶ If this is correct, roughly 1 billion people think the U.S. government was behind the attacks. Of course, this figure includes children. But even when we exclude everyone under 18 years of age we have 700 million adults in the world who think the U.S. government was behind the 9/11 attacks.

It is not clear if the *Guardian's* "band of September 11 conspiracy theorists," which Castro was said to have joined, consists of this 700 million people or if it consists of the entire group of 4.6 billion non-believers. Either way, we are talking about a pretty large "band."

Do these poll results prove that the official narrative is false? No. Do they prove that blaming elements of the U.S. government is correct? No. But these figures suggest two things. First, the official story, despite its widespread dissemination, has failed to capture the imaginations of the majority of people on the planet. Second, the minds of 700 million adults have no trouble embracing the possibility that elements of the U.S. government were behind

ion.org, September 10, 2008).

³⁶*Ibid.*; "Why the 9/11 Conspiracies Have Changed," *BBC News Magazine*, August 29, 2011.

the attacks.

What can be said about the views of that segment of the world population that is most clearly targeted by Western imperialism today?

The so-called Global War on Terror, announced shortly after the 9/11 events, has mainly targeted countries with Muslim majorities.

The [2008 WorldPublicOpinion.org poll](#) of people in 17 countries included five countries with majority Muslim populations. Of the total Muslim population represented in the survey (399.6 million people in 2008), only 21.2% assigned guilt to Al-Qaeda.³⁷

In 2011 the Pew Research Group surveyed eight Muslim populations. Of the total Muslim population represented (588.2 million in 2011), only 17% assigned guilt to Arabs.³⁸

The evidence suggests that scepticism toward the official account among Muslims has been growing. In December of 2016 a published poll of British Muslims indicated that only 4% of those polled believed that “Al-Qaeda/Muslim terrorists” were responsible for 9/11, whereas 31% held the American government responsible.³⁹ This is remarkable given the unvarying, repetitive telling of the official story by British mainstream media and political parties.

Are British Muslims wallowing in feelings of victimhood, which have made them prey to extremists peddling “conspiracy theories?” As a matter of fact, the British think tank that sponsored the 2016 poll has drawn this conclusion. But the think tank in question, Policy

³⁷[International Poll: No Consensus On Who Was Behind 9/11.](#) The figures I give have been arrived at by using data from the poll in combination with country population data for 2008 from the Population Reference Bureau.

³⁸[Muslim-Western Tensions Persist: Common Concerns About Islamic Extremism](#) (Pew Research Center, July 21, 2011). The figures I give have been arrived at by using data from the poll in combination with country population data for 2011 from the Population Reference Bureau.

³⁹[Unsettled Belonging: A Survey of Britain’s Muslim Communities.](#) (London: Policy Exchange, December 2, 2016); [“What Muslims Want: A Survey of British Muslims by ICM on Behalf of Policy Exchange.”](#) (London: Policy Exchange, December 2, 2016).

3. *Beyond Their Wildest Dreams: Sep 11 2001 and the United States Left*

Exchange, has a special relationship to the UK's Conservative Party and appears to have carried out the poll precisely in order to put British Muslims under increased scrutiny and suspicion.⁴⁰

Cannot the left, in its interpretation of the views of this targeted population, do better?

Most peculiar and disturbing is the tendency of left activists and leaders to join with state intelligence agencies in using the term “conspiracy theory” to dismiss those who raise questions about official state narratives.

There seems to be little awareness among these left critics of the history of the term.⁴¹ They seem not to realize that they are employing a propaganda expression, the function of which is to discourage people from looking beneath the surface of political events, especially political events in which elements of their own government might have played a hidden and unsavoury role.

In the case of the 9/11 attacks it is important to remember, when the “conspiracy theory” accusation is made, that the lone wolf alternative, which was available for the John Kennedy assassination, is not available here. Everyone agrees that the attack was the result of multiple persons planning in secret to commit a crime. That is, the attack was the result of a conspiracy. The question is not, Was there a conspiracy? The question is, Who were the conspirators? Defamation cannot answer this question.

Conclusion

Suppose our imaginations can embrace the possibility that the 9/11 attacks were orchestrated by elements in the U.S. government. In

⁴⁰Graeme MacQueen, “British Muslims Overwhelmingly Reject the Official 9/11 Story,” *Global Research*, December 29, 2016.

⁴¹Lance deHaven-Smith, *Conspiracy Theory in America* (Austin, Texas: Univ. of Texas Press, 2013). [See Also: *The Term “Conspiracy Theory” – an Invention of the CIA*, by Rev. Douglass Wilson, [Project Unspeakable](#)]

that case what do we do next? There is no mystery. Once the imagination stops filtering out a hypothesis and allows it into the realm of the possible, it can be put to the test. Evidence and reason must now do the job.⁴² Imagination cannot settle the question of truth or falsity any more than ideology, morality, or “common sense.”

I am not concerned in this article to demonstrate the truth of the “inside job” hypothesis of the 9/11 attacks. Ten years of research have led me to conclude that it is correct, but in the present paper I am concerned only with the preliminary, but vital, issue of imagination. Those who cannot imagine this hypothesis to be true will leave it unexamined, and, in the worst of worlds, will contribute to the silencing of dissenters. The left, in this case, will betray the best of its tradition and abandon both the targets of imperial oppression and their spokespeople.

Fidel Castro sounded the warning in his November 23, 1963 speech:

Intellectuals and lovers of peace should understand the danger that maneuvers of this kind could mean to world peace, and what a conspiracy of this type, what a Machiavellian policy of this nature, could lead to.

⁴²Civil society researchers have, of course, already begun the job. Good books to begin with are: David Griffin, *The New Pearl Harbor: Disturbing Questions About the Bush Administration and 9/11*, Second edition (Northampton, Mass.: Interlink Publishing, 2004) [isbn.nu]; David Griffin, *The New Pearl Harbor Revisited: 9/11, The Cover-Up, and the Exposé* (Northampton, Mass.: Interlink Publishing, 2008); James Gourley, ed., *The 9/11 Toronto Report: International Hearings on the Events of September 11, 2001* (International Center for 9/11 Studies, 2012). Additional sources include the websites of *Consensus 9/11* and the *Journal of 9/11 Studies*.

4. British Muslims Overwhelmingly Reject the Official 9/11 Story

Muslims in the West tend to toe the official line in public pronouncements on 9/11. But polls show that, in their private views, they are one of the most sceptical populations in the world with respect to the official narrative. In this article I show how a poll in Britain, apparently constructed and interpreted to discipline the domestic British Muslim community by linking it to “conspiracy theory” and to terrorism, reveals, on close examination, a very different picture.

Published in [Global Research](#), 29 Dec 2016

Introduction

A recent poll reveals that a maximum of 4% of British Muslims believe the official narrative of the 9/11 attacks. This is one of the strongest rejections of that story ever recorded. The sponsors of the poll have done their best to link these poll results to extremism and terrorism, but the data offer no support for this interpretation.

4. British Muslims Overwhelmingly Reject the Official 9/11 Story



Figure 4.1.: September 11, 2001

The poll was released as both a set of data and an interpretative report on December 2, 2016.¹ The sponsor of the poll was British think tank, Policy Exchange, which had the polling company ICM carry out the survey. Policy Exchange, regarded as a highly influential institution, is known for its relationship to the Conservative Party. The current Chair of its Board of Trustees is well known neo-conservative, David Frum. Policy Exchange has been described by a representative of the Muslim Council of Britain as an “[anti-Muslim organization](#),” a useful observation for readers puzzled by the think tank’s interpretation of the poll.

The question in the poll that most directly addresses the events of September 11, 2001 is: “Who do you think was responsible for 9/11?” Five possible responses are listed, with results as follows (Report, p.

¹ “*What Muslims Want: A survey of British Muslims by ICM on behalf of Policy Exchange*. London: Policy Exchange, Dec. 2, 2016. *Unsettled Belonging: A survey of Britain’s Muslim communities*. London: Policy Exchange, Dec. 2, 2016.

75; data set, p. 802):

Responsible	Answers
Al-Qaeda/Muslim terrorists	4%
Jews	7%
The American Government	31%
Other	6%
Don't know	52%

The belief that Al-Qaeda carried out the attacks is an essential component of belief in the official narrative of 9/11. If only 4% regard Al-Qaeda as responsible, then no more than 4% accept the official narrative.

The authors of the interpretive report on the poll (among whom, sadly, is Labour MP, Khalid Mahmood) attempt to make British Muslim respondents look isolated and peculiar for their views on 9/11. But, of course, Muslim populations have been critical of the official account of 9/11 for years.

In 2008 WorldPublicOpinion.org polled over 16,000 people in 17 countries, five of which had a majority Muslim population. Of the total Muslim population represented in the survey (399.6 million people in 2008), only 21.2% assigned guilt to Al-Qaeda.²

In 2011 the [Pew Research Group](http://PewResearchGroup.org) surveyed eight Muslim populations. Of the total Muslim population represented (588.2 million in 2011), 17% assigned guilt to Arabs (see [endnote 2](#)).

In short, a very modest percentage of Muslims around the world has accepted the official story. Knowing this makes the recent results for British Muslims look less peculiar. It is true, however, that these recent results show an even greater scepticism than usual among Muslims, and this is fascinating given the location of this Muslim

²All figures relating to the 2008 and 2011 polls have been arrived at by using data from the polls themselves in combination with country population data for 2008 and 2011 from the [Population Reference Bureau](http://PopulationReferenceBureau.org).

4. British Muslims Overwhelmingly Reject the Official 9/11 Story

population in the midst of a country where both government and mainstream media routinely recite the official story.

The interpreters of the recent poll support their aim of making British Muslims look peculiar by contrasting their responses to those of a control group included in the ICM survey. This group of about 2000 UK citizens, intended to represent the British population as whole, responded to the above question as follows (Report, p. 76; data set, final page):

Responsible	Answers
Al-Qaeda/Muslim terrorists	71%
Jews	1%
The American Government	10%
Other	2%
Don't know	16%

The contrast between 71% and 4% fingering “Al-Qaeda/Muslim terrorists” is, indeed, dramatic. But what Policy Exchange does not tell us is that, if British Muslims are not representative of world opinion, neither is this control group.

The 2008 17-country survey by WorldPublicOpinion.org indicated that only 39% of the total population represented in the survey (2543.2 million people in 2008) said that Al-Qaeda was behind the 9/11 attacks. These results contrast sharply with ICM’s control group. They also let us know that in 2008 a maximum of 39% of the surveyed population, which I believe to have been representative of the population of the world as a whole, supported the official narrative of 9/11 (see [endnote 2](#)).

Determined to make British Muslims look not only peculiar but dangerous, Policy Exchange has even engaged in practices that are clearly deceptive in its poll and in its discussion of the poll results.

Anti-Semitism

The authors of the poll report say that some Muslim respondents, within the focus groups held in various locations in the UK, repeated the erroneous claim that no Jews died in the Twin Towers. The authors comment that this is an example of a “belief in conspiracies rooted in anti-Semitic tropes” and they explain that this claim is meant to be a sign that Jews “had foreknowledge of the attack—and were therefore implicated in the crime” (Report, p. 77)

The attempt to criminalize 9/11 dissent, in the UK and elsewhere, has depended in large part on the idea that everyone who questions the official narrative of 9/11 says “the Jews did it.” This allows 9/11 dissent to be regarded as a form of anti-Semitism and attacked by states with all relevant legal apparatus. The notion that 9/11 dissenters are racists plays into the criminalization effort much better, for example, than the notion that 9/11 dissenters are troubled by [violations of the laws of physics](#) in the official narrative.

The authors are correct when they say that the claim that no Jews died in the Towers is false. But they do not attempt to quantify this result. How many Muslims referred to this claim? In the only relevant part of the survey that is quantified respondents chose the US government as responsible for the attacks far more often than they chose “Jews.”

And what, precisely, does “Jews” mean in this poll? This option is one of five offered to respondents. Muslims did not choose the wording of this option: the designers of the poll did. To whom is the term pointing? The state of Israel? A group of high-ranking neo-conservative state officials in the US? Jewish teenagers in Montreal? We are not told.

The 2008 poll by WorldPublicOpinion.org asked an open-ended question (“Who do you think was behind the 9/11 attacks?”) and established its categories on the basis of responses given. It ended up with a category called “Israel.” This option has the virtue of clarity—it

4. British Muslims Overwhelmingly Reject the Official 9/11 Story

also has the virtue of plausibility, given the evidence of Israeli foreknowledge of the attacks.³ But perhaps “Jews” is useful for Policy Exchange precisely because it is not clear? Its generality and vagueness are useful for making the charge of anti-Semitism. Our suspicions about Policy Exchange’s motives are strengthened when we find that the Policy Exchange interpreters use the expression “the Jews” repeatedly in their discussion of poll results. That is, they say 7% of British Muslims blame the 9/11 events on “the Jews” (Report, pp. 9, 75, 77, 86). In this way they imply that the blame is cast on all Jews, on Jews as a collectivity. This is straight misrepresentation. The question in the poll says nothing about “the Jews.”

Conspiracy theory and extremism

In the poll British Muslims were asked this question (data set, p. 767):

From time to time we all come across so-called ‘conspiracy theories,’ which supposedly explain events in a different way to commonly held beliefs. You may have seen or heard about conspiracy theories about, for example, the attacks on the Twin Towers in New York on 9/11. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

Conspiracy theories are started by extremists trying to dupe Muslims into support for their views.

³Examples of Israeli foreknowledge are referenced on pp. 151-153 of my book, *THE 2001 ANTHRAX DECEPTION: The Case for a Domestic Conspiracy* (Clarity Press, 2014). Another well-known example is the warning received two hours in advance of the attacks by employees of the Israeli instant messaging company, Odigo. See “Odigo says workers were warned of attack,” *Haaretz*, Sept. 26, 2001; “Odigo clarifies attack messages,” *Washington Post*, Sept. 28, 2001; “Instant messages to Israel warned of WTC attack,” *Washington Post*, Sept. 27, 2001; “Agents following suspects’ lengthy electronic trail—web of connections used to plan attack,” *Washington Post*, Oct. 4, 2001.

(Further sub-questions then ask about other aspects of belief in “conspiracy theories.”)

Now, the so-called War on Terror utilizes several powerful and slippery terms. “Conspiracy theory” and “extremism” are two of them. Both of these terms are used in the poll, yet neither of them is defined. This shows the extent to which the poll violates [basic principles of public polling](#) and veers into propaganda and entrapment.

About the only things clear in the above question are that “conspiracy theories,” whatever they may be, are bad; that extremism, whatever it may be, is also bad; and that conspiracy theories may be connected to extremism. So it is not surprising that many respondents chose to steer clear of these menacing notions: 40% agreed with the statement that extremists dupe Muslims into conspiracy theories.

How frustrated the Policy Exchange interpreters must have been when, having achieved this result, they found that their most despised “conspiracy theory,” the one about 9/11, was strongly supported by respondents! Unwilling to consider the possibility that many Muslims support the claim of US government responsibility because they think it is the hypothesis best supported by evidence, and determined to draw links between 9/11 dissent and “extremism,” the Policy Exchange authors say (Report, p. 80):

In considering the importance of this apparent readiness to see the world through a lens of conspiracy, it is worth noting how far these theories cast Muslims as the victims of nefarious intrigue. This is crucial given the extent to which radical Islamist groups feed on narratives that place a sense of Muslim victimhood at their core. Groups like al-Qaeda and ISIS portray the world as divided between Islam and ‘unbelievers’, with ‘the West’ held up as the primary manifestation of the latter. In that context, they insist that Muslims face an existential threat from the West, which demands a response—and it is this narrative, which is used to justify acts of violence

4. British Muslims Overwhelmingly Reject the Official 9/11 Story

and terrorism across the globe.

The argument seems to go like this: Muslim terrorist groups undertake violent acts because they think Muslims are under deadly assault from the West; the belief that Muslims are under assault is not rational but is an example of victim mentality and political paranoia; the delusional 9/11 “conspiracy theory” supports this irrational belief that Muslims are under assault from the West; therefore, the 9/11 conspiracy theory supports violence and terrorism.

Meanwhile, back in the real world, the international political scene has been dominated since 9/11 by a series of extremely violent assaults by the United States and its allies on Muslim countries. Muslims killed, wounded and left homeless are in the millions. Moreover, we know perfectly well that those attacked have been “the victims of nefarious intrigue.” Is Policy Exchange really unaware of the Downing Street memo, for example, which shows high-level members of the British government, including the Prime Minister, meeting to make a secret plan to support what they acknowledge is an illegal assault on Iraq?

And if the belief that Muslims are under attack is a true belief, what is irrational or immoral about saying that this demands a response from Muslims? There is no reason the response need be violent, and British Muslims clearly do not want it to be violent. *The survey actually shows that British Muslims are less sympathetic to terrorism and political violence than the control group representing the general population* (Report, p. 8). In other words, this 2016 poll shows that British Muslims reject both terrorism and the official story of 9/11 and see no contradiction in this double rejection.

The real goals of Policy Exchange and those in the British government that the think tank supports begin to become clear when we ponder the wording employed in the conspiracy theory question:

Conspiracy theories are started by extremists trying to dupe Muslims into support for their views.

Who are these extremists? The question implies they are not Muslims. Are they members of the 9/11 truth movement? Given that 9/11 dissent is the only “conspiracy theory” given prominence in this poll, who else could be meant?

If it seems absurd that this non-violent social movement should be called “extremist,” we must remember that for some years now the criminalization of 9/11 dissent has been a goal of high-level actors in the British government. Many of us living outside the UK first became aware of this when we listened to then-Prime Minister [David Cameron’s speech to the UN General Assembly](#) on September 25, 2014. In that speech he referred with a show of indignation to the claims “that 9/11 was a Jewish plot or that the 7/7 London attacks were staged.” He said that these ideas were connected to “extremism” and that his government intended to take on all forms of extremism, including “non-violent extremism.”

Mr. Cameron continued to pursue this theme after his UN speech. In a July 2015 [speech on extremism in Birmingham](#), for example, he repeated his 9/11 and 7/7 examples and said that in taking on extremism the government would need to “take its component parts to pieces — the cultish worldview, the conspiracy theories.” He reiterated his determination to “tackle both parts of the creed—the non-violent and violent.”

The decision to target “non-violent extremism” had, in fact, already been British government strategy for some years, having been made part of the controversial “[Prevent](#)” strategy for countering terrorism. But Cameron was intent on integrating “conspiracy theories” into this target.

There is little doubt that Policy Exchange, which openly supports the Prevent strategy in its discussion of the recent poll (Report, [p. 10](#)), wishes both to keep British Muslims on a tight leash and to discredit the global 9/11 truth movement.

Yet, in the face of these aims, the poll responses stubbornly remain. They indicate that British Muslims are aware of major empiri-

4. British Muslims Overwhelmingly Reject the Official 9/11 Story

cal claims made by the 9/11 truth movement (see focus group quotations, Report, p. 76) and they also indicate that respondents distrust mainstream media (Report, pp. 80 ff.).

Here is an interpretation of the poll that is at odds with the Policy Exchange interpretation: the official narrative of 9/11, which has been a minority position among the world's people for years, is in increasing trouble, fed by growing scepticism toward mainstream media, increasing influence from the movement for 9/11 dissent, and a courageous willingness— demonstrated in this poll by British Muslims—to think independently of Western mainstream ideologues and propagandists.

5. You Weren't Stupid, Mr. Brown!

Here I examine the work of CNN's news anchor Aaron Brown on the day of 9/11. Brown, years after the events, apologized for precisely the coverage that he had handled most insightfully. He was not stupid in his reluctance to accept the possibility of the total collapse of the Twin Towers from airplane impact. He was actually at his best in these moments, as he put forth competing hypotheses and looked to his reporters on the scene for evidence supporting these hypotheses.

A more comprehensive look at same-day news coverage can be found in the two articles in this book authored with Ted Walter: "How 36 Reporters Brought Us the Twin Towers' Explosive Demolition on 9/11" and "The Triumph of the Official Narrative: How the TV Networks Hid the Twin Towers' Explosive Demolition on 9/11."

Published in [Off Guardian](#), 11 Sep 2019

Aaron Brown, news anchor during most of CNN's coverage on September 11, 2001, was interviewed on the 15th anniversary of the event. He said in that interview that he had felt "profoundly stupid" when he was reporting the destruction of the first Tower (the South Tower) on that morning.

5. You Weren't Stupid, Mr. Brown!



Figure 5.1.: CNN's brief shining moment on September 11, 2001

"I...I will tell you...that a million things had been running through my mind about what might happen. About the effect of a jet plane hitting people above where the impact was, what might be going on in those buildings. And it just never occurred to me that they'd come down. And I thought...it's the only time I thought, maybe you just don't have what it takes to do a story like this. Because it just had never occurred to me."

(CNN, Sept. 11, 2016, interviewer Brian Stelter)

Is it not remarkable that Brown was made to feel stupid, and to feel inadequate as a news anchor, during the precise moments of his coverage of that day when his senses and his mind were fully engaged and on the right track?

Shortly after 9:59 a.m. Brown had been standing on a roof in New York City about 30 blocks from the World Trade Center. He was

looking directly at the South Tower as it was destroyed. He was not just a journalist and not just a news anchor: he was an eyewitness.

He immediately interrupted a journalist who was reporting live about the Pentagon:

“Wow! Jamie. Jamie, I need you to stop for a second. There has just been a huge explosion...we can see a billowing smoke rising...and I can't...I'll tell you that I can't see that second Tower. But there was a cascade of sparks and fire and now this...it looks almost like a mushroom cloud, explosion, this huge, billowing smoke in the second Tower...” (9:59:07 a.m.)

Having reported honestly what he saw with his own eyes, Brown next did exactly what he should have done as a responsible news anchor. He let his audience know that while he did not know what had happened it was clear that there were two hypotheses in play, the explosion hypothesis and the structural failure hypothesis. And then he went to his reporters on the scene, as well as to authorities, to try and sort out which hypothesis was correct.

Here are examples of his setting forth—after the first building was destroyed and again after the second was destroyed—the rival hypotheses:

“and then just in the last several minutes there has been a second explosion or, at least, perhaps not an explosion, perhaps part of the building simply collapsed. And that's what we saw and that's what we're looking at.” (10:03:47) ... “This is just a few minutes ago...we don't know if...something happened, another explosion, or if the building was so weakened...it just collapsed.” (10:04:36 a.m.) ... “we believe now that we can say that both, that portions of both Towers of the World Trade Centre, have collapsed. Whether there were second

5. *You Weren't Stupid, Mr. Brown!*

explosions, that is to say, explosions other than the planes hitting them, that caused this to happen we cannot tell you.” (10:29:21 a.m.) ... “Our reporters in the area say they heard loud noises when that happened. It is unclear to them and to us whether those were explosions going on in the building or if that was simply the sound of the collapse of the buildings as they collapsed, making these huge noises as they came down.” (11:17:45 a.m.)

Brown's honest reporting of his perceptions was balanced repeatedly by his caution. Here is an example:

“it almost looks...it almost looks like one of those implosions of buildings that you see except there is nothing controlled about this...this is devastation.” (10:53:10 a.m.)

His next move, having set forth the two hypotheses, was to ask his reporters on the scene, who were choking on pulverized debris and witnessing gruesome scenes, what they perceived.

Reporter Brian Palmer said honestly that he was not in a position to resolve the issue.

Brown: “Was there...Brian, did it sound like there was an explosion before the second collapse, or was the noise the collapse itself?” (10:41:08 a.m.)

Palmer: “Well, from our distance...I was not able to distinguish between an explosion and the collapse. We were several hundred yards away. But we clearly saw the building come down. I heard your report of a fourth explosion: I can't confirm that. But we heard some “boom” and then the building fold in on itself.”

Two others were more definite about what they perceived.

Brown: “Rose, whadya got?” (10:29:43 a.m.)

Rose Arce: “I’m about a block away. And there were several people that were hanging out the windows right below where the plane crashed, when suddenly you saw the top of the building start to shake, and people began leaping from the windows in the north side of the building. You saw two people at first plummet and then a third one, and then the entire top of the building just blew up...”

Brown: “Who do we have on the phone, guys? Just help me out here. Patty, are you there?” (10:57:51 a.m.)

Patty: “Yes, I am here.”

Brown: “Whaddya got?”

Patty: “About an hour ago I was on the corner of Broadway and Park Place—that’s about a thousand yards from the World Trade Center—when the first Tower collapsed. It was a massive explosion. At the time the police were trying desperately to evacuate people from the area. When that explosion occurred it was like a scene out of a horror film.”

As can be seen, the explosion hypothesis was flourishing. Even the news caption at the bottom of the screen shortly after the destruction of the South Tower (10:03:12 a.m.) is striking to read today:

“THIRD EXPLOSION SHATTERS WORLD TRADE CENTER IN NEW YORK”

After checking with his reporters, Brown continued to explore his hypotheses, this time by consulting authorities. This was where he was led astray. “Authorities” are less securely tied to evidence than witnesses and may, in fact, be implicated in high level deception.

First Brown consulted a political authority. He got the Mayor of New York City on the line.

5. *You Weren't Stupid, Mr. Brown!*

Brown: “Sir, do you believe that...was there another set of explosions that caused the buildings to collapse, or was it the structural damage caused by the planes?” (12:31:45 p.m.)

Giuliani: “I don't, I don't know, I, uh, I, uh...I, I saw the first collapse and heard the second 'cause I was in a building when the second took place. I think it was structural but I cannot be sure.”

Later in the afternoon Giuliani got his script right and was more definite in ruling out explosions. But, of course, Giuliani had no right to pronounce on the science of building destruction. Brown should have persisted in his questioning.

Finally, Brown brought in an engineer, Jim DeStefano—associated, we were told, with the National Council of Structural Engineers. DeStefano's brief comments put an end to Brown's explosion hypothesis and rendered CNN's news coverage safe for public consumption.

Brown: “Jim De Stefano is a structural engineer. He knows about big buildings and what happens in these sort of catastrophic moments. He joins us from Deerfield, Connecticut on the phone. Jim, the plane hits...what...and I hope this isn't a terribly oversimplified question, but what happens to the building itself?” (04:20:45 p.m.)

DeStefano: “...It's a tremendous impact that's applied to the building when a collision like this occurs. And it's clear that that impact was sufficient to do damage to the columns and the bracing system supporting the building. That coupled with the fire raging and the high temperatures softening the structural steel then precipitated a destabilization of the columns and clearly the columns

buckled at the lower floors causing the building to collapse.”

I am not in a position to call DeStefano a fake or to claim he was reading from a script given to him by others, but I am prepared to say he was extremely irresponsible. He did not say “here is one hypothesis.” He said, in effect, “this is what happened.” He was in no position to make this claim. There had been no photographic or video analysis of the building destruction, no analysis of the remains of the WTC, no cataloguing of eyewitnesses, nor any of the other methods of evidence gathering. He was shooting in the dark. He was silencing a journalist who was sincerely trying to discover the truth. As we have known for years now, DeStefano not only *could have been wrong*: he *was wrong*.¹

And let us remember that the entire War on Terror, with its suffering and oppression, has depended on this false structural failure hypothesis. No structural failure hypothesis, no guilty Muslim fanatics. No guilty Muslim fanatics, no War on Terror.

Some readers will feel I am too generous with Brown and with CNN. But I am not interested in portraying them as broadly “dissident” or as on the political Left. I am simply interested in calling things as I see them and giving credit where credit is due. Anyone

¹Many works have appeared over the years refuting the account of the destruction of the World Trade Center Towers released by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). But special note should be taken of two sources:

- Ted Walter, [Beyond Misinformation: What Science Says About the Destruction of World Trade Center Buildings 1, 2, and 7](#). Architects & Engineers for 9/11 Truth, 2015. [PDF copy]
- [Lawyers’ Committee for 9/11 Inquiry, First Amended Grand Jury Petition](#), filed July 30, 2018 at the office of the U.S. Attorney in Manhattan, N.Y. [PDF copy]

In addition, a recent academic report on the related destruction of World Trade Center 7 destroys whatever confidence we might have in NIST’s accounts:

J. L. Hulsey, et al, [A Structural Reevaluation of the Collapse of World Trade Center 7](#) (Final Report), University of Alaska Fairbanks, Mar 2020. [PDF copy]

5. *You Weren't Stupid, Mr. Brown!*

who wants a contrast to Brown's performance is free to watch the work of Fox News anchor, Jon Scott, on September 11, 2001. The same confidence that allowed him to name Bin Laden as a suspect 42 seconds after the impact of the second plane allowed him to proclaim the structural failure hypothesis directly after the destruction of the South Tower. He persisted even when his reporters in the field clearly spoke of explosions.

David Lee Miller reported:

“we heard a very loud blast, an explosion. We looked up, and the building literally began to collapse before us..”
(10:01:17 a.m.)

Rick Leventhal said:

“The FBI is here, as you can see. They had roped this area off. They were taking photographs and securing this area just prior to that huge explosion that we all heard and felt.” (10:06:39 a.m.)



News anchor Scott was troubled by none of this. He overrode, silenced and patronized Fox reporters. *At no point did he even acknowledge the existence of a second reasonable hypothesis for the Trade Center destruction.*

Of course, it is true that by the end of the day of September 11, 2001 CNN and Fox were singing from the same hymnbook. But I believe we ought to acknowledge Brown's brief, shining moment and consider what might happen if journalists found their courage and trusted their senses and their minds.

Sources

Same-day coverage by CNN and Fox for September 11, 2001 has been sporadically available on the Internet. My notes are from my own previously downloaded files. Times should be accurate to within two seconds.

6. Foreknowledge of World Trade 7's Collapse: The Challenge to the Official Hypothesis

The 47-story World Trade Center 7 was not hit by a plane on September 11 but, strangely, collapsed completely at about 5:21 on that day. The mystery of this collapse is compounded by the fact that many people knew it was going to come down well before it did. In the present article, originally a talk delivered at the University of Hartford, I argue that attempts to portray the demonstrated foreknowledge as rational, evidence-based prediction do not meet serious research standards.

Many other investigators preceded me in investigating WTC 7's collapse. To mention just one obvious example, Steven Jones' early work on the topic was an important stimulus to my skepticism of the official 9/11 narrative (see "[Why Indeed Did the WTC Buildings Completely Collapse?](#)" [local PDF]). My only contribution was my single-minded dedication to the foreknowledge problem. See also the article in Section 3 of this collection, "[Waiting for Seven: WTC 7 Collapse Warnings in the FDNY Oral Histories](#)".

The videotape of this talk, given below, begins with an

6. *Foreknowledge of World Trade 7's Collapse: The Challenge to the Official Hypothesis*

Introduction to William Pepper, who then introduces me.

Links: [Slide Set](#), [raw text transcript](#)

Transcript of Public Talk, University of Hartford, U.S.A., March 21, 2011, Minor revisions Nov. 21, 2017

Introduction

Good day. It's an honour to appear today with such distinguished speakers and to be introduced by William Pepper, whom I have long admired.

Today we are going to discuss the collapse of a building. The building is World Trade Center 7, and it came down on September 11, 2001.

The World Trade Center complex in southern Manhattan included seven buildings. The last to be built was World Trade Center 7, which was completed in 1987. The building was owned by Seven World Trade Company and Silverstein Development Corporation. It was on the north side of Vesey Street, approximately 350 feet north of the north side of World Trade Center 1 (the North Tower).

[slide]

In this photograph you can see World Trade Centre 7 encircled in red with the Twin Towers behind it. This photograph, like the diagram I just showed, is taken from the final report of the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

World Trade Center 7 was a 47 storey steel-framed skyscraper. It was 610 feet tall, and "a typical floor was similar in size to a football field." (NIST, p. 5). This was, by most standards, a very large building.

WTC 7 had a number of interesting occupants, including the Secret Service and the CIA. It also housed, on the 23rd floor, the New York City

Office of Emergency Management. The OEM had been established a few years before 9/11 by Mayor Rudolph Giuliani. Mr. Giuliani was derided by critics for locating the Office in the World Trade Center, since the Center was widely considered a likely target of terrorist attack. The OEM office was sometimes disparagingly referred to as "Rudy's Bunker."

WTC 7 was not hit by a plane on 9/11, although there was some damage done to the building when World Trade Center 1 collapsed, and there were fires in the building during the day.

[slide]

At roughly 5:21 p.m., ten seconds after a shaking of the earth that was recorded by seismographs, WTC 7 came down suddenly, swiftly and completely. Here is the collapse.

[Play]

The National Institute of Standards and Technology [NIST], an agency of the US Dept of Commerce, was charged with undertaking a study of WTC 7's collapse. You will be hearing a fair bit about this study later today because each of today's speakers rejects NIST's conclusions. Essentially, NIST concluded that WTC 7 collapsed due to office fires. Today's speakers do not accept this hypothesis but believe the building was deliberately taken down on 9/11—was subjected to controlled demolition.

If we are right, important questions will follow. Who took it down? Why did they take it down, and when did they prepare it for demolition? Why have we been deceived for nine and a half years? Were other buildings also subjected to controlled demolition? What are the implications of this deception for the study of 9/11 generally?

Today we will not be asking these wider questions—we will focus quite narrowly on the collapse of World Trade Seven—but I want to acknowledge these questions so that you will understand the importance of today's topic.

Foreknowledge

In order to guide you into my specific topic I want to begin by showing you the BBC's announcement of WTC 7's collapse. (Note that WTC 7 is referred to here as the Salomon Brothers Building—this company, before merging with another company, was one of the major occupants of the building.)

[play BBC clip]

Anchor:

Now more on the latest building collapse in New York. You might have heard a few moments ago I was talking about the Salomon Brothers Building collapsing, and indeed it has. Apparently that's only a few hundred yards away from where the World Trade Center Towers were. And it seems that this was not a result of a new attack, it was because the building had been *weakened* during this morning's attacks. We'll probably find out more now about that from our correspondent, Jane Standley.

There was one very serious difficulty with the BBC's announcement. Building 7 is clearly visible behind correspondent Jane Standley. It has not collapsed at all. The BBC has announced the building's collapse over 20 minutes before it has occurred.

A controversy followed the rediscovery of this BBC footage in 2007. Defending the BBC, the head of news for BBC World said, "We're not part of a conspiracy. Nobody told us what to say or do on September 11th. We didn't get told in advance that buildings were going to fall down...If we reported the building had collapsed before it had done so, it would have been an error—no more than that." (DRG 115)

Let us think about this for a moment. Suppose one of you were to get up now and say: "We're going to have to end this talk because MacQueen, who stumbled and hurt his knee on the way over here,

has just collapsed and died.” You would be surprised to hear this because here I am standing at the podium. In this case we would all agree that the announcement was an error. But suppose that 20 minutes after the announcement I suddenly collapsed and died. What then? The person announcing my death prematurely still made an error (got the timing wrong) but that person also said something true—peculiarly true, since people don’t normally collapse and die after injuring their knee. It would be reasonable in that situation to suspect that the person announcing my death had foreknowledge, and it would be important to ask what kind of foreknowledge. It could be innocent foreknowledge (the speaker was an extremely skilled physician, had made a prognosis based on observation and experience, and had just jumped the gun). Or it could be criminal foreknowledge (the speaker had poisoned my coffee).

Maybe you think I’m giving a misleading analogy by making reference to myself falling dead after my only visible injury is a damaged knee. I do not think I am. Here is a quotation from the NIST report that you are going to see more than once today:

“This was the first known instance of the total collapse of a tall building primarily due to fires.” (NIST xxxi)

I believe you get the point. How could the BBC have made a simple error given the uniqueness of this event?

If you were a police investigator investigating my fatal collapse you would have tough questions for the person who gave the premature announcement of my death. Did the FBI and the 9/11 Commission and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) have tough questions for the BBC? Not as far as we know.

As I will show, the BBC is just one among many parties that had foreknowledge of WTC 7’s collapse. As far as we know, none of these parties was subjected to tough questions.

But what is foreknowledge? Let us address this before going further.

6. *Foreknowledge of World Trade 7's Collapse: The Challenge to the Official Hypothesis*

We assume in our daily lives that we have a fair bit of awareness of the future, and we make decisions based on that awareness. We recognize that there are different kinds of awareness of the future and that each has its own degree of certainty. We use an array of terms to make these distinctions. When we do not have full certainty we may speak of prediction or forecast or prognosis. But in some cases we feel able to say that we know something about the future. An astronomer will not usually say, "I predict that there will be a lunar eclipse next week." She or he will say, "there will be a lunar eclipse next week." This is foreknowledge. In today's talk I will use a standard definition of foreknowledge, taken from Webster's 3rd New International Dictionary:

Foreknowledge is "knowledge of a thing before it happens or exists."

I want to draw attention to three criteria that I believe distinguish foreknowledge from other kinds of awareness of the future: certainty, confirmation, and detail.

1. "Certainty" has to do with the subjective state of the knower. When we speak of foreknowledge we must have certainty about what is known. We are certain when we are fully confident, free of hesitation and doubt.
2. "Confirmation" has to do with the objective event that is known by the person with foreknowledge: it has to eventually exist or come about.

The advance awareness must be confirmed by unfolding events. Certainty by itself is not enough. Knowledge, including foreknowledge, requires confirmation.

3. "Detail" is required in order for us to use the term foreknowledge. If I say: "I know that I will die some day" I am speaking with a sense of certainty and, in time, my statement will be confirmed, but we do not generally use the term "foreknowledge"

for this kind of knowledge. If I say, "I know that I will die in March of 2014" we have got enough detail and we may speak of foreknowledge. How much detail is required in order for us to speak of foreknowledge? There is no hard and fast rule, but the level of detail must be greater than could be predicted from general knowledge of the nature of things.

Although premature declarations are in a sense a case unto themselves, the BBC announcement seems to me to fit all three criteria of foreknowledge. It was made with certainty, it was confirmed by events, and it was staggeringly accurate. (To be off by slightly more than twenty minutes with such a rare event is to be extremely accurate.) But I do not want to linger on the BBC case because I do not want to give the impression that it is unique.

Let us be systematic. Let us go through the three criteria of foreknowledge one at a time. Once we have done this and we are sure that we are dealing with foreknowledge, I will make my argument that the foreknowledge of the collapse of WTC 7 is not innocent foreknowledge but suspect and criminal foreknowledge. That is, it was insider knowledge that derived from the people who ultimately demolished the building.

1. Certainty

If we study the oral histories of the members of the FDNY who were present on the scene on 9/11 we will find about 60 members who refer to the impending collapse of WTC 7. Slightly over half of these witnesses speak of the collapse with certainty: that is, they have been told, and they have accepted, that the building is *definitely* coming down. This suggests there were many people on 9/11 who were certain about WTC 7's fate.

Here is another way of approaching the issue. To return to the analogy where I am giving a talk in this room, suppose as I am giving this talk a number of people enter the room and stand around, apparently impatient, not listening to what I am saying. You approach

6. *Foreknowledge of World Trade 7's Collapse: The Challenge to the Official Hypothesis*

them and ask them what they're doing. They reply: "we're just waiting."

"What are you waiting for?"

"We're waiting for MacQueen to collapse and die. We've got some tasks to do in the building but we can't do them till he dies so we're just waiting for him to do it."

Notice that they do not say, we're waiting to see *if* I collapse and die; they say they're waiting for me to collapse and die so they can get on with their tasks. This statement indicates a high degree of certainty that the event is going to occur.

But what has this anecdote got to do with WTC 7? Listen to the following statements from the oral histories of the FDNY (my emphasis throughout).

Firefighter Burke, 46, p. 17

"The rest of the day we were unloading trucks. We were just doing whatever little things we could do, but *they were waiting for 7 World Trade Center to fall.*"

Donato, 129, p. 5-8

"We came around, I think we took Murray Street down the west side, and we stopped the rig and pulled over to the side and we all got out of the rig. *We were standing, waiting for seven to come down.* We were there for quite a while, a couple hours."

Wallace, 473, p. 4

"They were saying building seven was going to collapse, so we regrouped and went back to our rig. We went to building four or three; I don't know. We were going to set up our tower ladder there. They said no good because building seven is coming down.

We waited for building seven to come down."

Fortis, 158, p. 13-15

"...they pulled everyone back, and everybody stood there and we actually just waited and just waited and waited until [it?] went down..."

Massa (V), 280, p. 16-21.

"I remember later on in the day as we were waiting for seven to come down, they kept backing us up Vesey, almost like a full block...[19] The whole time while we were waiting — there were hours that went by."

Pilla, 367, p. 13-14.

"We walked back. We didn't do [sic] any further because building number seven was coming down. That was another problem, *to wait for building seven to come down...*"

Stroebel, 441, p. 5

"They had figured they knew that building was going to come down. It was just a question of time, *and everybody was awaiting that.*"

Sweeney, 447, p. 14

"Once they got us back together and organized somewhat, they sent us back down to Vesey, where we stood *and waited for Seven World Trade Center to come down.*"

McCarthy (Chief), 285, lOff

"So when I get to the command post, they just had a flood of guys standing there. *They were just waiting for 7 to come down.*

Drury (Assistant Commissioner), 133, p. 10, [12].

"I must have lingered there. There were hundreds of firefighters waiting to — *they were waiting for 7 World Trade Center to come down...*"

The criterion of certainty is met through these references to waiting.

In case anyone still has doubts, consider this statement by Firefighter Long:

"they were just adamant about 7 coming down immediately. I think we probably got out of that rubble and 18 minutes later is when 7 came down."

Or Firefighter Kennedy: "...the only guy that really stands out in my mind that I remember being on the radio was Chief Visconti...!

remember him screaming about 7, No. 7, that they wanted every-

6. Foreknowledge of World Trade 7's Collapse: The Challenge to the Official Hypothesis

body away from 7 because 7 was definitely going to collapse.”

Or Firefighter Cassidy:

”...building seven was in imminent collapse [edited]. They blew the horns. They said everyone clear the area...”

The criterion of certainty has been met.

2. Confirmation

This one is as easy as it is crucial. Yes, the building came down that afternoon. The event confirmed what people said about the collapse in advance.

3. Detail

Let us distinguish two kinds of detail. The first has to do with the nature of the collapse and of the collapse zone. The second has to do with time of the collapse.

A collapse zone was established around WTC 7 prior to its collapse. We find references to this collapse zone in passages like the following:

Massa (V),280,p. 16-21.

”They were concerned about seven coming down, and they kept changing us, establishing a collapse [18] zone and backing us up...”

It seems clear that many members of the FDNY had been told to expect the *total* collapse of WTC 7. This is why most members were not surprised when total collapse took place. It also seems that total collapse was the assumption used to establish the collapse zone around the building. Note the following dialogue in the oral histories between the interviewer and the interviewee:

[check the quotation]

Q. Were you there when building 7 came down in the afternoon?

A. Yes.

Q. You were still there?

A. Yes, so basically they measured out how far the building was going to come, so we knew exactly where we could stand.

Q. So they just put you in a safe area, safe enough for when that building came down?

A. 5 blocks. 5 blocks away. We still could see. Exactly right on point, the cloud stopped right there.

The advance knowledge of total collapse and the accurate establishment of a collapse zone around the building qualify as detail.

Now let us look at detail in the time of the event. Is there evidence that people knew when the building was going to come down?

Actually, I believe all the statements of foreknowledge I have quoted fit this category. To know within a few hours that such a rare event is going to occur certainly fulfils the criterion of detail.

But we can find further detail if we look.

We have seen how the BBC announced the collapse. Let us look at how CNN announced the event.

[play]

Anchor Aaron Brown says, "We are getting information now that one of the other buildings, Building 7, in the World Trade Center complex, is on fire and has either collapsed or is collapsing."

Then he looks at his monitor and pauses in confusion. Building 7 is clearly still standing. It continues to stand for an hour and 10 minutes. The CNN announcement is even more premature than that of the BBC.

But what happens next is even more odd. Do CNN spokespersons apologize for giving misinformation? No. Do they turn the cameras away from WTC 7 in embarrassment, aware that they were wrong? No. In fact, from the time of the premature announcements till the time the building collapses, CNN seldom lets WTC 7 stray from the TV screen. We are shown WTC 7 repeatedly, sometimes by itself, sometimes in a split screen arrangement when another event is being reported. Throughout this time a caption appears at the bottom of the screen saying, "Building 7 at World Trade Center on fire, may collapse."

In other words, CNN refuses to be deterred by its earlier error. It

6. Foreknowledge of World Trade 7's Collapse: The Challenge to the Official Hypothesis

appears to know that WTC 7 will be coming down.

4.5 minutes before WTC 7 comes down a new caption appears at the bottom of the screen. Instead of "Building 7 at World Trade Center on fire, may collapse" we now get: "Building # 7 ablaze, poised to collapse."

Then, 1.5 minutes before the building comes down, another caption appears: "Building 7 at World Trade Ctr on fire, on verge of collapse."

Then, it collapses, and this is duly noted.

CNN, after its initial error in premature announcement, appears to have refused to be discouraged from covering this building because it had been told that the collapse would definitely take place, and it appears to have been kept up to date on the timeline so that the station knew with considerable precision when the building would come down. This is *detail* in respect to time, and it means that the third criterion of foreknowledge has been met.

NIST's Unsatisfactory Explanation of WTC 7's Collapse

We can now confidently say that there was foreknowledge of WTC 7's collapse. This means that we are dealing with something distinct from prediction or guess or error.

I will now argue that this foreknowledge of the collapse of WTC 7 cannot be legitimate and innocent foreknowledge but must be illegitimate and criminal foreknowledge. This foreknowledge could have been based only on insider knowledge that derived from the people who ultimately demolished the building.

Let us begin this section by asking how NIST deals with the foreknowledge of 7's collapse.

On the whole, NIST has chosen to ignore the issue of foreknowledge. For example, the draft of its final report, released to the public for comment in August, 2008 provoked a group of us (including

NIST's Unsatisfactory Explanation of WTC 7's Collapse

Mr. Gage, Mr. Ryan, Mr. Szamboti, myself and several others) to write a critique and response. I wrote the part on foreknowledge. NIST, in its final draft, ignored what I had to say about foreknowledge and made no relevant changes.

On occasion, however, NIST spokespersons have attempted, indirectly, to deal with foreknowledge. Let us look at two such attempts.

The first of these statements occurs in NIST's final report on the collapse of WTC 7. This is the only section of the report in which foreknowledge is dealt with, even indirectly.

[slide]

[NIST report 1A,. 16]

"The emergency responders quickly recognized that WTC 7 had been damaged by the collapse of WTC 1...

As early as 11:30 a.m., FDNY recognized that there was no water coming out of the hydrant system to fight the fires that were visible. With the collapses of the towers fresh in their minds, there was concern that WTC 7 too might collapse..."

Notice that this statement ("with the collapses of the towers fresh in their minds, there was concern that WTC 7 too might collapse") is ambiguous. It could mean one of two very different things:

(a) FDNY members engaged in scientific, evidence-based prediction. They observed damage to WTC 7; they realized they could not fight the fires burning in the building; they had experienced the collapses of the Twin Towers. Putting all these things together, they came to a reasonable conclusion: WTC 7 was in danger of collapse.

Or

(b) FDNY members were unduly influenced by the collapses of the Twin Towers, so, ignoring the great difference between the kind of damage done to those buildings and the damage done to WTC 7, they drew the invalid conclusion that WTC 7 was in danger of collapse.

NIST's report does not resolve this ambiguity, so we are left with two possible explanations of the early statements about WTC 7's inevitable collapse: (a) evidence-based prediction, and (b) lucky guess.

6. *Foreknowledge of World Trade 7's Collapse: The Challenge to the Official Hypothesis*

The second statement I am aware of by NIST that bears on this issue is one made by the lead investigator in the NIST study of WTC 7's collapse, Dr. Shyam Sunder.

In 2008, shortly after the public appearance of NIST's report on WTC 7, I debated Dr. Sunder on the radio (CKNX Radio Wingham, Ontario). I raised the issue of foreknowledge and here is what Dr. Sunder said:

“The July 6 BBC program also explained some of the other aspects about the advanced knowledge. The only issue about the advanced knowledge was the fact that there was a technical advisor or an engineer who was called by, who was providing advice to, city agencies on 9/11 about the condition of buildings, in particular Building 7, and it was his or her judgment—I believe it was him—it was his judgment that he was hearing creaking sounds which was entirely appropriate and consistent with fires causing damage to connections and members, and he was hearing such sounds that would suggest that the building may come down and he, of course, was observing the fires in the building as well so it was based on that advice that the fire department decided around mid-afternoon—it was around 2:30 in the afternoon—to decide to abandon fighting the fires in that building. So it is something that people were expecting could happen based on what they were seeing and hearing.”

So, according to this second explanation of foreknowledge, an engineer on the scene perceived (saw and heard) the damage to WTC 7 and made a collapse prediction. And, it seems Dr. Sunder is saying, this was the basis of the foreknowledge evident during the rest of the day. Other sources also mentioned this unnamed engineer.

But for our purposes today it does not matter whether prediction of WTC 7's collapse is said to have derived from FDNY members

or from this engineer on site or from both. It also does not matter whether the conclusion drawn (that WTC 7 would collapse) was the result of observation and reason, as Dr. Sunder implies, or of a lucky guess. None of these arguments, separately or in combination, accounts for the evidence we have.

As we enter into this next stage of argument it is important to understand the relationship of foreknowledge to the nature of the event known about.

1. Uniqueness

If the event in question is the kind of event that has occurred often in the past, it may be possible to know a great deal about the conditions that precede or cause it and to have foreknowledge of its next occurrence. This is the basis of medical prognosis. But if the event has never occurred before it will generally be very difficult or impossible to have foreknowledge of it.

2. Randomness

If the event depends on the reliable behaviour of a small number of entities, we may achieve foreknowledge with a high degree of certainty and accuracy. This is why we can have foreknowledge of a solar eclipse—the movements of the heavenly bodies are regular. But if the event depends on a multitude of events with a high degree of randomness, foreknowledge will be difficult or impossible. Moreover, when the foreknowledge is possible it will generally be possible only very close in time to the occurrence of the event. As the time interval grows the degree of randomness and unpredictability will generally

grow and will rule out foreknowledge. Weather forecasting is an example of this.

Coming to the case at hand, if NIST's current collapse hypothesis is correct, then according to both of these criteria (uniqueness and ran-

6. Foreknowledge of World Trade 7's Collapse: The Challenge to the Official Hypothesis

domness) this collapse would have been impossible to know about in advance.

1. Uniqueness

To repeat what has been said before the NIST final report says:

"This was the first known instance of the total collapse of a tall building primarily due to fires." (NIST final, Exec. Summary, xxxv.)

But in this case, how could anyone, whether firefighter or engineer, have known in advance that Building 7 would undergo complete collapse? What basis is there for this prognosis? Vague predictions and lucky guesses will not do: we have already established that there was advance *knowledge* of the building's collapse, and that this knowledge was much too certain and detailed to have been derived either from early predictions or from lucky guesses.

2. Randomness

Some people who discuss the collapse of WTC 7 do not seem to have grasped how the discussion changed after NIST issued its final report in 2008. After my discussion with him on the radio, I am not sure even Dr. Sunder, NIST's lead investigator, grasps this point. Before the report came out, there were people who claimed that structural damage from the WTC 1 collapse might have done the building in, or that structural damage might have joined with huge and very hot fires fueled by diesel fuel stored in the building to cause the steel structure to lose strength. Although there was never any serious evidence for these hypothesis, they were popular all the same, and I believe part of the reason for their popularity was that they helped to explain foreknowledge of the collapse. That is, people could in this case have predicted, on the basis of damage they observed, that the building might come down.

But the NIST report had little time for the structural damage caused by WTC 1. NIST says losing seven exterior columns was too

NIST's Unsatisfactory Explanation of WTC 7's Collapse

minor to have played a significant role in the collapse. NIST also dismissed as fictional the raging fires caused by stored diesel oil, and it asserted that the fires were not hot enough to cause significant loss of strength in the steel. In ruling out these previously discussed causes of collapse, NIST pulled the rug out from under those who had tried to explain foreknowledge of the collapse as legitimate and innocent.

I will not describe here NIST's eventual collapse hypothesis--the one to which the final report of 2008 is dedicated. I will leave that for my colleagues who will speak later. But I want to point to three crucial claims in this collapse hypothesis:

1. Randomness of events

The NIST hypothesis assumes that the movement of the fires within the building, which could not have been predicted early in the day, combined with facts about the building's structure--the long span beam here, a connection to a girder there, a further relationship to a particular column over here--to bring about a chain of events never witnessed before in a steel high-rise. There is a high degree of randomness and unpredictability in this entire series of events. No one, engineer or otherwise, could have predicted this convergence of factors.

2. Invisibility of events

The NIST hypothesis has these events coming together within the structure of the building. No one standing outside the building (or inside the building for that matter) could have observed these events. There is no point, therefore, in emphasizing the observations of witnesses, because the crucial factors were unobservable. Saying people observed fires does not do the job: there have been many high rises with fires; the high rises have not come down. Dr. Sunder tries to get around this invisibility problem by saying that the engineer heard

6. *Foreknowledge of World Trade 7's Collapse: The Challenge to the Official Hypothesis*

"creaking," but although creaking may be consistent with NIST's hypothesis it is also consistent with other hypotheses and could not have been used to predict the building's complete collapse.

3. Last minute convergence of events

Although NIST does not give us a precise time when this convergence of random events took place and sealed the fate of the building, it appears that it took place less than 20 seconds before collapse. But if this is the case, what is the point of talking about what the firefighters saw at 11:30 a.m. or what an engineer discovered early in the day (other sources have the engineer's prediction taking place at noon)?

Here is how things stand. If anyone, firefighter or engineer, had foreknowledge of the collapse, as this collapse sequence is described by NIST, that person would have had to possess two forms of extrasensory perception. Clairvoyance, the ability to see what is unobservable by the five senses, would have been needed for the observation of hidden events in the building's structure. Precognition, the ability to know things in advance without the usual powers of observation and reason, would have been needed to perceive this convergence of events hours before they happened.

But if NIST's hypothesis does not explain the foreknowledge we have found, how do we explain this foreknowledge? As far as I can see, the only adequate hypothesis proposed to date is that knowledge that this building would come down came ultimately from those who intended to bring it down and did bring it down.

Evidence of Controlled Demolition: Witnesses

Some of you may agree that the foreknowledge I have referred to is very odd and is not compatible with the official collapse hypothesis, but you may feel I am moving too quickly to the hypothesis of controlled demolition. Later speakers will have a lot to say that relates

to this concern, but in the remaining minutes of my talk I will briefly sketch the sorts of witness evidence (just one type of evidence) we possess that supports what I have concluded from the study of foreknowledge.

We can approach this evidence by asking three questions:

1. Did authorities on the scene discuss, prior to WTC 7's collapse, the possibility that they might deliberately bring down the building?
2. Did any insider say *after* 9/11 that building 7 had been deliberately brought down?
3. Did any eyewitnesses claim to have witnessed explosions in the building?

The answer to all three questions is, yes. Let us go briefly through each.

1. Indira Singh, a senior consultant for JP Morgan Chase, was working as a voluntary emergency medical worker on 9/11. In 2005 she was interviewed by Bonnie Faulkner on the show "Guns and Butter". [DRG, 117]

Here is what she said: [play]

"Pretty soon after midday on 9/11 we had to evacuate [the site where we had been working] because they told us Building 7 was coming down...I do believe that they brought Building 7 down because I heard that they were going to bring it down because it was unstable because of the collateral damage. That I don't know; I can't attest to the validity of that. All I can attest to is that by noon or one o'clock, they told us we had to move from that triage site up to Pace University, a little further away, because Building 7 was gonna come down or being brought down."

6. *Foreknowledge of World Trade 7's Collapse: The Challenge to the Official Hypothesis*

Faulker: "Did they actually use the word 'brought down' and who was it that was telling you this?"

"The fire department. The fire department. And they did us the word 'we're gonna have to bring it down.'"

Is there corroboration for Singh's remarkable statement? There is. Lieutenant David Rastuccio of the FDNY was interviewed live on MSNBC directly after the collapse of Building 7. Here's how that interview went:

[play]

Immediately after WTC 7 comes down the reporter says to Rastuccio: "You guys knew this was cornin' all day." [after saying a couple of times that they've been watching that building all day] Rastuccio replies: "We had heard reports that the building was unstable and that eventually it

would either come down on its own or it would be taken down. I would imagine it came down on its own."

This is serious evidence that bringing down WTC 7, through some form of controlled demolition, was discussed as an option on 9/11 prior to WTC 7's collapse. This evidence forces us to put the controlled demolition hypothesis on the table.

2. Now to the question as to whether insiders have ever made reference after 9/11 to the fact that the building was deliberately taken down.

Larry Silverstein of Silverstein Properties, one of the owners of Building 7, was interviewed in 2002 for the PBS documentary, "America Rebuilds". He said the following:

[play]

"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 then we watched the building collapse."

When he spoke of "pulling" it, Silverstein seemed to many peo-

ple to be referring to deliberately demolishing the building. Silverstein himself later claimed that he simply meant that the firefighters should be pulled from the building.

Much ink has been spilled on this issue, and we do not have time to go through all the arguments. But it is surely clear that any serious investigation of the collapse of Building 7, in which the controlled demolition hypothesis was not ruled out of bounds from the beginning, would have to include tough questions for Mr. Silverstein. Yet NIST has simply accepted his explanation and has admitted that it never pursued the issue or interviewed Silverstein about his statement. So much for the tough questions.

3. And now on to our third and final question: Did any eyewitnesses actually claim to have observed explosions in the building?

There are several such witnesses, but the best known is Barry Jennings. Mr. Jennings was deputy director of the Emergency Services Department of the New York City Housing Authority. He was interviewed several times, beginning on the day of 9/11 about his experience on that day in WTC 7. Here is a brief clip of an interview he gave on 9/11:

[play]

Subsequently, Jennings was interviewed by several people and groups, including NIST. For a careful and detailed account of his story, please consult Professor David Ray Griffin's book, *The Mysterious Collapse of World Trade Center 7*. Since I have time restrictions I will simply give what I consider to be the gist of the situation.

- (a) Jennings claimed to have experienced a major explosion inside WTC 7 before either of the Twin Towers came down. This explosion, he said, blew out the stairs and made it impossible for him and Michael Hess, who accompanied him, to get out of the building. They were therefore trapped in the building for some time, being finally rescued by firefighters well after the collapses of WTC 1 and WTC 2.

6. *Foreknowledge of World Trade 7's Collapse: The Challenge to the Official Hypothesis*

- (b) NIST and the BBC made two changes in Jennings' story to make it fit with the NIST hypothesis. First, they said that Jennings had not actually witnessed an explosion. He had mistaken falling debris from the North Tower for an explosion. Second, in order to make the claim about the North Tower debris they changed Jennings' time estimations by about one hour.

What shall we say about these changes? As far as I can see they are not based on evidence and are not based on inconsistencies in Jennings' story. The changes were introduced simply to save NIST's hypothesis. Is this how we do research? I thought we modified our hypothesis to fit evidence rather than modifying evidence to fit our hypothesis.

This dismissal of eyewitnesses who claim to have experienced explosions on 9/11 is typical of NIST's approach and of the 9/11 Commission's approach. I have catalogued 155 witnesses who perceived explosions at the time the Twin Towers came down (and I've published 118 of these). Both the 9/11 Commission and NIST have ruled all of these witnesses irrelevant. It seems we are to believe that there was some kind of mass hallucination on 9/11, according to which people thought they were perceiving explosions when they were not.. Barry Jennings has become just one more eyewitness to be dismissed.

Mr. Jennings cannot be here today to speak for himself because he died on August 19, 2008, two days before NIST presented the Draft version of its report on WTC 7. (DRG wording, 98). Until someone is able to give a good reason why his testimony is false, I intend to accept it.

To sum up my main points:

1. There was widespread foreknowledge of Building 7's collapse on 9/11.
2. This foreknowledge is incompatible with evidence-based prediction, as well as with error and lucky guesses.

Evidence of Controlled Demolition: Witnesses

3. NIST's collapse hypothesis relies on claims of evidence-based prediction, error and lucky guesses, and is, therefore, wrong.
4. The controlled demolition hypothesis is compatible with the foreknowledge evidence we possess.
5. The controlled demolition hypothesis is further supported by witness evidence.
6. The new investigation which we so urgently need must, therefore, seriously address the controlled demolition hypothesis.

Thank you for your patience.

7. The Anthrax Attacks Were a False Flag Operation

Here I summarize the central points of my 2014 book, *The 2001 Anthrax Deception*, while updating the book's claims with new information. My analysis of the anthrax attacks differs from most other treatments in its contention that the crime cannot be solved unless we understand that these attacks were planned by the same people who planned the 9/11 attacks.

Introduction

Would you believe this ABC News Story?

A man walks into an office of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Florida.¹ It is spring in the year 2000. Speaking to a loan officer, Johnelle Bryant, the man explains that he has come from Egypt via Afghanistan. He wants to fulfill his dream of becoming a pilot.

More specifically, he wants to acquire a crop-duster with which he can dust American crops. His name—he is careful to spell it for her—is Atta. He wants a loan of \$650,000 with which to buy a two-engine, six-passenger aircraft. He wants to take this substantial plane and modify it so that it can be used as a crop-duster.

¹“Face to Face with a Terrorist—Worker Recalls Atta Seeking Funds Before 9/11,” *ABCNEWS.com*, June 6, 2002.

7. The Anthrax Attacks Were a False Flag Operation

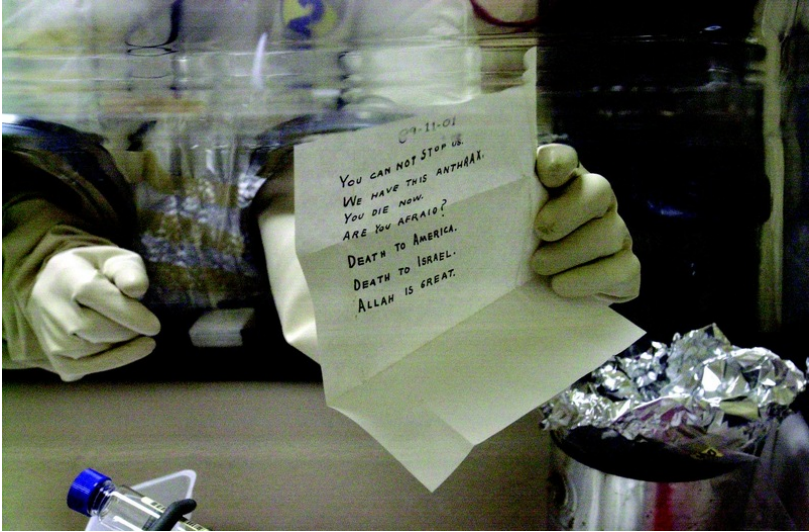


Figure 7.1.: The letter that started the anthrax scare: Laboratory technician holding the anthrax-laced letter addressed to Senator Leahy after safely opening it at the U.S. Army's Fort Detrick bio-medical research laboratory in November 2001.

Unlike traditional crop-dusters, which are small and agile, Atta's creation would, he explains, be able to hold a very large chemical tank. He is an engineer, he says, and will find it easy to modify the plane as required. With its extra-capacity tank, he would be able to do all the spraying required in one flight, not needing to land to refill his tank as he would with an ordinary crop-duster.

Bryant is confused by this requirement. Why does he need to do all his spraying in one flight?

Bryant continues to question Atta. Pouring cold water on his evident hope of quick and easy money, she explains that there are procedures for handing out funds. Even in the best of circumstances he would not be able to walk out of her office with \$650,000. He would need to make an application.

Atta is not pleased. He points out that he could go around Bryant's desk, cut her throat, and take the money from her safe. Untroubled by this suggestion, Bryant assures Atta that there is not much money in the safe and, in any case, she knows karate.

Bryant continues to pour cold water on her visitor, explaining that he is ineligible for a loan because he is not a U.S. citizen.

This does not bring an end to the conversation. In fact, when Atta sees an aerial photograph of Washington, D.C., on Bryant's wall he is delighted and begins throwing down cash in an offer to buy it. The representation of important monuments, including the view of the Pentagon from the air, inspires his admiration. He inquires of Bryant what the security is like at these monuments. He wants to visit these monuments and hopes he will be given access.

Atta next tells Bryant of his desire to visit the World Trade Center in New York City. What is the security like at the Trade Center? he asks.

Not quite finished, Atta tells Bryant of an organization, al-Qaeda, with which, he implies, he is associated. He adds that there is a wonderful man named Osama bin Laden, who "would someday be known as the world's greatest leader."

7. *The Anthrax Attacks Were a False Flag Operation*

Bryant parts on good terms with the man from Egypt, referring him to a bank where he might get his loan.

Here endeth the tale.

The gentleman seeking the loan was, according to these sources, none other than the famous Mohamed Atta, the alleged ringleader of the 9/11 attacks who, we are told, piloted American Airlines Flight 11 into the North Tower. And the ABC News journalists who recounted this story were apparently serious and wanted us to believe their story.

I suggest that “Atta Seeks a Loan” is most definitely not a believable account of the actions of a leader entrusted with a top-secret, world-changing mission. It is either a yarn ungrounded in events or the recounting of a rehearsed drama in which the chief actor was an operative tasked with leaving a trail of monstrous breadcrumbs.

Atta’s exploits, as described by the mass media, include many similar incidents, of which the following are but samples:²

- Atta Annoys Airport Employees
- Atta Leaves Incriminating Evidence in his Luggage
- Atta Is Bitten by a Dog
- Atta Visits a Drugstore and Frightens an Employee
- Atta Gets Pulled over for Driving without a License (and has a warrant for his arrest issued after he fails to show up for his court hearing)
- Atta Abandons a Stalled Plane on the Runway
- Atta Gets Drunk and Swears at a Restaurant Employee

A strange list of exploits for this secret operative. But let us return to the Atta who went to get a federal loan in Florida. In this tale Atta had a quite specific aim. He wanted to spray large amounts of a

²Graeme MacQueen, *The 2001 Anthrax Deception: The Case for a Domestic Conspiracy** (Atlanta, GA: Clarity Press, 2014, isbn.nu), 78.

See Also: Reviews of the book by [Edward Curtin](#), 1 Dec 2014, and [Antony Black](#), 20 Jul 2019.

mystery substance on U.S. soil. He was apparently as intent on this as he was on his coming suicide mission at the Trade Center.

If we are to believe the mystery substance was anthrax—and, as I shall argue, this fits the story—the famous 9/11 “hijackers” (meaning, in this article, the *alleged* hijackers) would appear to be implicated not only in the 9/11 attacks but in the anthrax attacks that immediately followed the 9/11 attacks.

But before we get into these issues, a quick reminder of the main elements of the attacks may be helpful.

The Anthrax Attacks: A Refresher

Many people have only vague memories of the 2001 anthrax attacks. I do not think this is entirely due to the frailties of memory. These attacks have, due to the disastrous failure of the operation’s narrative, been ushered down the memory hole by the FBI.

Here are the key facts:

The first anthrax letters were mailed about a week after the 9/11 attacks. When the anthrax letters made their way to news agencies in those early days after 9/11, several people developed cutaneous anthrax, but it was not initially recognized as such.

The first anthrax diagnosis was made on October 3, 2001, when [Robert Stevens](#), who worked for American Media Inc., the publisher of *The National Enquirer* tabloid in Boca Raton, Florida, was discovered to have pulmonary anthrax. He died two days after the diagnosis. The last victim died on November 21. At least 22 people were infected with either cutaneous or pulmonary anthrax and five died.

The first wave of attacks, where letters were sent to media outlets, were followed in early October by a second wave of attacks. These second wave anthrax spores were more sophisticated and deadly in their preparation. This time two elected representatives were the targets: Democratic Senators Tom Daschle and Patrick Leahy.

7. *The Anthrax Attacks Were a False Flag Operation*

The view that these were terrorist attacks by foreign enemies—the second blow, after 9/11, in a one-two punch against the United States—quickly became widespread. First, al-Qaeda was the chief suspect. Then Iraq was added to the suspect list. The Double Perpetrator hypothesis—Iraq supplied the anthrax to al-Qaeda foot soldiers—then began to make its way into a wide variety of news media.³

By the end of 2001, however, all stories of foreign terrorists had collapsed.⁴ The nature of the spore preparations revealed the operation as an *inside job*—the spores came from one of three possible labs, all inside the U.S. and serving the military and the CIA.

The events were also a *false-flag attack*, since great care had been taken to deceptively pin the attacks on foreign Muslims. The FBI and the Office of Homeland Security, as it was then called, avoided both the expressions “inside job” and “false-flag attack,” but they could not avoid the realities to which these expressions refer.

Once the foreign Muslim story collapsed, the FBI got busy looking for a lone wolf perpetrator on whom to put the blame. The Bureau eventually settled on Dr. Bruce Ivins, an anthrax researcher at the United States Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases (USAMRIID) at Fort Detrick, Maryland. Ivins died, allegedly by suicide, shortly before he was to be indicted.

The Failure of the FBI’s Hypothesis

In my 2014 book, *The 2001 Anthrax Deception: The Case for a Domestic Conspiracy*, I outlined the reasons the Ivins’ hypothesis was already widely held in contempt.⁵

I argued, with other researchers, that labs at Dugway Proving Ground and Battelle Memorial Institute were much better suspects

³Ibid., 72 ff.

⁴Ibid., 77 ff.

⁵Ibid., Chapter 5.

than those at USAMRIID, and that Bruce Ivins lacked the resources, skill, time and motives that would have made him a serious suspect.

There have been several developments since my book was written, two of which are especially important.

The first concerns Richard Lambert, who was for some years the Inspector in Charge of the FBI's anthrax investigation. In 2015, after he had left the Bureau, Lambert brought a lawsuit against the FBI, claiming that the Bureau was retaliating against him—ruining his chances of employment—because of his criticism of the FBI and of its conduct of the anthrax case.⁶

Lambert said he had made repeated complaints that the Washington field office of the FBI was mismanaging the case. He said, moreover, that the case against Ivins was clearly weak. The circumstantial case against Ivins would not have resulted in a conviction had it gone to court.

He said that, “while Bruce Ivins may have been the anthrax mailer, there is a wealth of exculpatory evidence to the contrary which the FBI continues [2015] to conceal from Congress and the American people.”⁷

Strangely, these bombshell pronouncements did not rouse the mass media from their slumber.

The second development occurred in 2020, when the Lawyers' Committee for 9/11 Inquiry sent a [petition](#) to the U.S. Congress.⁸

(Disclosure: I was at that time a member of the Anthrax Attacks Investigation Committee established by the Lawyers' Committee to prepare the petition.)

The petition requests that:

⁶Richard L. Lambert Plaintiff Pro Se, US DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE, April 2, 2015.

⁷Ibid., p. 26.

⁸The Lawyers' Committee for 9/11 Inquiry, Inc., “Before the Congress of the United States: Petition Pursuant to the First Amendment of the United States Constitution Seeking Redress for Government Misconduct Concerning the Post-9/11 Anthrax Attacks of 2001”. 15 October 2020. [local PDF]

7. *The Anthrax Attacks Were a False Flag Operation*

Congress should initiate its own focused inquiries into the post-9/11 anthrax attacks, and should establish as well a properly staffed and funded independent commission to conduct a comprehensive inquiry into these attacks which used biowarfare agents against Congress and the free press and involved the attempted assassination of two United States Senators.

The Lawyers' Committee argues, in 76 pages and with 69 exhibits, that the FBI's case against Bruce Ivins entirely lacks merit and that the FBI is guilty not merely of incompetence but of obstruction, cover-up and deliberate deception of both Congress and American civil society.

The petition concentrates on the physical evidence relating to the anthrax spores; and the labs of Dugway and Battelle, associated with the U.S. military and the CIA, emerge from this research as chief suspects for the source of the anthrax attack.

The exhibits attached to the Petition include affidavits from several of Ivins' colleagues. These go beyond character references. Several include specific reasons why these colleagues have never believed Ivins was the culprit.

In my view, the work of the Lawyers' Committee lays the FBI's case against Ivins in its grave.

And what are we to think of the FBI's treatment of Bruce Ivins? The Bureau, aware of credible suspects, directed attention away from these suspects and onto an innocent man.

Aware of Ivins' emotional vulnerability, the Bureau put extreme pressure on him, which resulted in his death. Then, after he died it publicly pronounced him the anthrax killer; said he had killed himself out of guilt; and closed the case. Ivins' family was left in grief and shame to pick up the pieces of their lives.

The Lawyers' Committee notes that the domestic parties responsible for the anthrax attacks are guilty of treason. The Committee

holds out the possibility that certain FBI officials may also be guilty of treason.

The Lone Nut

As Lisa Pease points out in her volume on the RFK assassination, when intelligence agencies plan complex operations they plan both for the success of these operations and for their possible flaws and failures.⁹

There were plenty of failures in the 9/11 operation (such as the ill-timed destruction of Building 7), and there is evidence of rapid moves to conceal these failures. Although the anthrax operation failed in an even more thorough way than the 9/11 operation, those in control moved quickly and smoothly to repair the damage.

One of their first moves was to shift from a hypothesis of multiple attackers (multiple attackers were widely assumed prior to the collapse of the narrative) to a hypothesis of a single attacker.¹⁰ The single attacker, or “lone wolf” hypothesis, is a common fallback position when an intelligence operation falters. Being alone, this wolf implicates others only weakly. He or she is ultimately uninteresting and raises few questions.

There is a subcategory of the lone wolf hypothesis that, for better or worse, is often called the “lone nut.” This narrative is extremely valuable for intelligence planners. A “lone nut”—a mentally unbalanced perpetrator—is even less interesting, in terms of connections and motives, than other types of lone wolves.

We may say that the lone nut’s story is “a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing” (Macbeth). Since the tale sig-

⁹Lisa Pease, *A Lie Too Big to Fail: The Real History of the Assassination of Robert F. Kennedy* (Port Townsend, WA: Feral House, 2018, [isbn.nu](#)), p. 413.

See Also: Reviews of the book by [Tom Jackman](#), 9 Feb 2019, [Michael Le Flem](#), 21 Feb 2019, and [Edward Curtin](#), 10 Oct 2019.

¹⁰MacQueen, *The 2001 Anthrax Deception*, Chapter 5.

7. *The Anthrax Attacks Were a False Flag Operation*

nifies nothing, there is no need to look for rational motives, patterns, or links to groups and institutions.

The anthrax attacks had, during their early days, been blamed on insane (fanatical, suicidal, erratic) foreign Muslims. The shift was made, after the failure of this narrative, to an insane domestic individual. It was Ivins' misfortune to have had mental health problems and to have been chosen for the role of perpetrator.

I have argued at length in my book that the anthrax operation was not carried out by a lone nut but by a rational group, and, without repeating that argument here, let me suggest we experimentally put the lone nut in storage and look for both connections and motive.

Restoring the Missing Connections

I will be content here to make one simple point: There was overlap in personnel in the 9/11 and anthrax operations. Because of this overlap it is clear that the two operations were planned by a single group.

Here are two sets of evidence of overlapping personnel:

(1) Locations¹¹

There was a 71-mile strip along the coast of Florida where 15 of the 19 9/11 hijackers were active. Robert Stevens, the first anthrax victim, died in the middle of this strip.

If this fact were insignificant we would expect this to become clear as we examined the situation closely. We find the reverse. Connections come to light that cannot be accidental.

Anthrax victim Stevens was employed by a tabloid in Boca Raton called the *Sun*. The editor-in-chief of this tabloid, Mike Irish, had a wife, Gloria Irish, who was a real estate agent. In her professional capacity she had, in the summer of 2001, found apartments for two of the 9/11 hijackers, Marwan al-Shehhi and Hamza al-Ghamdi.

¹¹Ibid., 134 ff.

Al-Shehhi is the man who supposedly piloted United Airlines 175 into the South Tower. He is said to have been a close friend of Mohamed Atta, his fellow martyr.

Gloria Irish had driven al-Shehhi and al-Ghamdi around town numerous times, and she remembered them well. Interviewed by the press, she said: "I mean, Marwan called me all the time." She said they had a joking and friendly relationship.

But Gloria Irish had known anthrax victim Robert Stevens for 25 years and had helped him purchase a house. She was, therefore, *the real estate agent of the first anthrax victim and of men alleged to have carried out the 9/11 attacks.*

Indeed, the hijacker-real estate connection went beyond al-Shehhi and al-Ghamdi. The apartment Irish found for them became home to four of the hijackers.

The links between Gloria Irish, the hijackers, and the anthrax attacks were reported in the media in October 2001.

In Florida, The *St. Petersburg Times* noted, when speaking of the apartment Gloria Irish had found for the hijackers:

The Delray apartment is central to a massive federal investigation into the terrorist attacks. Investigators trying to piece the puzzle together created a diagram that includes photos of the 19 hijackers who seized control of four airplanes on Sept. 11.

The journalist continued: "It is clear that the apartment was a meeting ground for terrorists, authorities say. Now they must determine whether unit 1504 was also a hatching ground for the anthrax attacks."

Reporting all of this openly was not only permitted at the time but, I believe, encouraged.

This is because the insiders responsible for the anthrax attacks were then assuming the attacks would successfully be pinned on al-

7. *The Anthrax Attacks Were a False Flag Operation*

Qaeda and Iraq. Revealing the anthrax attacks to have been perpetrated by the parties responsible for 9/11 was part of the plan.

We were all to have followed the trail of gigantic breadcrumbs and concluded that the connected sets of 2001 attacks were the result of a collaboration between al-Qaeda and its sponsor, Iraq.

Though few remember the Florida connections today, they have not gone away. And if we choose to ignore them we are extremely poor sleuths.

(2) Crop-dusters¹²

On September 23-24, 2001, all crop-duster planes in the U.S. were grounded.

Attorney General John Ashcroft explained to Congress that crop dusters could be used to “distribute chemical or biological weapons of mass destruction.” He added that the ubiquitous Mohamed Atta “had been compiling information about crop-dusting before the Sept. 11 attacks.”

But there was more. Groups of “Middle Eastern men” had apparently visited an airport in Belle Glade, Florida—“about an hour’s drive from Delray Beach, the coastal community where some of the alleged hijackers are believed to have lived”—to inspect and inquire about crop dusters.

Willie Lee, “general manager of South Florida Crop Care,” said the men described themselves as flight students. The apparent leader of the group was especially visible and aggressive. Employee James Lester identified this man as Mohamed Atta.

“I recognized him because he stayed on my feet all the time. I just about had to push him away from me,” Lester said.

Atta supposedly visited twice more over the following months, while a variety of other Middle Eastern men came back repeatedly, taking photographs and video footage of the planes. To say they

¹²Ibid., 154 ff.

made themselves visible and unforgettable is to understate the case. Willie Lee said, “They were asking the types of questions that other people didn’t ask.” They were such a pain in the neck that Lee asked the police to “run them off.”

As with the related tale of Atta’s visit to the office of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Florida, we are offered a trail of bread-crumbs.

But what is the significance of crop-dusters? If they played a role in the theater of 2001, what do they signify? The answer is that they signified anthrax, and anthrax signified Iraq.

Iraq had possessed, at one time, an anthrax program, and it had experimented with aerial dispersion. The program had been shut down after the 1991 Gulf War and the materials destroyed, but U.S. planners were able to befog the issue and keep alive the fear of aerial dispersion by Iraq. One Western news story revealingly referred to crop dusters—a kind of poor man’s aerial dispersion technology—as Saddam Hussein’s “doomsday option.”¹³

During his spectacularly deceptive performance for the UN Security Council in 2003, preparing the world for the U.S.-led assault on Iraq, Colin Powell covered all the bases.¹⁴

He held up a vial of simulated anthrax, talked about how an equivalent amount of anthrax had closed down the Hart Senate Office Building in 2001, discussed Iraq’s anthrax program, and showed photos of Iraqi aerial dispersion planes.

He thereby narratively (not evidentially) connected anthrax to aerial dispersion and therefore WMD, to Iraq, and to the 2001 anthrax attacks on the U.S. homeland and Congress. There was little work to be done to lasso crop dusters into the field of guilt.

The crop-duster stories of the time remain extremely important today for sincere researchers, even though they are largely forgotten. They reveal the anthrax-9/11 connection.

¹³Ibid., 159-160.

¹⁴Ibid., 166-168.

7. *The Anthrax Attacks Were a False Flag Operation*



Figure 7.2.: Colin Powell holds up vial of anthrax in making his case for war in Iraq before the UN on 5 Feb 2003

They also, of course, show the false links being made to Iraq. Crop-duster stories were but one of the methods of implicating Iraq in the anthrax attacks. The idea that the anthrax in the attacks had come from Iraq was pushed vigorously in the media in the weeks after the first anthrax diagnosis.

The phrase repeatedly used in the press was (with some variations): “they aren’t making this stuff in caves.” What this meant was: al-Qaeda foot soldiers evidently have delivered this material, but these guys could not have manufactured such a sophisticated bioweapon in caves in Afghanistan—they must have had a state supplier.

And that supplier, went the story, was Iraq. ABC News went so far as to claim repeatedly that the spores in the attack letters had been coated in bentonite—the Iraqi method of weaponization.¹⁵

But this was just more fiction: The claims went up in smoke when unbought scientists examined the spores. Far from being weaponized with bentonite, they were weaponized (here I speak of the sophisticated spores sent to the senators) in a far more complex way that had the signature of U.S. domestic military/intelligence labs.

¹⁵Ibid., 80-81.

There were other Iraq tales circulated. One of the most famous was the tale of Mohamed Atta meeting in Prague with an Iraqi intelligence agent.¹⁶ The story was supposed to support the idea that Iraq had sponsored al-Qaeda's 9/11 attacks, but it was also used to suggest that Atta was arranging to get chemical or biological weapons from Iraq.

Some federal officials have wondered whether chemical or biological weapons might have been a subject of discussion when Mohamed Atta, one of the Sept. 11 hijackers, met last year with an Iraqi intelligence official in Prague. Iraq is known to have worked on the development of such weapons.

Widely spread by the media, this story turned out to be yet another piece of misinformation. No such meeting ever took place.

To sum up: The story promoted in the fall of 2001 was that the hijackers allegedly responsible for the 9/11 attacks were, in the lead-up to that event, also preparing to attack the U.S. with anthrax. Being simple fellows with limited technological expertise, they were exploring the idea of using U.S. crop-dusters, and in the end they chose an even more crude method—sending the spores in letters. But the anthrax spores were not their own preparation: They came from Iraq, al-Qaeda's sponsor.

Thus were two military invasions, that of Afghanistan and that of Iraq, simultaneously justified in advance.

Restoring the Missing Motives

The lone nut may have no rational motive, but the group of insiders who planned the two-part psychological operation of the fall of

¹⁶Ibid., 84-85.

7. *The Anthrax Attacks Were a False Flag Operation*

2001 were definitely rational, and many of their motives are easily discerned.

As just indicated, they wished to lay the foundation for the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. More broadly, however, they wished to supersede (not entirely replace, but temporarily supersede) the Cold War with the Global War on Terror.

Remember that each of these global conflict formations, the Cold War and the Global War on Terror, was designed to force nations, and even individuals, to make a choice between two antithetical positions.

Each global conflict formation supported numerous specific hot wars, high military spending, a drastic diminution in the sophistication of human thinking, and the overall health of the war system with its primitive and outgrown moral foundations.

*The chief method of recruiting people to the Global War on Terror was fear. The anthrax attacks contributed mightily, being used to evoke anxiety and panic.*¹⁷

“Anthrax Anxiety at Home,” “Widespread Anxiety in New York,” “Anxiety Grows in South Florida,” “Anxiety over Bioterrorism Grows” are a few of the headlines of the time. Immediately after the death of Robert Stevens, *The Washington Post* reported that “jittery” citizens were “on their knees begging for drugs.”

By October 15 we were told that the “anthrax scare” was spreading around the world. By October 18 we were informed that “the fear of anthrax has become inescapable,” and shortly before the congressional votes on the USA PATRIOT Act, Americans were said to be suffering “primordial terror” in “a national anxiety attack.”

The 9/11 attacks were more dramatic but the anthrax attacks were more intimate. Anyone, anywhere in the country, could innocently pick up their daily mail and get pulmonary anthrax.

We should not assume, of course, that Americans, or people of the world in general, were really experiencing the level of fear reported

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 44 ff.

by the media. Who knows? What is obvious is that such fear as existed was to a great extent the result of inflammatory media coverage.

This fear was the soil in which Islamophobia was cultivated. If the false narratives of the fall of 2001, as well as the spread of fear by the mass media, are left unmentioned, the term “Islamophobia” is no more than a distraction.

Although the Global War on Terror was sketched broadly enough to include non-Muslim individuals and nations when necessary (North Korea was the main case), it was aimed chiefly at Muslims.

The fear evoked in the fall of 2001 was a fear of Islam and the “craziness” or “nuttness” that supposedly led Muslims to unleash violence on the United States.

This was a deliberate propaganda campaign fueled by a two-part psychological operation that initiated what may be called the Crazy Muslim franchise, a narrative series that will continue as long as there is an interested audience and profits to be made.

Former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak explained it all on BBC television about 11:28 AM on 9/11, shortly after the attacks in New York and Washington:¹⁸

The world will not be the same from today on. It's an attack against our whole civilization ... I believe that this is the time to deploy a globally concerted effort led by the United States, the UK, Europe and Russia against all sources of terror.

Notwithstanding the complete absence of evidence, Barak, repeatedly given air time by the BBC during the day, did not hesitate to name specific nations (Iran, Iraq, and so on) as targets of the new “globally concerted effort.”

¹⁸Barak's remark was made at 11:28 a.m. See *BBC News* archives, accessible at: [Understanding 9/11A Television News Archive](#); his comment is made in the third-to-last box (5x4 grid) of the [third segment \(11:20-11:30\)](#) of the 11:00 hour.

7. *The Anthrax Attacks Were a False Flag Operation*

The use of fear in such psychological operations is typically meant to support a powerful clenching of the in-group, where the group that feels attacked draws together in tight formation to defend itself against the dangerous Other.

And this clenching results not merely in striking out against the alleged foe but squeezing out domestic civil rights. Freedom to think for oneself, to debate, to dissent is in these cases increasingly regarded with suspicion, and legislation is passed by intimidated legislatures that cast dissenters into the outer darkness.

These processes, starkly visible in the medical martial law forced on the world as I write these lines, were prefigured in the 2001 two-part operation.

The attack on Congress in the anthrax attacks, an obvious part of the plan to discipline U.S. civil society and its representatives, is well known, but I can add some flesh to the bones that are our usual fare.¹⁹

By the time anthrax fears began spreading in the U.S., Congress was already reeling from the 9/11 attacks. Concrete barriers blocked road access to Congress, while senators and representatives were discouraged from wearing congressional pins or displaying distinctive license plates lest their identities be known and they become targets.

But the possibility remained that members of Congress would recover their senses and begin to resist the legislation that had been placed before them—the [Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act](#), or USA PATRIOT Act. Only if Congress remained frightened and intimidated would it remain obedient to those in the Executive branch fighting for rapid passage of the Act.

During the intense days of September 2001, Attorney General Ashcroft repeatedly harangued the Democrats in the Senate to pass the USA PATRIOT Act quickly.

As Daschle later put it, Ashcroft “attacked Democrats for delaying passage of this bill. In this climate of anxiety the attorney general was

¹⁹MacQueen, *The 2001 Anthrax Deception*, 49 ff.

implicitly suggesting that further attacks might not be prevented if Democrats didn't stop delaying.”



Figure 7.3.: John Ashcroft holding up a copy of the USA PATRIOT Act

The Republicans had a generous majority in the House that would do the Executive's bidding and pass the bill but, in the Senate the Democrats had a majority of one. A slim majority, but potentially enough to block the new bill.

Patrick Leahy, a Democratic senator, was Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, a key body in the process of considering and approving the USA PATRIOT Act. While Leahy was generally supportive of the bill, he drew the line on October 2: He insisted he

7. The Anthrax Attacks Were a False Flag Operation

would not support the bill without changes.

Daschle was Senate Majority Leader and was the most powerful Democrat in the Senate. His support of the bill was essential to its passage. Although he had signaled in various ways his indignation at the 9/11 attacks and had offered the President his support, he was not ready to give Bush *carte blanche* either to attack any nation he wished or to bully the USA PATRIOT Act through Congress.

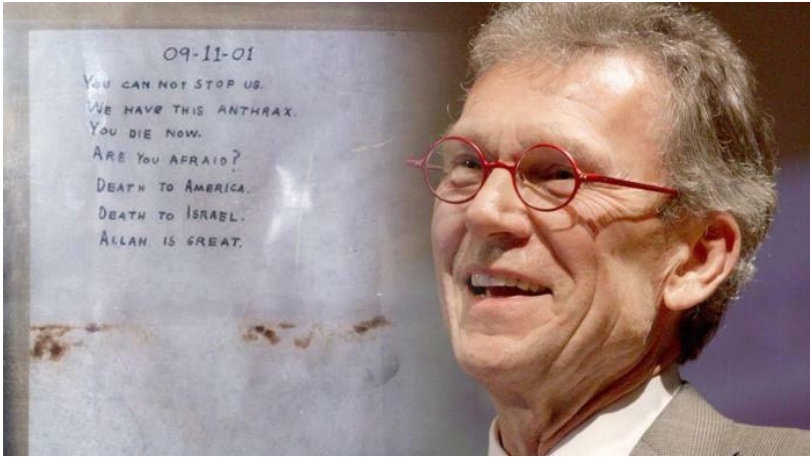


Figure 7.4.: Tom Daschle with threatening letter he received.

While he had been willing to introduce the resolution on the use of force that gave the President legal cover for war (September 14, 2001), Daschle did so only after toning down the astonishingly imperial version of the resolution written by the White House.

On October 2 he supported Leahy in resisting immediate passage of the new USA PATRIOT bill.

But Vice President Cheney had chosen October 5 as the date by which he wanted the bill passed. Due to the stubbornness of these two Democratic senators, Cheney's schedule was now unachievable.

Some time between October 6 and 8, two anthrax letters were put

in the mail. They were addressed to Tom Daschle and Patrick Leahy.

The event was embellished with a spectacular case of mass media precognition. On October 15, *Roll Call*, a Washington newspaper that reported Capitol Hill news, headlined its issue with:

“HILL BRACES FOR ANTHRAX THREAT”.

Right on schedule, later that day Grant Leslie, an intern of Senator Tom Daschle, opened a letter to find a hand-printed threat accompanied by shockingly aerosolized anthrax spores. The spores floated out of the envelope, contaminating not just Leslie but the entire Hart Senate Office Building, which had to be closed and sanitized.

Here is the text of the letter:

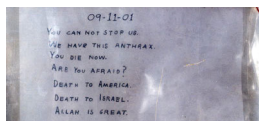


Figure 7.5.: Threatening letter reinforcing view that al-Qaeda was behind the anthrax attacks. However, this letter in hindsight appears to be part of a false-flag operation.²⁰

I hold that this text, considered with the text sent to Tom Brokaw, is one of the most important documents of the 21st century. (My assertion is based on an interpretation of the text that takes into account the spores that accompanied the text as well as the 9/11 attacks to which the text of the letter makes a clear reference.)

The Daschle and Brokaw letters indicate that their implied authors:

²⁰The envelopes of these letters are included on the FBI website: [Amerithrax or Anthrax Investigation](#) in the [Photo Gallery](#) which contains those to Leahy, Daschle, Brokaw, and the 09-11-01 note.

In 2010 Edward Epstein wrote in the *Wall Street Journal*: “[The Anthrax Attacks Remain Unsolved - The FBI disproved its main theory about how the spores were weaponized](#)”.

7. *The Anthrax Attacks Were a False Flag Operation*

1. are identical with, or related to, the crew responsible for the 9/11 attacks (“09-11-01” at the top of the letter)
2. are bent on homicide (“you die now”)
3. are, because of their 9/11 connection, also prepared to commit suicide
4. are crude (the printing) and stupid (in the Brokaw letter “penicillin” is spelled wrong, indicating the authors are not bright enough to use a dictionary or spell-check.)
5. are Muslim (“Allah is Great”)
6. regard the United States and Israel as of comparable importance and as forming a unified target (“Death to America. Death to Israel.”)
7. are determined to achieve their goals through fear (“Are you afraid?”)
8. are taunting the U.S. Congress as powerless (“You can not stop us”)
9. are prepared to use a weapon of mass destruction on the U.S. Congress (the spores are weaponized and the letters are addressed to Senators Daschle and Leahy).
10. are in a position to access some of the most sophisticated weaponized anthrax ever seen, presumably from their state sponsor (this we conclude from an analysis of the spores).

This is a message that loses none of its importance when we realize that its real authors, who are entirely different from its implied authors, are domestic groups within the U.S. Military-Industrial-Intelligence-Complex, possibly assisted by counterparts in one or more allied countries.

When we are awake to the deception practiced here, we can read these letters as a charter of the Global War on Terror spelled out in childish block printing.

The attacks on Congress were, of course, successful. Congress was disciplined and meekly passed the Act.

The mass media reported excitedly on the associated anxiety and

panic.²¹

A handful of anthrax particles sent through the mail to Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle (D- S.D.) has sent Capitol Hill into an orbit of jitters and confusion ...

Or again:

the perpetrators of the anthrax terror hit pay dirt in Washington. They've managed to accomplish what the British tried to generate with their burning of the White House, the Capitol and other government buildings in 1814—what Lee Harvey Oswald couldn't deliver in 1963—and what the Pentagon attackers sought to but couldn't provoke on Sept. 11: a sense of vulnerability and danger so great that it disables and fundamentally alters the way the nation's capital does its business.

When we look with clear eyes at the connections and motives noted above, having dismissed the lone nut theory and the Crazy Muslim theory, we see that the United States was subjected to a domestically produced two-part psychological operation of overwhelming importance in the fall of 2001.

Breadcrumbs and Blockheads

I have chosen not to attempt in this article to relate the 2001 anthrax attacks to our current nightmare—briefly, the endeavor to establish a global “reset” through what I believe is a weaponized virus²² accompanied by injections that are unneeded, ineffective and very dangerous.²³

²¹MacQueen, *The 2001 Anthrax Deception*, p. 57.

²²See lawyer Reiner Fuellmich's interview with Dr. David Martin: [Corona Committee, Session 60: Time Is Not A Flat Circle](#), 9 Jul 2021.

²³There are many experts who agree on these points. As an example, consult the website of [Doctors for COVID Ethics](#).

7. *The Anthrax Attacks Were a False Flag Operation*

Many lines of continuity between the 2001 anthrax attacks and the current deception have been pointed out by researchers.²⁴ But I would add that attention must also be paid to discontinuities. The 2001 attacks had specific geopolitical aims, the stigmatizing of specific nations, cultures and states, and the establishment of a particular global conflict framework that would revitalize the war system in a way that would favor particular parties. It is not yet clear to me how the transition has been made to the different aims that appear to drive the current operation.

In any case, the 2001 anthrax attacks remind us that a trail of monstrous breadcrumbs is effective in leading us to the perpetrators' desired endpoint only as long as we are blockheads.

When we make the decision to be intelligent, critical adults, the breadcrumbs become much worse than useless for the perpetrators' ends: now they lead us to the den of the true criminals. I am confident that the researchers who have taken on the puzzle of connecting the two-part 2001 operation to the current operation will, by critically following the recent trail of breadcrumbs, be able to solve this puzzle.

²⁴For example: Whitney Webb and Raul Diego, "All Roads Lead to Dark Winter," *The Last American Vagabond*, 1 Apr 2020, and Richard Ramsbotham, "Interlocking Histories, 9/11, the Anthrax Attacks and Covid-19," *New View*, Issue 100, Summer 2021. [local PDF]

8. False Flag Terror and the Passage of the Patriot Act, 2001

As noted elsewhere in this collection, the War on Terror involved the terrorizing of the legislative branch of government, the law-makers elected by citizens. And what did the intimidated legislators do? They passed legislation that reduced their own power while strengthening the government's military and spy agencies.

This 2014 piece is adapted from my book on the anthrax attacks (*The 2001 Anthrax Deception*), published in the same year.



8. False Flag Terror and the Passage of the Patriot Act, 2001



In the fall of 2001 members of the U.S. executive branch terrorized Congress into passing the Patriot Act that assaulted the rights of citizens.

Tom Daschle was at the U.S. Capitol when news of the 9/11 attacks broke. He began watching events unfold on television like other Americans. But shortly after 10:30 a.m. a Capitol police officer ran into the room. “Senator, he said, “we’re under attack. We have word that an airplane is heading this way and could hit the building anytime. You need to evacuate.”¹

The plane in question was probably the one that was eventually destroyed in Pennsylvania (allegedly United Airlines Flight 93). On September 11 and for some time after there was a widespread belief that this plane had originally been headed for the Capitol, the intention being to decapitate the republic by killing many of its elected members.

Daschle says “the scene was total chaos.” The halls “were filled with fear and confusion.” This was “the first time in history that

¹Tom Daschle and Michael D’Orso, *Like No Other Time: The 107th Congress and the Two Years That Changed America Forever* (New York: Crown Publishers, 2003), 107 ff.

the entire United States Capitol had been evacuated.”² With no procedure in place for this kind of attack, senators and representatives scattered. Daschle, as Majority Leader, was put by his security detail into a helicopter and flown to a secure location. Later, in the evening, members of Congress drifted back to the Capitol, listened to speeches, and broke into a spontaneous rendition of God Bless America.³

The unity that threat and war induce was already taking hold. Daschle says “we turned to one another like long-lost members of a large family and embraced.”⁴ Of the day as a whole, he remarks: “I can’t think of a time in my life when I have witnessed such deeply felt unity and connection among our countrymen.”⁵

Polls soon confirmed Daschle’s observations. A sense of national unity and pride increased, support for the executive dramatically climbed, and citizens confirmed a willingness to surrender civil liberties as part of the sacrifice that seemed demanded of them.⁶

From that violent day in September until the end of the autumn of 2001 there was not a day when Congress was safe. After 9/11 the Capitol was closed to the public and “surrounded by yellow police tape and concrete barriers.”⁷ The risk of violent incidents directed at Congress became a major media theme. And the danger from planes crashing into buildings rapidly became augmented in a most peculiar way by a new threat, the threat of a bioterror attack, especially anthrax.

On Monday, September 17, 2001 an unusual pattern began to emerge.

Attorney General John Ashcroft announced on this day that

²Ibid., 110.

³Ibid., 110 ff.

⁴Ibid., 118.

⁵Ibid., 117.

⁶Richard Morin, “Almost 90% Want U.S. To Retaliate, Poll Finds,” *The Washington Post*, September 12, 2001.

⁷Daschle and D’Orso, *Like No Other Time: The 107th Congress and the Two Years That Changed America Forever*, 125.

8. False Flag Terror and the Passage of the Patriot Act, 2001

he would soon be sending an anti-terrorism proposal to the U.S. Congress and that he would ask Congress to enact the legislation by Friday, September 21.⁸ Given the length, complexity and importance of the bill (the Patriot Act) this was an astonishing announcement. He was asking Congress to act with blazing speed and to make an Olympian leap of faith.

On the same day, September 17, an article by Rick Weiss appeared in the *Washington Post* entitled, “**Bioterrorism: An Even More Devastating Threat.**” Weiss explained that:

Biological attacks can be far more difficult to respond to than conventional terrorist attacks. For one thing, they are covert rather than overt; for days, no one would know that one had occurred. That’s a huge problem for a disease like anthrax.

If it was peculiar that the announcement of the proposed legislation should correspond with the announcement of a threat of anthrax, it was even more peculiar that the threat was simultaneously being made real. On September 17, or possibly on the following day, letters containing spores of *Bacillus anthracis* were put in the U.S. mail.⁹ As Weiss had suggested, although several people at the targeted sites (news agencies) developed anthrax, for some time after the disease was induced it remained undiagnosed.

The pattern was now established. For over a month following Ashcroft’s announcement, as the Patriot Act made its way through Congress before being signed into law by G. W. Bush on October 26, the bill would be accompanied by anthrax—both the threat and the reality. Perhaps there has never been a piece of legislation in American

⁸John Ashcroft and Mueller, “Attorney General John Ashcroft Remarks: Press Briefing with FBI Director Robert Mueller,” FBI Headquarters, September 17, 2001

⁹“History Commons: 2001 Anthrax Attacks,” *History Commons*, n.d. September 17-18, 2001: First Wave of Anthrax Attacks Targets ABC, NBC, CBS, New York Post, and National Enquirer.

history that was so clearly forced on Congress by a credible threat of death.

Congress, it seemed, required this death threat. Although it had been traumatized by the 9/11 attacks, it had not been prepared to pass the Patriot Act as quickly as Ashcroft wanted—in the same week it was proposed—and in fact by September 24 the legislation had run into trouble, coming in for criticism in committees of both Senate and House. Ashcroft kept pushing. “Terrorism is a clear and present danger to Americans today,” he said, adding that “each day that so passes is a day that terrorists have an advantage.”¹⁰ On September 25 questions and criticisms continued to arise, so Bush and Cheney entered the fray. Bush said: “we’re at war...and in order to win the war, we must make sure the law enforcement men and women have got the tools necessary.” Cheney, at a lunch with Republican senators, asked them to do their best to get the legislation through Congress by October 5.¹¹

On September 30 a major administration offensive began, with the aim of putting pressure on Congress to meet Cheney’s new deadline of October 5. Among the members of the executive branch stepping forward were, in addition to Ashcroft, White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, and Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson. Card said on television that “terrorist organizations, like al Qaeda...have probably found the means to use biological or chemical warfare.” Tommy Thompson, trying to strike a more reassuring note, assured his television viewers that “we’re prepared to take care of any contingency, any consequence that develops for any kind of biological attack.”¹²

¹⁰John Lancaster and Walter Pincus, “Proposed Anti-Terrorism Laws Draw Tough Questions; Lawmakers Express Concerns to Ashcroft, Other Justice Officials About Threat to Civil Liberties,” *The Washington Post*, September 25, 2001.

¹¹John Lancaster, “Senators Question an Anti-Terrorism Proposal,” *The Washington Post*, September 26, 2001.

¹²Dana Milbank, “More Terrorism Likely, U.S. Warns; Bush Wants National Airport Reopened,” *The Washington Post*, October 1, 2001.

8. False Flag Terror and the Passage of the Patriot Act, 2001

There was nothing subtle about the connection of all these speeches and warnings to the bill the administration wanted passed. The first line in the *Washington Post*'s October 1 article on the topic was: "Bush administration officials said yesterday there will likely be more terrorist strikes in the United States, possibly including chemical and biological warfare, and they urged Congress to expand police powers by Friday [Oct. 5] to counter the threat."¹³

On the same day as this administration offensive, September 30, photo editor Robert Stevens, on vacation, came down with "flu-like symptoms" and crawled into the backseat of his car to rest, letting his wife take the wheel.¹⁴ He had inhalation anthrax. His illness would be diagnosed on October 3 and he would die on October 5. October 3 would mark the first diagnosis of anthrax and the first day on which anyone except the perpetrators should have known anthrax was in play. *All anthrax warnings in the period prior to October 3 must be regarded as suspicious in the extreme.*

But anthrax references prior to Stevens' diagnosis were actually very common.¹⁵ An op-ed by Maureen Dowd appeared in *The New York Times* on September 26 with the title, "From Botox to Botulism." The article's theme was that naïve "boomers" were living in the delusion that "they could make life safe." This generation "that came of age with psychedelic frolicking" was ill-prepared, Dowd said, for Muslim martyrs dispersing biological toxins. Upper middle class New York women were carrying Cipro, Dowd claimed, in their "little black Prada techno-nylon bags" due to widespread fears of an anthrax attack.

Cipro (ciprofloxacin) was the antibiotic recommended at the time

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Jeanne Guillemin, *American Anthrax: Fear, Crime, and the Investigation of the Nation's Deadliest Bioterror Attack* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2011), 18.

¹⁵Graeme MacQueen, *The 2001 Anthrax Deception: The Case for a Domestic Conspiracy* (Atlanta, GA: Clarity Press, 2014, isbn.nu), chap. 6. See Also: Reviews of the book by Edward Curtin, 1 Dec 2014, and Antony Black, 20 Jul 2019.

against anthrax. It is not surprising that Cipro received a great deal of media attention in October after it was clear that people were coming down with anthrax, but is it not strange that Cipro received so much attention in the period just prior to the emergence of public knowledge of the attacks? On September 27 *The New York Times* followed Dowd's article with, "[Anthrax Scare Prompts Run on an Antibiotic.](#)" " 'We can't keep it in stock,' says Sebastian Manciameli, a pharmacist at Zitomer Pharmacy on Manhattan's Upper East Side."

Examples of suspicious foreknowledge are easy to find. Richard Cohen, a columnist for the *Washington Post*, admitted in later years that he "had been told soon after Sept. 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. I was carrying Cipro way before most people had heard of it."¹⁶

When did Cohen receive his extraordinary tip? We know that by September 26 (article published in *The New York Times* September 27) there was a run on Cipro and druggists could not keep it in stock. Obviously at this time a great many people had heard of it. So Cohen's tip must have been received "way before" September 26 and "soon after" September 11. Whatever the exact date may have been, it was well before any government official is supposed to have known anthrax spores were in circulation.

It was eventually revealed that both George W. Bush and Dick Cheney were put on Cipro on September 11.¹⁷ Attempts to explain this as standard protocol following a terrorist event must contend with the flood of anthrax warnings, including Cohen's, that soon followed and that cannot be dismissed as protocol but indicate foreknowledge.

Meanwhile, the threats to Congress continued. On October 9 it was noted that terrorist retaliation was expected now that

¹⁶Richard Cohen, "How Did I Get Iraq Wrong?" *Slate*, March 18, 2008.

¹⁷Sandra Sobierai, "White House Mail Machine Has Anthrax," *Washington Post*, October 23, 2001; "Feds Sued Over Anthrax Documents: Legal Group Wonders Why White House Took Cipro before Attacks," *WorldNetDaily*, June 7, 2002.

8. False Flag Terror and the Passage of the Patriot Act, 2001

Afghanistan was being bombed. Congress was said to be a prime target. Members of Congress were advised to hide their identities. “On Capitol Hill members of Congress were discouraged from wearing their congressional pins when they are away from the Capitol.” Moreover, they were “advised for security reasons to avoid using license plates or anything else that would identify them as members of Congress.”¹⁸

On October 10 it was learned that “concern over an attack on the U.S. Capitol” was resulting in proposals for road closings and barriers. “Washington is considered one of the leading targets for terrorists.”¹⁹

On October 11 the FBI issued its most specific warning since 9/11, saying that “additional terrorist acts could be directed at U.S. interests at home and abroad over the ‘next several days.’” The warning included all types of terrorist attacks and specifically referred to the Capitol as a possible target. Mention was made of crop-duster planes, which were being reported widely in the news as especially effective methods of delivering large quantities of biological or chemical agents.²⁰ (Crop-dusters pointed to Iraq. For several years U.S. intelligence had falsely maintained that Iraq had terror crop-dusters ready to deliver anthrax.)²¹

The FBI’s October 11 warning was well timed and effective for passage of the Patriot Act. The Senate had been giving the executive trouble, and it buckled subsequent to this warning. The bill was passed by the Senate late in the evening of October 11.

¹⁸Eric Pianin, “Ridge Assumes Security Post Amid Potential For New Attacks; FBI Warns Public, Private Entities To Observe ‘Highest State of Alert,’” *The Washington Post*, October 9, 2001

¹⁹Spencer S. Hsu and Carol D. Leonnig, “Lawmakers Seek Ways To Secure U.S. Capitol; Temporary Street Closings; Pop-Up Barriers Considered,” *The Washington Post*, October 10, 2001.

²⁰Dan Eggen and Bob Woodward, “[Terrorist Attacks Imminent, FBI Warns](#); Bush Declared Al Qaeda Is ‘On the Run’; Assaults on U.S. Called Possible in ‘Next Several Days,’” *The Washington Post*, October 12, 2001.

²¹MacQueen, *The 2001 Anthrax Deception: The Case For a Domestic Conspiracy**, chap. 7.

But real anthrax, not just threatened anthrax, was again in play by this time, and U.S. Senators were the new targets.

There is no mystery as to why the Senate rather than the House was the target. The Republicans had a comfortable majority in the House and could easily carry the vote regardless of opposition, but in the Senate the Democrats had a majority of one. To become law the Patriot Act had to pass in both houses, and the Democrats were in a position to block it in the Senate. Many of the same proposals that constituted the Patriot Act had been tried out on Congress after the Oklahoma bombing of 1996 and they had, in fact, been blocked.²² The same danger existed this time, and the more time the Senate had to recover from the trauma of 9/11 the more likely it was that the measures would once again be stopped.

There were two Democratic Senators who were in an especially strong position to halt the legislation. Tom Daschle was Senate Majority Leader. He had a great deal of power in establishing a timeline, negotiating with the opposition party and with the executive, and generally determining whether and in what form the bill would make it through. Patrick Leahy was Chair of the Senate Judicial Committee, the committee that was central to the review of all bills affecting the civil rights of Americans. Leahy was in daily contact with Ashcroft's office, trying to find formulations of the bill's measures that he could live with.

Daschle has noted in his account of those days the pressure he and his fellow Democrats were under. Ashcroft, he says, "attacked Democrats for delaying passage of this bill." "[I]n this climate of anxiety, the attorney general was implicitly suggesting that further attacks might not be prevented if Democrats didn't stop delaying."²³

Although today it may be difficult today to see Daschle and Leahy

²²History Commons: US Civil Liberties: Patriot Act: [April 25, 1996: New Anti-Terrorism Law Passed](#)," n.d.

²³Daschle and D'Orso, *Like No Other Time: The 107th Congress and the Two Years That Changed America Forever*, 135.

8. False Flag Terror and the Passage of the Patriot Act, 2001

as champions of civil rights—they both accepted the need for the Patriot Act and worked very hard to get it passed—there were certain times when they drew the line. October 2 was one such occasion. It appears that their opposition on that day nearly got them killed.

The *Washington Post* gave the gist of that day's conflict in the title of an important October 3 article: "Anti-terrorism Bill Hits Snag on the Hill; Dispute Between Senate Democrats, White House."²⁴ The article's author noted that "Leahy accused the White House of renegeing on an agreement." The issue was "a provision setting out rules under which law enforcement agencies could share wiretap and grand jury information with intelligence agencies." Leahy had been under the impression that his negotiations with the White House had produced an acceptable compromise; suddenly he discovered the compromise had been rejected. As Leahy balked, "Attorney General John D. Ashcroft accused the Democratic-controlled Senate of delaying legislation that he says is urgently needed to thwart another terrorist attack." The Senate, Ashcroft said, "was not moving with sufficient speed." "Talk," he complained, "won't prevent terrorism," adding that he was "deeply concerned about the rather slow pace" at which the legislation was moving. The *Washington Post* reported that Tom Daschle supported Leahy and said that Daschle "doubted the Senate could take up the legislation before next week." In other words, both Leahy and Daschle intended to violate Cheney's October 5 deadline. Leahy and Daschle were the only senators mentioned by name in the *Post* discussion.

Although this act of resistance may seem trivial to us today, it was clearly not trivial at the time. Shortly after the October 5 date passed without enactment of the bill, letters containing anthrax spores were sent to Senators Leahy and Daschle. These letters were put in the

²⁴John Lancaster, "Anti-Terrorism Bill Hits Snag on the Hill; Dispute Between Senate Democrats, White House Threatens Committee Approval," *The Washington Post*, October 3, 2001.

mail sometime between October 6 and 9.²⁵

With these letters in the mail, the drama of the Patriot Act was evidently not over.

After the Senate's passing of the bill on October 11 the Patriot Act was still not secure. The Senate and House had passed somewhat different versions of the bill and it was necessary to work out a way of harmonizing the different versions and then getting new votes on the harmonized bill in both houses.

On October 15, *Roll Call*, a Washington newspaper dedicated to reporting news related to Capitol Hill, had as its front page headline: "HILL BRACES FOR ANTHRAX THREAT."²⁶ Sure enough, later that day Leslie Grant, an intern working for Daschle, opened a letter to the senator to find two grams of *B. anthracis* spores along with the following text:²⁷

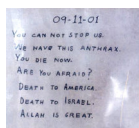


Figure 8.1.: 09-11-01\ YOU CAN NOT STOP US.\ WE HAVE THIS ANTHRAX.\ YOU DIE NOW.\ ARE YOU AFRAID?\ DEATH TO AMERICA.\ DEATH TO ISRAEL.\ ALLAH IS GREAT.²⁸

Allah's advocates, it seemed, had taken a sudden dislike to Democratic senators who violated the Vice-President's deadlines.

The preparation of anthrax spores in the Daschle letter was, unlike

²⁵History Commons: 2001 Anthrax Attacks," October 6-9, 2001: Second Wave of Anthrax Attacks Targets Senators Daschle and Leahy.

²⁶John Bresnahan, "Hill Braces For Anthrax Threat," *Roll Call*, October 15, 2001.

²⁷Daschle and D'Orso, *Like No Other Time: The 107th Congress and the Two Years That Changed America Forever*, 147.

²⁸MacQueen, *The 2001 Anthrax Deception: The Case For a Domestic Conspiracy*, chap. 5.

8. False Flag Terror and the Passage of the Patriot Act, 2001

the text of the letter, extremely sophisticated. Due to the aerosolized (“floaty”) nature of the prepared spores, a characteristic not easily achieved since in nature the spores tend to clump, many people in the Hart Senate building tested positive for exposure. There was general shock as it was discovered that the spore preparation, behaving essentially like smoke, had quickly drifted off and contaminated much of the building.

The Hart Senate building had to be closed and the senators with offices there relocated. Much of the work by members of Congress to harmonize the two versions of the Patriot Act was carried out in unsettled conditions—in some cases in temporary quarters with limited computer access by senators writing on pads of paper.²⁹

Journalist Colbert King summed up the disturbance to Capitol Hill.³⁰ Noting that an aim of terrorism is “to instill feelings of fear and helplessness in citizens,” he said:

... the perpetrators of the anthrax terror hit pay dirt in Washington. They’ve managed to accomplish what the British tried to generate with their burning of the White House, the Capitol and other government buildings in 1814—what Lee Harvey Oswald couldn’t deliver in 1963—and what the Pentagon attackers sought to but couldn’t provoke on Sept. 11: a sense of vulnerability and danger so great that it disables and fundamentally alters the way the nation’s capital does its business.

“Anthrax,” he added, “caused the House of Representatives to flee town; it closed Senate office buildings; unprecedented actions.”

²⁹See, for example, [Tish Schwartz](#), Chief Clerk/Administrator, House Committee on the Judiciary, “Effects of the Anthrax Attacks on the Drafting of the USA PATRIOT Act” [History, Art & Archives, United States House of Representatives; Transcript](#).

³⁰Colbert I. King, “Don’t Give In to the Anthrax Scare,” *The Washington Post*, October 27, 2001.

Finally, on October 26, after all the theatre and the threats, George W. Bush signed the bill into law. As he did so, he did not hesitate to add the anthrax attacks to the crimes of 9/11 and to imply that they had been carried out by the same perpetrators.³¹

The changes, effective today, will help counter a threat like no other nation has ever faced. We've seen the enemy, and the murder of thousands of innocent, unsuspecting people.

They recognize no barrier of morality. They have no conscience. The terrorists cannot be reasoned with. Witness the recent anthrax attacks through our Postal Service.

Immediately after the passing of the Patriot Act the anthrax story, less resilient than the 9/11 fiction, went into free fall collapse. It became clear that, despite the repeated attempts in October to blame the attacks on al-Qaeda and Iraq, the spores had been prepared in a U.S. laboratory serving the military and intelligence communities. This was admitted by the FBI and Homeland Security by the end of 2001 and has not been seriously challenged in the years since then.³²

As to who, precisely, the anthrax perpetrators were, the debate continues. The FBI has spent years trying to convince the world that a scientist (Dr. Bruce Ivins) from the United States Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases was the "lone wolf" perpetrator. But that claim, never tested in court because of Ivins' sudden death just before he was to be charged, has crumbled to dust in the last few years. It simply cannot be made to fit with the evidence.³³

³¹ *President Bush Signs Anti-Terrorism Bill (text of Bush Remarks on Oct. 26, 2001 prior to His Signing of the USA PATRIOT Act)* (PBS Newshour, October 26, 2001)

³² MacQueen, *The 2001 Anthrax Deception: The Case For a Domestic Conspiracy*, chap. 5.

³³ *Ibid.*

8. *False Flag Terror and the Passage of the Patriot Act, 2001*

We would do well to ask who wanted Afghanistan and Iraq in the crosshairs and worked very hard throughout October of 2001 to falsely blame al-Qaeda and Iraq for the anthrax attacks. *And we might also ask who wanted the American people controlled and spied upon and worked so hard to get the Patriot Act passed as one lethal threat after another arrived.*

In my view, the answers to these questions are quite clear. Although the perpetrators had a wide circle of friends and collaborators, this circle included the highest members of the executive branch of government. In the anthrax attacks, and in the 9/11 attacks to which they were linked,³⁴ the executive branch threatened to kill the legislative branch. It is hard to imagine a greater insult, and a greater danger, to the U.S. Constitution and to the future of democracy generally.

This essay is adapted from *The 2001 Anthrax Deception: The Case for a Domestic Conspiracy*.

³⁴MacQueen, *The 2001 Anthrax Deception: The Case For a Domestic Conspiracy*. The linking of 9/11 and the anthrax attacks is a major theme in this book.

Part II.

False Flag Analyses

9. JFK 55 Years On: Casting Light on the JFK Assassination as well as 9/11 and Other 21st Century Crimes

Instead of tackling a particular deep state operation on its own we would be well advised to study other similar incidents and attempt to discover general principles.

In 1998 the late Vincent Salandria, whom I came to know in his final years, gave [a brilliant address on the JFK assassination](#). Drawing on his speech, I use the “Salandria Approach” to show that the same questions that help penetrate the fog of the JFK assassination help clarify the 9/11 attacks. Dispensing with false debates, we ask how a sincere and democratic government would have investigated these crimes, and we contrast that with the actual investigations.

Published in [OffGuardian](#), 22 Nov 2018



Figure 9.1.: 1962: US statesman John F Kennedy, 35th president of the USA, making a speech. (Photo: Central Press/Getty Images)

Introduction

Fifty-five years ago, on November 22, 1963, John F. Kennedy was assassinated. Although there has been a great deal written about this event over the years, I want to draw attention to one exceptionally important article, originally delivered as a talk on November 20, 1998. Vincent Salandria gave this talk in Dallas at the invitation of the Coalition on Political Assassinations.¹

Salandria had been a high school teacher at the time of the assassination (he later became a lawyer) and was one of the first people in the US to [write essays expressing dissent from the government narrative](#) of lone gunman Lee Harvey Oswald, maverick leftist.

In his 1998 talk Salandria went through over a dozen of the famous obstacles to the government story—the grassy knoll witnesses, the “magic bullet,” the testimony of the doctors at Parkland Hospital, and

¹The Salandria essay that is the basis of my article, “[The JFK Assassination: A False Mystery Concealing State Crimes](#),” is Chapter 15 of *False Mystery: Essays on the JFK Assassination by Vincent Salandria*.

so on—but he did not let himself get sidetracked into detailed debates on any of these. By 1998 he had already seen, and participated in, 35 years of such debates. He had long ago [concluded](#) that, “the national security state at the very highest level of its power killed President John F. Kennedy for his efforts at seeking to develop a modus vivendi with the Soviets and with socialist Cuba.”

In 1998 he felt it was time to warn researchers about the danger of wasting time in “false debates,” where the essential facts had clearly been established and the wrangling served only the purposes of the assassins. Rather than repeat the debates, Salandria decided in 1998 to outline his basic approach. I will call this the Salandria Approach. I draw attention to it because I believe it helps us find our feet when we tackle not only the JFK killing but many of the killings in the 21st century’s War on Terror.

Here are [Salandria’s words](#):

“I began to sift through the myriad facts regarding the assassination which our government and the US media offered us. What I did was to examine the data in a different fashion from the approach adopted by our news media. I chose to assess how an innocent civilian-controlled US government would have reacted to those data. I also envisioned how a guilty US national security state which may have gained control of and may have become semi-autonomous to the civilian US governmental structure would have reacted to the data of the assassination.”

He adds that,

“only a guilty government seeking to serve the interests of the assassins would consistently resort to accepting one improbable conclusion after another while rejecting a long series of probable conclusions.”

Let us take two cases from Salandria's list of over one dozen in order to see what he was getting at.

The Grassy Knoll

Dozens of witnesses thought there were shots from an extended grassy rise, containing several structures, situated west of the famous Texas School Book Depository Building. Salandria, refusing to get drawn into the familiar debate, [says](#):

“Let us assume *arguendo* [for the sake of argument] that all of the eyewitnesses who had concluded that shots were fired from the grassy knoll were dead wrong. But an innocent government could not and would not at that time have concluded that these good citizens were wrong and would not have immediately rushed to declare a far-fetched single assassin theory as fact.”

Note that Salandria's emphasis is not on the details of the grassy knoll discussion but on the method the government followed in its investigation. And he is right, both about the immediate claim that Oswald acted alone—presented, as he explains, by a government representative on November 22 itself—and about the identical statement presented later by the Warren Commission.

In both cases the claim flew in the face of the eyewitness evidence. For example, despite the fact that there are references to dozens of witnesses to shots from the grassy knoll in the 26 volumes of evidence appended to the Warren Report,² the Commission itself displayed little interest in them. And when the Commission dismissed every single one of the grassy knoll witnesses to protect its lone gunman theory it did so without bothering to make a sustained argument.

²Both the [Warren Report](#) and the [26 volumes of evidence](#) can be found at the [History Matters](#) website. See Also: [Fifty-one Witnesses: The Grassy Knoll](#), Harold Feldman, reprinted in *Fair Play Magazine*, Issue #12, Sep-Oct 1996.

It chose instead to play a credibility game. It pronounced:

“No credible evidence suggests that the shots were fired from the railroad bridge over the Triple Underpass, the nearby railroad yards or any place other than the Texas School Book Depository Building” Warren Report, p. 61

In other words, the Commission decided to gather together into one great agglomeration the credibility of its seven well-dressed and high-ranking white men associated with government and use this to crush the credibility of the “good citizens” who were present in the Plaza and witnessed, with their senses, the unfolding of events.

It was a breathtaking move. But in what way could it be said to characterize an innocent government? How could any serious investigator pretend to solve an evidential problem by playing a credibility game? Standard practice in a homicide investigation would be to find all witnesses, to interview them, and to record their statements impartially, making sure to ask each one of them where they thought the shots came from and why they reached their conclusion. How would the opinions of congressmen, spies and the like possibly be relevant to the case when these gentlemen declined to offer adequate counter-evidence or to give a serious argument to support their peculiar conclusion?

Readers who have never had the opportunity to see and hear for themselves the good citizens in question may benefit from Mark Lane’s documentary:

Well, where, in such a case, does the Salandria Approach lead us? We have no choice but to conclude that the Warren Commission’s investigation was not what we would expect from “an innocent civilian-controlled US government.”

It was more characteristic of “a guilty government seeking to serve the interests of the assassins.” There was a predetermined perpetrator and an insistence on the guilt of this perpetrator, while evidence

suggestive of a conspiracy was systematically ignored, distorted or suppressed.

Suppose we were to apply the Salandria Approach to events of the 21st century—to the eyewitnesses at the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, for example? We have over 150 witnesses who reported that they saw, heard or felt explosions at the time of the beginning of destruction of the Twin Towers.³

Their testimony constitutes very significant support for the theory that the Trade Center was blown up and did not undergo collapse from structural failure caused by airplane collision. We are not simply talking about loud sounds here. We are talking about sounds that experienced firefighters suspected were caused by bombs. We are talking about patterns of explosions seen pulverizing the buildings. We are talking, in some cases, about witnesses who say these explosions threw them through the air. Now, avoiding the debates about the details of this testimony, let us follow Salandria and ask: What did the government's 9/11 Commission do with these eyewitness accounts, all of which were in its possession?

The answer is that it called for no comprehensive search for eyewitnesses (neither did the FBI, as far as I can discover), nor did it have such witnesses asked the appropriate questions. It devoted to these witnesses a single line in the roughly 585 pages of its Report. And that single line is both dismissive and extremely misleading.

What about the National Institute of Standards and Technology, assigned by government the task of looking in detail at the destruction of the Trade Center and sorting out the reasons for its destruction? In the thousands of pages of its reports on the Twin Towers we find

³The list of 156 eyewitnesses to explosions in the Twin Towers is presented in this 25-page document, "[156 Eyewitnesses Whose Statements Are Suggestive Of Explosions In The Twin Towers](#)" [local PDF]. A discussion of the method used to arrive at the list as well as the treatment of these witnesses by the 9/11 Commission and NIST can be found in my article, "[Eyewitness Evidence of Explosions in the Twin Towers](#)" reproduced in the *9/11 Toronto Report*, ed. James Gourley, International Center for 9/11 Studies, 2012.

not a single mention of the explosion witnesses. Despite NIST's pride in its interviewing techniques, and despite its access to all the relevant information, it somehow missed over 150 witnesses. It made no attempt to find them, to sort out their testimony, or to discover how their words might illumine the mystery of the so-called "collapses."

We should recall that the efforts of the 9/11 Commission and NIST were mere follow-through. A strenuous attempt to promote the structural failure hypothesis was begun on the very day of September 11, 2001, in the absence of serious evidence in its favour and in bold contradiction to what large numbers of witnesses were saying.⁴

When we adopt the Salandria Approach we must, to paraphrase Salandria, conclude that, "an innocent government could not and would not at that time have concluded that these good citizens were wrong and would not have immediately rushed to declare a far-fetched [structural failure] theory as fact."

The Magic Bullet

In his essay Salandria explains the absurdity of the single bullet ("magic bullet") theory, according to which one bullet passed entirely through the president's body and then caused all of Governor Connally's wounds, emerging after its adventure in near-pristine condition. This bullet evidently had no difficulty changing direction in mid-air, nor did it balk at losing mass in Connally's body and then regaining this mass at the end of its journey. Salandria **concludes**:

"our Cold War government in the context of the assassination had declared a moratorium on the science of physics."

⁴For the dismissal of evidence of controlled demolition from the earliest moment see Ted Walter's article, "Dick Cheney and Rudy Giuliani: The First Government Officials to Dismiss the Idea of Controlled Demolition on 9/11", 10 Sep 2018.

9. *JFK 55 Years On: Casting Light on the JFK Assassination as well as 9/11 and Oth*

Remember: the issue before us is not merely the single bullet theory itself but the behavior of government representatives in investigating this hypothesis. So it is in those moments when we read the Warren Commission transcripts and watch counsel Arlen Specter leading and pressuring witnesses into accepting the single bullet theory that we realize we are seeing the handiwork of a guilty state.

Now, what might we find if we were to apply the Salandria Approach to the destruction of the World Trade Center? To restrict ourselves, for the sake of this discussion, to World Trade 7, what would the approach of an innocent government to this building destruction look like? Would we not expect a thorough search for eyewitnesses?

Would not all of the recoverable steel be preserved carefully and made accessible to civilian experts? Would there not be a serious attempt to explain evidence of corrosion and vaporization of the steel? Would there not be the most rigorous examination of the Trade Center dust, searching for evidence that would allow ascertainment of temperatures reached during the building's destruction and searching as well for residue of explosives and incendiaries?

Would there not be frank astonishment at the fact that the descent of this 47-storey building, not hit by a plane, began rapidly, symmetrically, and at free fall acceleration? Would not physicists openly debate this astounding event, troubled by the fact that the vertical columns of this well constructed steel-framed high-rise offered no resistance whatsoever when, for mysterious reasons, the collapse began?

Surely an innocent government sincerely probing for the truth would not choose, instead of taking the path outlined above, to construct a computer simulation that, even with manipulation, could not replicate the historical event clearly preserved on video? Surely investigators would not bring the simulation to an abrupt end before it was able to represent total collapse, and surely they would not refuse to release the complete data set used in their simulation, claiming it

might compromise national security?⁵

When we ask these questions and contemplate the answers we see at once what game NIST has been playing in its account of World Trade 7. In the 21st century there is, perhaps, no more obvious demonstration that the US government, for the sake of its War on Terror, has “declared a moratorium on the science of physics.”

There is an entire organization, Architects & Engineers for 9/11 Truth, which has taken as its task for over a decade the pointing out of such violations of the laws of physics in the US government’s account of the September 11, 2001 crime. The organization is to be praised for its creativity and persistence. Yet the false debate continues, and the intelligentsia continues to insist that the Emperor is well dressed, thank you very much.

Political Implications of Grassy Knolls and Magic Bullets

There is something I have always found arresting about the grassy knoll, and my concerns extend to the suppressed witnesses of September 11. In both cases we have ordinary folks—people like ourselves—who are, supposedly, citizens of a democracy. They are also, as far as we can tell, of sound mind and body, able to perceive with their senses and assess with their minds. Yet, all of a sudden, when their bodies and minds tell them something that conflicts with a government dictum, they are considered by government of no more political competence than cattle. I find it hard to think of a greater insult to these “good citizens” and to the notion of democracy, and I find it hard to think of a more brash assertion of

⁵For a discussion of the destruction of World Trade 7 see the website of *Architects & Engineers for 9/11 Truth* & especially Ted Walter’s publication, *Beyond Misinformation: What Science Says About the Destruction of World Trade Center Buildings 1, 2, and 7*, Architects & Engineers for 9/11 Truth, 2015, 52 pp. 11 Jul 2017 archived snapshot of beyondmisinformation.org.

the principle of authority.

This is why witnesses from the grassy knoll and the World Trade Center should be at the centre of the current debate about state deception and its relation to democracy.

As for magic bullets in Dealey Plaza and the mysterious collapse of World Trade 7, they are, I suggest, of comparable political importance to the abused witnesses. We face a collection of gentlemen in suits and ties (seven gentlemen in the Warren Commission and ten in the 9/11 Commission) telling us that their stories are more potent than the laws of the universe. How poor must be our self-confidence that we can put up with this guff? How defective must be our educational systems if they produce citizens who accept this?

Here we are, then, at the 55th anniversary of the murder of a president who was moving away from Cold War thinking and entering a different path.⁶ As we reflect on the direction in which his assassins have steered the United States of America, to the detriment of all of us, US citizens and otherwise, let us reflect on [Salandria's words](#):

“By coming to understand the true answer to the historical question of who killed President Kennedy and why, we will have developed a delicate and precisely accurate prism through which we can examine how power works in this militarized country. By understanding the nature of this monumental crime, we will become equipped to organize the struggle through which we can make this country a civilian republic in more than name only.”

⁶For a discussion of Kennedy's turn away from the Cold War see James Douglass's brilliant *JFK and the Unspeakable: Why He Died and Why It Matters* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2008).

10. Martin Luther King: The Saint Honored by the Government that Shot Him in the Face

After studying the investigative work of William Pepper on the King assassination, my love of primary sources led me to read the transcript of the civil trial made possible by Pepper's hard work. In this article I concentrate on the testimony of a particular witness—a cab driver—who had been at the scene. This testimony supports Pepper's contention that government forces killed King and framed James Earl Ray.

The need to take eyewitnesses seriously is a theme in my work on the 9/11 fraud, and here I have simply extended the point to cover the MLK assassination.

Published in [Global Research](#), 18 Jan 2016

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day was signed into law as a federal holiday in 1983. I do not wish to trivialize this accomplishment: it took great persistence by civil society groups and it had to conquer serious opposition. Yet what it has established is an indigestible paradox in the nation's list of saints and heroes.

10. *Martin Luther King: The Saint Honored by the Government that Shot Him in*

Recall that the jury in [the 1999 civil trial](#) examining the assassination reached a startling conclusion on December 8, 1999: [US government agencies had conspired successfully to kill Dr. King.](#)

Mainstream media cared little about this trial and verdict in 1999 and they persist in ignoring it to this day.

When challenged they tend to say that the claims were muddy and confused and vulnerable to easy refutation. Actually, the plaintiffs' case was strong, and the jury, after sitting and listening to presentation of evidence and argument from November 15 to December 8, was quickly able to reach consensus on the verdict. The great variety of evidence presented by [attorney William Pepper](#) pointed to the impossibility of the lone assassin hypothesis (James Earl Ray) and to the conspiring of several bodies, including the local police (Memphis Police Department), the mafia (local representative Frank Liberto), and federal police, intelligence and military units. In other words, the combination of forces that carried out the murder was not very different from that which had killed President Kennedy. Such was the planning, the commitment, and the determination of the assassins that there was little chance Dr. King could have survived the day. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter onto the balcony of the Lorraine Motel.

[Stanford Archive](#)

Reading the transcript of this trial takes some time (it's [about 2700 pages](#) long), but having done so I am impressed by attorney Pepper's persistence and skill in getting to the heart of this matter. Yet if the findings are to have political force, and if the mainstream media persist in pretending the trial never took place, it falls to active citizens to do their part to make the trial and the findings known. They should tell people about this trial, encourage people to read it, quote from it, and emphasize its importance. They should not let it be trivialized (as the current Wikipedia article on Martin King tries to do) by pretending the claims of government conspiracy were weak and have been refuted—they have not.

King was killed not just because he was a civil rights activist, but because he was planning the Poor People's Campaign[1][2] [3][4], which would have involved nonviolent disruption of business as usual in Washington on behalf of all of the nation's poor, whatever their colour. This made the 1% uncomfortable. King was also killed because he had passionately criticized his country's pursuance of the Vietnam War—his major denunciation of that war at Riverside Church in New York City had taken place one year to the day before he was killed. The eloquent and uncompromising talk had made everyone from President Johnson to the U.S. military and intelligence communities uncomfortable.

Far from being confused and muddy, I think the central arguments presented in 1999 have been quite well established. Moreover, there was little sophistication in the attempts to buy off and threaten James Earl Ray, to discourage and even kill eyewitnesses, and to pretend against all evidence that government investigations had been thorough and had found nothing to seriously question the case against Ray.

The truth is that the lone gunman theory bit the dust in 1999, and anyone who attempts to resurrect it had better be able to challenge chapter and verse of this civil trial.

For those who have not read the trial transcript, I shall end with an exemplifying segment—worth quoting to friends who might be unfamiliar with it.

This material is taken directly, with only minor omissions, from the court transcript of testimony given in mid-afternoon, November 30th, 1999.

A former Memphis Yellow Cab driver, [Louis Ward, is on the stand](#) answering questions put to him by attorney William Pepper. Ward describes what a fellow cab driver, Paul Butler, saw and reported as an eyewitness to the assassination and its aftermath. Why Butler himself was not on the stand will eventually become clear.

Some of these details were reported by Butler via car radio right

10. *Martin Luther King: The Saint Honored by the Government that Shot Him in*

after the assassination, while Ward heard other details face-to-face from Butler a bit later in the day. [This excerpt begins on page 1243 of the trial transcript.]

“...as I raised up and looked, that rifle popped — it didn’t sound like a rifle, it sounded like two boards clapped together. And he said, I seen his jaw and part of his neck blowed away. It was like he had a stick of dynamite in his mouth. He said, as I wheeled and looked, I seen a cluster of smoke coming up out of the bushes, and then I seen the guy come running up. He didn’t have no rifle. But he said, I know that he is the one that had to shoot him. And then he headed towards the — headed north towards the squad car. And, of course, we thought the police had picked him up. Because it was a black and white squad car...

Q. So he’s telling you that after the shot he saw a man come out of the bushes —

A. Yes, sir.

Q. — run up north on Mulberry Street —

A. Yes, sir.

Q. — and get into a squad car — a traffic —

A. Traffic squad car, black and white, mm-hum.

Q. Which was parked where?

A. He said about a half a block north of the motel.

Q. And then what happened to that car?

A. Well, he said they headed north. We thought he picked — well, he come back on the radio and said the police has picked him up and they headed north with him. You could hear the tires were squealing. So we

thought the police had already picked up the guy that done the shooting.

Q. I see. So both you and Mr. Butler had thought that the police had apprehended the shooter.

A. Yes.

Q. What happened next? Did any police come out to the airport?

A. Yes. While I'm standing there talking, a squad car drove up with a lieutenant and a patrolman...And the lieutenant wrote the report down that he [Butler] had and told him that they would be back in contact with him. So they got in the squad car and left after they got the report.

Q. So they took a report from Mr. Butler and they — they left. Where were you standing when that report was being taken?

A. Oh, probably — when they came up, I was standing up next to him. When they came up, I backed away, probably 3 or 4 feet out of their way, where they would have plenty of clearance. But I was close enough that he gave them the same report that he gave me.

Q. You overheard this report being given?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. All right. Then what happened next?

A. Well, they called — the dispatcher called him to come in to the headquarters. We have a headquarters. Said he was wanted down there. Well, later on that night, not too much later, I was in town and drove by the cab company and there was several squad cars down there. And I figured that they were, you know, taking some

10. *Martin Luther King: The Saint Honored by the Government that Shot Him in*

more reports. And then I found out later that he was supposed to be at court at 9 o'clock the next morning.

Q. He was supposed to give a statement –

A. Yes, sir.

Q. – the next morning? And how many squad cars were around Yellow's offices that night?

A. There were several. I would say seven or eight. Might have been more, might have been five or six. But I just noticed there were several squad cars sitting there. I didn't count them.

Q. Seven or eight Memphis Police Department cars around Yellow's headquarters that night?

A. Yes, sir.

[Two weeks then pass before Ward goes back to Yellow's headquarters, when the following takes place.]

Q. When was the next time you actually went into the offices and –

A. Oh, it was – well, I went into the office when I first came back to work. I went in then. That's when I – I asked him about Mr. Butler.

Q. Who did you ask about Mr. Butler?

A. There was four or five cab drivers standing around talking. And I just asked them. And that's when they told me – I don't even remember which one told me. But he said he had been throwed out of a high- speed automobile between Memphis and West Memphis. And they found him about 10 o'clock the next day. [April 5, 1968]

Q. They said he was thrown out of a high-speed automobile. When was he thrown out of that automobile?

A. The next — the next morning. They said they found his body about 10 o'clock or 10:30 the next morning. He was supposed to have been in court at 9 o'clock that morning and he wasn't there. They found his car there at the cab company. And — but he wasn't — he wasn't — never made it to court. But then about 10:30 they said they found his body between Memphis and West Memphis.

And so it is that Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, finding its way into the nation's calendar of saints and heroes, has the potential to shake this calendar of myths and fibs into pieces.

11. One Year After Canada's October 22nd Shootings: We Need a Public Inquiry

In this piece I give several reasons why the October 22, 2014 apparent assault on the Canadian federal parliament is suspect and deserves deep and critical study. Just before publication of this article I made a start on such a study with the booklet, *The October 22, 2014, Ottawa Shootings: Why Canadians Need a Public Inquiry* (Sept. 1, 2015).

The presentation deals with Canadian examples of the intimidation of legislatures, in the War on Terror, by intelligence and security agencies.

Published in [Global Research](#), 18 Oct 2015

11. *One Year After Canada's October 22nd Shootings: We Need a Public Inquiry*



On the evening of October 22, 2014 I found myself in Toronto sitting alone in a restaurant watching a CNN news broadcast playing on a huge TV in the restaurant's main room. The Ottawa shootings of the day were front and centre.

When the young waitress brought my bowl of chili I said to her,

“So we're being attacked by terrorists now?”

“So they say,” she replied evenly.

“You know,” I said, “I have my doubts about this whole thing.”

“Of course,” she replied. “This is obviously meant to support Harper's military intervention in the Middle East.”

My jaw dropped. Maybe my fellow Canadians were more inclined to skepticism than I thought?

The “war on terrorism” has been a tangle of deceptions, so there were plenty of reasons to greet this latest act of apparent terrorism with suspicion. For my part, I had just finished writing a book about

the 2001 anthrax attacks in the US, so I was in a mood for questioning. The anthrax attacks had appeared to be a jihadi attack (“DEATH TO AMERICA...ALLAH IS GREAT,” said the letters) and they were used to justify invasions of other countries and the theft of civil rights in the US. But shortly after the Patriot Act was signed into law in October of 2001 by George W. Bush the jihadi story had collapsed. The anthrax spores in the deadly letters, including the letters to two key Democratic senators holding up passage of the Patriot Act, were revealed to have originated neither in an al-Qaeda lab nor an Iraqi lab, but in a US lab serving the military and intelligence communities.¹

Here was a theme I would not forget: the very security and intelligence agencies that gain power from a bill intimidate the people’s elected representatives into passing the bill.

Such thoughts were in my mind as I sat in the restaurant in Toronto watching the events on Parliament Hill. Centre Block was, in those moments, still in lockdown. Canadian Members of Parliament, having been exposed to a barrage of gunfire right outside their caucus doors, were trapped, and definitely intimidated, while officers with guns went through the houses of Parliament.

Senator Céline Hervieux-Payette has recalled her experience in her Senate office:

At 2:30 p.m., to cries of “Police,” my assistant opens the office’s main door. He comes face to face with soldiers aiming their machine guns at him and ordering him to put his hands in the air. One by one, our doors are opened and the soldiers point their guns at my other assistants who exit their offices, hands in the air, as if they were criminals... The door we go through is destroyed; glass has exploded all over the floor. The door across the hallway has also been knocked in. Glass litters the

¹Graeme MacQueen, *The 2001 Anthrax Deception: The Case for a Domestic Conspiracy*.

11. *One Year After Canada's October 22nd Shootings: We Need a Public Inquiry*

hallway. There are more than 50 people crammed into four offices, everyone talking to one another...

I sit near the open window. I'm breathing but stunned: parliamentarians are under the command of the military. Parliament is in the hands of the armed forces.²

The people with guns who took control of Parliament were likely militarized police rather than the armed forces per se, but it was not easy to tell them apart. Police of different types swarmed the vicinity, some of them carrying heavy automatic weapons and dressed in helmets, boots and green fatigues.

I wondered on October 22, 2014 if we were witnessing a revised version of the 2001 US fraud—another intimidation of an elected legislature by internal security forces to facilitate a shift in power. Bill C-13, allowing increased surveillance of Canadian citizens, was before Parliament and C-44, further empowering Canada's spy agency, CSIS, was to be introduced that very day, October 22. Soon we would learn that another bill was on the way. It turned out to be the infamous Bill C-51, now made law as the "Anti-terrorism Act, 2015," one of Canada's most repressive and dangerous pieces of legislation.

On October 23, 2014, Kevin Vickers, the sergeant-at-arms responsible for killing the Parliament shooter, got a standing ovation in Parliament. Unity in the legislature as all parties joined in celebrating their safety! Soon citizens were treated to images of the Prime Minister hugging the leaders of the opposing parties. More unity! But the hugs were familiar from the fall of 2001. The image of Democratic senate majority leader Tom Daschle embracing George W. Bush in the wake of the 9/11 attacks was fresh in my mind. This particular unity had enabled the passing of a bill permitting the use of armed force overseas, *Authorization for Use of Military Force, 2001*. The sub-

²Céline Hervieux-Payette, October 22, 2014. [The Day the Military Police Took Control of Parliament](#). Blog of Senator Hervieux-Payette. I am grateful to Amy MacPherson for pointing me to this blog.

sequent anthrax attacks had kept this unity intact long enough to enable the passing of the Patriot Act.³

There was another troubling development. Those parliamentarians who did not bow and scrape before the Prime Minister, and who resisted the use of the October 22 attacks to pass repressive legislation, tended to adopt a “lone nut” narrative. According to this story the suspect, Michael Zehaf-Bibeau, was simply an unbalanced homeless man acting on his own—a case for social services rather than a sign of coordinated political violence. The problem was that this narrative did not accommodate all the available evidence.

There was evidence that Zehaf-Bibeau had planned his attack carefully and had had access to considerable resources; there was evidence that the October 22 attack was linked to an earlier October 20 attack in the province of Quebec; and there was a good deal of evidence that police knew well in advance that attacks such as those that took place that week were in the works. The story of the drug-addled loner seemed inadequate. Accordingly, I wrote a letter to a local Member of Parliament warning him not to invest all his credibility in this lone nut narrative. I suggested that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police would, at an opportune moment, display the video shot by the suspect just before his killing of a soldier at the War Memorial. The video would show Zehaf-Bibeau to have been cogent and as well as committed to some form of jihadi enterprise.

That, of course, is what happened. After keeping the video from the public for months RCMP Commissioner Bob Paulson decided, during the hearings held in association with Bill C-51, that it was time for Canadians to see it. In fact, now we not only *could* see it, we really *should* see it. He asked that his showing of the video be televised live in Canada. Sure enough, the Zehaf-Bibeau we saw in that video did not look like an unbalanced homeless man. Clean, well groomed and rational, he appeared to know just what he was doing.

So, if he was not a lone nut, who and what was he? Was he acting

³*The 2001 Anthrax Deception*. See especially Chapter 3.

11. *One Year After Canada's October 22nd Shootings: We Need a Public Inquiry*

with, or on behalf of, others? If so, what others? I did not know at the time, and I still do not know, the answers to these questions. But I do know that the usual two hypotheses—the lone nut and the member of an Islamic terrorist organization—do not exhaust the possibilities, and that a third possibility is being kept from the Canadian public. I also know that the police narrative is tattered, trailing a host of unanswered questions, and kept in place with the help of RCMP secrecy and deception.

As for the third hypothesis, the unspeakable hypothesis, it is merely necessary to recall that *the majority of people who come before the courts in North America on charges related to violent terrorism have been aided and abetted by police and intelligence agencies.*

This known fact was seldom part of the discourse in the heated discussions on television in the weeks and months after October 22, 2014. Police pretended to be unaware of the pattern. For example, in a CBC Radio interview on March 7, 2015, RCMP Commissioner Paulson stated that when he had first watched Zehaf-Bibeau's jihad video, he had found it shocking. The clarity, the sense of purpose of this violent man! Mr. Paulson neglected to tell listeners that in the previous year the RCMP had taken a young man similar in many ways to Zehaf-Bibeau—impoverished, adrift in Vancouver, caught between drug addiction and his personal version of Islam—and had done their best over a period of months to turn him into a terrorist. RCMP moles *had prompted this man, John Nuttall, and his common law wife to make videos taking responsibility for "violence in the name of Allah."* The moles had assisted in the jihadi video productions and "even provided the black Islamic flag the two used as a backdrop for a video message urging jihad."

Were we really supposed to believe, then, that Mr. Paulson was shocked by Zehaf-Bibeau's video? And, given the well established broad pattern of entrapment by police and intelligence agencies in North America, would it not be perverse for any thoughtful person to neglect the possibility that state agencies may have been complicit

in the October 22 shootings? Yet avoidance of this possibility has been the rule in this year since the 2014 events, on the part of both the media and Members of Parliament.

We appear to be in the presence of yet another taboo in the Global War on Reason.

Determined that civil society researchers not allow themselves to be silenced by this taboo and determined as well not to allow information available in the early hours and days of this event to be swept down the memory hole, I decided to write a report on the October 22 shootings. My central aim was to see whether the questions many of us had in the wake of the events had been answered. My 25,000-word report, submitted to Canadian NGO, Democracy Probe International, is available here: *The October 22, 2014, Ottawa Shootings: Why Canadians Need A Public Inquiry*, 22 Oct 2014 (92 pp.)

The list of important, unanswered questions is a long one. For this reason I am calling for a federal public inquiry.

Why is a public inquiry necessary? First of all, police killed the suspect, putting 31 bullets in his body. There is no sign of further suspects and, therefore, no court case on the horizon. No court case usually means no serious effort to discover the truth. Secondly, several months ago a series of police reports was released but they added little to what we already knew. Redaction in these reports is heavy, methodology is poor, and the most serious questions have not even been asked. Thirdly, the media have not done their job. There were fierce promises on the day of October 22, 2014 that they would pursue the key questions, but for the most part these promises have been broken.

I hope readers who are disgusted when they see foreign military intervention defended, and repressive legislation passed, on the basis of obscure events shrouded in police secrecy will download this report, study it, build on it, and use it.

11. *One Year After Canada's October 22nd Shootings: We Need a Public Inquiry*

Notes

With the exception of the few cases below, sources are given in the report referred to in the article: *The October 22, 2014, Ottawa Shootings: Why Canadians Need a Public Inquiry*.

12. Remember Pearl Harbor: Provoking Japan, Provoking North Korea

At a moment when US provocation of North Korea was intense and dangerous, I wrote this piece as a warning, using the provocation of Japan in the Pearl Harbor affair as a model.

Published in [Global Research](#), 4 Dec 2017

But the evidence suggests the attack was not unprovoked. On the contrary, it was carefully and systematically provoked in order to manipulate the U.S. population into joining WWII.

This provocation game, spectacularly successful in 1941, is currently being played with North Korea. The stakes are high.

Many good people are reluctant to look critically at the U.S. role in the Pearl Harbor attacks because they consider FDR a progressive president and because they are appalled at the thought of what might have happened if the U.S. had not joined the war. But they should not allow these considerations to prevent them from examining the Pearl Harbor operation. To give up such examination is to give up the understanding of a key method of manipulating populations.

* * *

12. Remember Pearl Harbor: Provoking Japan, Provoking North Korea



Figure 12.1.: A destroyed Vindicator at Ewa field, the victim of one of the smaller attacks on the approach to Pearl Harbor

By the late 1930s it was clear to much of the world that war was imminent. British planners worked hard to figure out how Britain could emerge on the winning side of the encounter.

British propaganda expert **Sidney Rogerson**'s 1938 book, *Propaganda in the Next War* gives us an important glimpse of British thinking on the eve of war. Rogerson notes that "Japan's distinction is that she is unpopular," (p. 142) and he comments that U.S. citizens "are more susceptible than most peoples to mass suggestion—they have been brought up on it." (p. 146). He is thus able to pose the challenge to the British propaganda community in this way:

"Though we [Britain] are not unfavourably placed, we shall require to do much propaganda to keep the United States benevolently neutral. To persuade her to take our part will be much more difficult, so difficult as to be unlikely to succeed. It will need a definite threat to America, a threat, moreover, which will have to be brought home by propaganda to every citizen, before the republic will again take arms in an external quarrel. The position will naturally be considerably eased if Japan were involved and this might and probably would bring America in without further ado. At any rate, it would be a natural and obvious object of our propagandists to achieve this, just as during the Great War they succeeded in embroiling the United States with Germany." (p. 148)

Reading Rogerson prepares us for the discovery that the Pearl Harbor operation was a masterful exercise in deceit.

Robert Stinnett served in the U.S. Navy in WWII. He spent 17 years researching the Pearl Harbor events before bringing out, in 2000, his book, *Day of Deceit: The Truth about FDR and Pearl Harbor*. I find his argument, based on solid documentary evidence unearthed through Freedom of Information requests, convincing.

12. Remember Pearl Harbor: Provoking Japan, Provoking North Korea

FDR and his top advisors agreed with the British that the U.S. needed to get into the war on Britain's side, and they felt, or claimed to feel, that conflict between the U.S. and Japan was in any case inevitable. Waiting for war with Japan to break out spontaneously was, they felt, a poor idea. But it was also a poor idea to have the U.S. fire the first shot: Japan had to appear as the aggressor. This was the only way to put the U.S. population in the mood for war. The majority of U.S. citizens opposed entering WWII (Stinnett, p. 7) just as they had opposed entering WWI in 1914. Therefore it was decided to goad the Japanese. As U.S. Secretary of War, **Henry Stimson**, put it shortly before the Pearl Harbor attack: "The question was how we should maneuver them into the position of firing the first shot without allowing too much danger to ourselves." (Stinnett, p. 178)

Stinnett names eight steps of provocation proposed on October 7, 1940 by **Lieutenant Commander Arthur McCollum**. The list includes instituting a complete embargo on trade with Japan (Stinnett, p. 8). Subsequent to McCollum's list, it was decided also to institute "the deliberate deployment of American warships within or adjacent to the territorial waters of Japan" (Stinnett, p. 9).

Stinnett wrote,

"Throughout 1941, it seems, provoking Japan into an overt act of war was the principal policy that guided FDR's actions toward Japan" (p. 9).

He further claims that McCollum's specific suggestions were followed closely (Stinnett, p. 9).

In 1941 the U.S. leadership put into effect the complete embargo McCollum had proposed. This included cutting off Japan's supply of oil, a move that would have made Japan's continued participation in the war, and even its existence as an industrial nation, impossible. As one commentator put it:

“We cut off their money, their fuel and trade. We were just tightening the screws on the Japanese. They could see no way of getting out except going to war” (Stinnett, p. 121).

The [Japanese response](#) was predictable. In their declaration of war against the United States (and Britain), published directly after the Pearl Harbor attack, they said:

“They have obstructed by every means Our peaceful commerce and finally resorted to a direct severance of economic relations, menacing gravely the existence of Our Empire...This trend of affairs, would, if left unchecked, not only nullify Our Empire’s efforts of many years for the sake of the stabilization of East Asia, but also endanger the very existence of Our nation.”

By the time Japan decided on its aggressive response U.S. intelligence had cracked the vital Japanese communication codes, both diplomatic and military (Stinnett, [xiv](#) and throughout), and was able to track closely Japanese vessels as they began their movements toward Pearl Harbor. The attack was permitted to proceed without obstruction.

The day after December 7, 1941, after listening to FDR’s Infamy speech, and believing his claim that the attacks had been unprovoked, Congress duly passed a declaration of war against Japan. Because of treaties then in place, the U.S. was at war with all the Axis powers.

Are we to believe that this provocation game, so useful to U.S. planners those many decades ago, now gathers dust on the shelf? On the contrary, U.S. strategy today requires it, and its proponents are in some cases surprisingly frank about this. For example, in the publication, [Which Path to Persia?](#), authored by strategists at the Saban Centre (housed in the Brookings Institution), we find the following argument:

12. *Remember Pearl Harbor: Provoking Japan, Provoking North Korea*

- (a) Any major, overt military action against Iran by the U.S. will be very unpopular (this was in 2009) internationally and domestically unless it is seen as a response to Iranian aggression.
- (b) Waiting for the Iranians to carry out such an act may mean waiting forever, because Iran avoids such actions.
- (c) It may, therefore, be necessary to goad Iran into such an action—especially if the aim is an invasion of Iran with regime change as in the Iraq case.
- (d) The more violent the Iranian response to U.S. goading, the better. All military options are at that point easy to pursue.

The authors note:

“it would be far more preferable if the United States could cite an Iranian provocation as justification for the airstrikes before launching them. Clearly, the more outrageous, the more deadly, and the more unprovoked the Iranian action, the better off the United States would be. Of course, it would be very difficult for the United States to goad Iran into such a provocation without the rest of the world recognizing this game, which would then undermine it. (One method that would have some possibility of success would be to ratchet up covert regime change efforts in the hope that Tehran would retaliate overtly, or even semi-overtly, which could then be portrayed as an unprovoked act of Iranian aggression.)” (pp. 84-85)

Later they return to the theme of covert regime change as deliberate provocation:

“Indeed, for this same reason, efforts to promote regime change in Iran might be intended by the U.S. government as deliberate provocations to try to goad the Iranians into an excessive response that might then justify an American invasion.” (p. 150)

The dream of these authors is an attack on the U.S. similar to the assaults of 9/11 (p. 66). Their problem is how to bring this about. If they could get an Iranian assault, they feel, U.S. forces could then do whatever they wanted to do to Iran without resistance from either the U.S. domestic population or the international community.

This, then, is what the “game” looks like among certain U.S. strategic thinkers today. As for citizens of the relevant states—democratic or otherwise—we are outside the game and are supposed to remain in a state of political unconsciousness. If we *recognize* the game, we *undermine* it.

At this moment, it seems to me that the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK, North Korea) is even more vulnerable to the provocation game than Iran. The game, in fact, is already in progress.

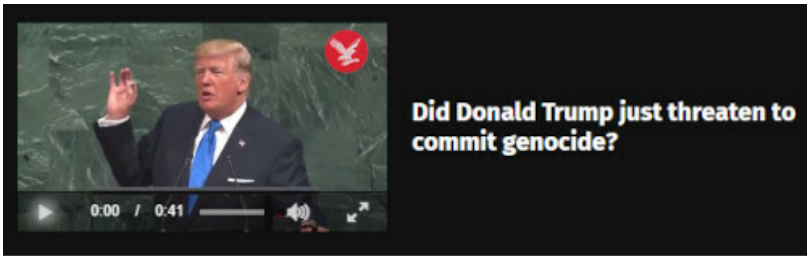
We have seen several means employed to provoke the DPRK. The most blatant are insults and threats. For example, U.S. **President Donald Trump** and U.S. **Secretary of Defense Mattis** have **threatened to commit the crime of genocide against the DPRK**.

Two further actions bring us unsavoury reminders of the provocative acts of the Pearl Harbor operation.

(a) Military maneuvers in the region

To antagonize its diminutive opponent (far smaller, in both area and population, than the state of California), the U.S. led a series of **extremely provocative military exercises near the DPRK**. The exercises included large numbers of weapons systems, some of them nuclear capable—a clear threat of not only aggressive action but nuclear attack.

12. Remember Pearl Harbor: Provoking Japan, Provoking North Korea



President Donald Trump's address to the United Nations General Assembly last week was noted for its aggressiveness, bellicosity and emphasis on U.S. sovereignty over multilateralism. Whatever one thinks of that approach, that wasn't the most notable aspect. The speech appeared to make an open and outright threat to commit genocide: "The United States has great strength and patience, but if it is forced to defend itself or its allies, we will have no choice but to totally destroy North Korea."

(b) Oil embargo

In addition to escalating general economic sanctions strangling the DPRK economy, the U.S. has tried to cut off the DPRK's entire supply of oil. The DPRK has no significant oil production of its own and relies on China and Russia for its oil, without which it cannot survive as an industrialized country. Only [the noncooperation of China and Russia](#) has forced the U.S. to accept, for the moment, a less draconian move. With [UN Security Council resolution 2375](#), passed on September 11, 2017, [the DPRK has lost about 30% of its oil imports](#).

The cynicism of the UN Security Council in passing UNSC 2375 is staggering. How can the five permanent members of this body refer to the [Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty \(NPT\)](#), which they piously do in the text of 2375, as a basis for the harsh treatment of the DPRK? It is true that this treaty seeks to halt the spread of nuclear weapons to states that do not have them. But it also seeks to get rid of the nuclear

weapons already possessed by nuclear states. Written in 1968, the NPT says:

“Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.”

Far from doing this, the permanent members of the Security Council continue to guard their nuclear weapons and to resist attempts to get rid of them. All five of the nuclear powers who happen to be the permanent members of the UN Security Council have refused to sign the recent Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

As long as the Security Council’s permanent members continue to ignore the NPT’s call for nuclear disarmament, and as long as they likewise refuse other treaties calling on them to get rid of their nuclear weapons, they have no credibility when they insist that other states (the particular ones they designate as “rogue”) remain nuclear weapons-free. If the NPT disallows the spread of nuclear weapons while permitting existing nuclear powers to hold on to their nuclear weapons, it simply becomes a fancy way of maintaining the exclusive Nuclear Club.

The NPT also states that

“in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, States must refrain in their international relations from the threat of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.”

Instead, we have the U.S., which authored UNSC 2375, threatening the most serious crimes it is possible to commit, including genocide, against the DPRK.

12. Remember Pearl Harbor: Provoking Japan, Provoking North Korea

To be clear, I do not approve of the acquisition of nuclear weapons by any state under any circumstances. I have spent my adult life opposing nuclearism. I do not rejoice in the nuclear weapons of the DPRK. But that government is not going to give up its nuclear program voluntarily as long as it feels under existential threat. What DPRK leaders say publicly—we need a deterrent against U.S. aggression—is the same thing their diplomats have said to me privately. And how can the permanent members of the Security Council reject this argument when every one of them believes in nuclear deterrence? Which one of them can claim to be under more threat than the DPRK?

The sad fact is that as long as the so-called “great powers” continue to use treaties such as the NPT to get what they want, while denying other states equal rights, nuclear proliferation will be extremely difficult to prevent.

I have no magical solution to the current crisis, but it seems to me that the Security Council is violating the UN Charter, which it has no authority to do, and is acting to prevent a peaceful outcome.

If I had a global platform from which to address the world I would say the following.

(a) To the leaders of the DPRK:

Please do not play the provocation game. I know you are not insane and therefore I know you will not carry out a Pearl Harbor attack on the U.S. or its allies. But responding, as you have in some instances, with threats and harsh rhetoric is dangerous and cannot possibly benefit you. In fact, such responses make it possible for U.S. leaders to turn any accident or international incident against you. They may even fabricate an incident (create a false flag attack on themselves), in which case every threat you have ever made will be quoted to prove to the world that you are the guilty party.

(b) To China and Russia:

I understand why you do not want to risk the survival of your states and your populations for the protection of the little DPRK, which you no doubt regard as something of a loose cannon. But remember that giving in to U.S. bullying is like giving in to the demands of a violent hostage-taker. No good is likely to come of it in the long run.

(c) To the United Nations as a whole:

Only by addressing the genuine and legitimate security concerns of the DPRK will you be likely to achieve a peaceful outcome to the current crisis. If you believe in your own organization, its purpose and Charter, you will not cooperate with the imperial policies of those members who, to the grief of the world, are installed in positions of privilege in the Security Council.

(d) To the people of the world:

Remember Pearl Harbor. That is, understand the provocation game. *Recognize* it whenever it is played. *Undermine* it.

13. Triggering War: The Urgent Need to Understand Catalytic Events that Initiate War

At a time when the War on Terror and its many fraudulent “terrorist” incidents were justifying invasions and authoritarianism, I wrote this piece to establish a basic typology of war triggers and to alert people to their creation and manipulation.

The concept of war as a “system” with cold and hot phases, briefly suggested in this article but not elaborated in the present collection, has been discussed in a separate essay, “[War as a System in Nature](#)” [PDF], co-authored with Tom Slee in late 2022

Published in [Global Research](#), 18 Mar 2018

13. *Triggering War: The Urgent Need to Understand Catalytic Events that Initiate*



PHOTO: GROUND ZERO CENTER FOR NONVIOLENT ACTION

As we watch Western governments testing their opponents – today Iran, the next day the DPRK, and then Russia and China – we hold our breaths. We are waiting with a sense of dread for the occurrence of a catalytic event that will initiate war. Now is the time to reflect on such catalytic events, to understand them, to prepare for them.*

The assassination of Archduke Ferdinand on June 28, 1914 in Sarajevo led to the outbreak of World War I. The Gulf of Tonkin incidents on August 2 and August 4, 1964 enabled what we call the Vietnam War.

Both events were war triggers. A “war trigger”, as I am using the term, is an event that facilitates an outbreak or expansion of hot war—that phase of the war system in which active killing takes place.

War triggers can lead affected populations to cast aside their critical faculties and their willingness to dissent from government narratives. They can also disable moral values and ideological commitments. At the outbreak of World War I the peace movement, the women’s movement and the socialist movement were all shattered.

While there is debate among scholars today about the extent of the frenzy in Europe as World War I began, it is difficult to dismiss sophisticated eyewitnesses such as **Rosa Luxemburg** (image on the right), who referred to what she saw as:

“mad delirium”; “patriotic street demonstrations”; “singing throngs”; “the coffee shops with their patriotic songs”; “the violent mobs, ready to denounce, ready to persecute women, ready to whip themselves into a delirious frenzy over every wild rumour”; “the atmosphere of ritual murder”. (Luxemburg, 261)

What Luxemburg described was a subjective state produced by a successful war trigger, in which a population becomes extremely lethal as it readies itself to rush at its foe while simultaneously battering anyone in its own ranks that dares to dissent.

Luxemburg herself dared to dissent. This led to two and a half years in a German prison cell. During this time she wrote the *Junius Pamphlet*, criticizing Europe’s socialist leaders for having been captured by the spirit of war, and pointing to the consequences of their folly:

“the cannon fodder that was loaded upon the trains in August and September is rotting on the battlefields of Belgium and the Vosges...Cities are turned into shambles, whole countries into deserts, villages into cemeteries, whole nations into beggars, churches into stables; popular rights, treaties, alliances, the holiest words and the highest authorities have been torn into scraps”. (Luxemburg, 261-2)

Luxemburg’s anger had a solid basis in what has become known as “the August madness” that struck Europe. For example, on August 3, 1914, when the war had just begun, the following call went out

13. *Triggering War: The Urgent Need to Understand Catalytic Events that Initiate*

to university students from the most senior officials in the Bavarian universities:

“Students! The muses are silent. The issue is battle, the battle forced on us for German culture, which is threatened by the barbarians from the East, and for German values, which the enemy in the West envies us. And so the *furor teutonicus* bursts into flame once again. The enthusiasm of the wars of liberation flares, and the holy war begins”. (Keegan, 358)

In response to this hysterical appeal, the German university students volunteered in large numbers. Untrained, they were thrown into battle. In the space of three weeks 36,000 of them were killed.

Germany was not unique, of course, in its vulnerability. Randolph Bourne, in an unfinished essay generally known as “[War is the Health of the State](#)”, described what he saw somewhat later in the United States as that country flipped from anti-war to pro-war and joined in the global disaster. He observed that once the executive branch had made the decision to go to war the entire population suddenly changed its mind. “[The moment war is declared](#) ... the mass of the people, through some spiritual alchemy, become convinced that they have willed and executed the deed themselves.”

Therefore, the people, “with the exception of a few malcontents, proceed to allow themselves to be regimented, coerced, deranged in all the environments of their lives, and turned into a solid manufactory of destruction”.

It is true that war madness of the kind that accompanied WWI has been less common in the years since then, partly because that war turned out to be an unprecedented catastrophe. But I believe it is entirely wrong to think that in today’s era of high technology and digitalized war, the arousing of the spirit of war in a population is no longer sought or needed. A highly influential analysis of

American Vietnam War strategy, carried out by one Col. Harry Summers, concluded some years ago that a chief cause of the US downfall was the failure of leaders to arouse their population's emotions. The American people, said Summers, had been forced to fight that war "in cold blood", which they found intolerable. In fact, this failure to arouse the war spirit was taken by many US analysts to have led to the "Vietnam syndrome" – a reluctance to intervene in the affairs of other countries militarily. This was a timidity unsuitable, they felt, for an imperial power.

One of the purposes of the September 11, 2001 operation, in my view, was precisely to change that situation – to arouse intense feelings of unity, aggression and support for government in order to banish once and for all the Vietnam Syndrome and to launch with great energy the new global conflict formation (the "War on Terror") so that the 21st century, with the military leading the way, would become another American Century.

Still, war triggers are not all the same, and we need to create categories. We can distinguish three broad types: accidental war triggers, managed war triggers and manufactured war triggers.

An *accidental war trigger* is an event that triggers hot war in the absence of intention. The pressure of events, random clashes, the everyday quest to satisfy physical needs – all these may, in the absence of warlike intent, produce a war trigger. After the event occurs it may lead, again without conscious plotting, directly to a hot and violent conflict between contending parties.

No doubt many war triggers throughout history fit the category of accidental war trigger. However, the more I have studied recent human wars the less ready I have become to promote the triggering events as accidental.

13. Triggering War: The Urgent Need to Understand Catalytic Events that Initiate

Weather Forecast:
Showers Tonight; Fair
Monday
Full Report on Page Three.

The Washington Times

NUMBER 8211. WASHINGTON, SUNDAY EVENING, JUNE 28, 1914. PRICE ONE CENT.

SUNDAY EVENING
EDITION

SERB STUDENT ASSASSINATES ARCHDUKE AND HIS DUCHESS

CAPT. HOPKINS CHARGES LETTERS WERE STOLEN AS PART OF CONSPIRACY

Lawyer Intimates Cientifico Plot to Suppress Success of Carranza Revolution—Readily Admits Friendship for Enemies of Huerta.

Plot and emphatic denial that American "big business" is back of the constitutional revolution in Mexico was made today by leading constitutionalist representatives in Washington.

The charge that "big business" is in fact engineering the revolution had been made on various occasions. It has since more been thrust to the front by the publication this morning in New York and Washington of correspondence of the part of the constitutionalists in this city.

The allegation is made on the reported basis of this correspondence that powerful business interests in the United States are working hand-in-glove with Carranza. The inference which is intended to be drawn from the disclosure of the correspondence is that the revolutionary spirit in Mexico are merely pawns which are being used, as a matter of cold-blooded fact to serve the purposes of American high finance.

ADMITS ADVISING PIERCE.

New Mexico, June 28.—The American consul at Mexico City today advised that he had received from a confidential source a copy of a letter from a certain American citizen to a certain Mexican official, in which the former advised the latter of the success of the Carranza revolution in Mexico.

**HUERTA WILL FORCE
WAR, MEXICAN SAYS**

Member of Mexican Cabinet

NEWMAN TO FILE MOTION FOR NEW TRIAL WEDNESDAY

Three Grounds for Setting Aside Verdict in Ouster Suit Are Alleged.

A motion for a new trial of the case of *United States v. Newman* was filed today in the United States district court at New York.

The motion is for a new trial on the ground that the jury was improperly instructed, that the evidence was insufficient and that the verdict was contrary to the law.

The motion is for a new trial on the ground that the jury was improperly instructed, that the evidence was insufficient and that the verdict was contrary to the law.

FALL VICTIMS TO ASSASSIN



The assassination of the Archduke and Duchess of Austria and their children is a tragedy that will be remembered for many years to come.

The assassin, a Serbian student, was shot and killed by the police in the streets of Vienna.

The Archduke and Duchess were shot and killed by the assassin in the streets of Vienna.

SEVEN PASSENGERS FLY THROUGH AIR WITH LIEUT. PORTE

Trans-Atlantic Flight Plans Advanced by Almost Perfect Behavior of the Marconi.

The flight of the *Zeppelin* is a remarkable achievement and a triumph for the German navy.

The flight was made on Sunday evening, June 28, 1914, and lasted for several hours.

The flight was made on Sunday evening, June 28, 1914, and lasted for several hours.

BOMB HURLED INTO CARRIAGE FAILS TO EXPLODE, USES PISTOL

Fires Several Shots, All of Which Lodged in Vital Parts, and Francis Ferdinand of Austria and Sophie Chotek, His MORGANIC Wife, Were Found to Have Been Killed Instantly.

VIENNA, June 28.—The Archduke Francis Ferdinand and the archduchess were assassinated today as they were leaving the Serravallo station.

A Serbian student of eighteen, first hurled a bomb into the carriage. This took no effect. He then opened fire on the royal couple with a revolver. He fired several shots, all of which lodged in vital points and the archduke and duchess were found to have been killed instantly.

The assassin was arrested after being attacked by a mob and has been placed in jail. He had been banished from Bosnia. The Austrian cabinet has been summoned to Vienna and are now in session.

The archduchess, Sophie Chotek, was the archduke's morganatic wife. She belonged to one of the oldest noble families of Bohemia, but her rank was far below that of the imperial house of Hapsburg.

After the archduke had married her, he swore in the presence of the Emperor, all the princes of the house of Hapsburg, the cardinals of Vienna, and the high dignitaries of the dual monarchies of Austria and Hungary that he would

Here's a chance to win \$10,000

Years ago when I gave talks on war triggers I used to give the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand as an example of an accidental war trigger. True, I understood that the assassin of the Archduke did not act alone: **Gavrilo Princip**, the young Serbian nationalist, was certainly not a "lone wolf"; he was one of several armed men stationed along the route of the Archduke's carriage, and although he was committed to this plan it is also pretty clear that he was deliberately used by a group with high-level connections to carry out the assassination. But I felt that the planners were unlikely to have sought the large-scale conflagration they ended up getting, and I was impressed by the variety of elements in the "Balkan cauldron" that seemed to defy rational planning. Likewise, I was impressed by the numerous systemic factors operative in the wake of this event that led to a major war, ranging from a flourishing arms industry, through genuinely deluded ruling classes and entangling state alliances, to systems such as railways that gave an advantage to the first party to mobilize. All

in all, I felt that non-deliberate factors outweighed deliberate factors, so I called this an accidental war trigger.

Recent reading, however, has made me less confident of this position. Especially since encountering Docherty and McGregor's book, *Hidden History: the Secret Origins of the First World War*, I am inclined to reclassify the World War I war trigger as a managed trigger.

A *managed war trigger* is one in which a party of influence consciously acts to increase the chances of hot war, either by deliberately creating conditions where a war trigger is likely to arise, or by seizing an event after the fact and shaping it into a war trigger.

If World War I's war trigger must be moved from accidental to managed, this increases the number of cases in this already well-stuffed category. The Pearl Harbor attack that caused the US entry into World War II was certainly managed. The factors that would increase the chances of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, thereby overcoming the US population's resistance to entering this war, were studied and made part of a deliberate program. The Japanese advance on Pearl Harbor was consciously allowed to proceed. The declaration of war on Japan was the immediate fruit of this managed attack.

The Gulf of Tonkin incident also falls into this category. This was no accidental dustup in the Gulf of Tonkin. US leaders had created a systematic program of naval raids on the coast of North Vietnam (the DESOTO raids) intended to stimulate responses. While there is still debate about the degree to which this incident was planned, I am on the side of those who see it as highly deliberate provocation by US leaders, constructed and used to create hot war. The North Vietnamese response to the intrusion of the Maddox and the Turner Joy was remarkably mild, but it was magnified and distorted by US Cold Warriors so that it could be portrayed as "communist aggression" that required violent response.

The success of these last two managed war triggers can be seen in the record of voting in the US Congress. On December 8, 1941 there was only one vote in Congress against the declaration of war

13. *Triggering War: The Urgent Need to Understand Catalytic Events that Initiate*

on Japan. On August 7, 1964 the House voted unanimously in favour of the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, while in the Senate the vote was 88-2.

These voting statistics are sobering. The readiness of the group mind to revert to a pre-rational state—to take aggressive action with dire consequences without seeking any serious confirmation of the facts of the matter—puts humanity in a state of profound risk.

A *manufactured war trigger* carries the manipulation of populations even further. Here, deliberateness is extreme: it is not simply a matter of increasing the chances that this or that incident will occur, or making a mountain out of a molehill after the event. Here, those desirous of war write the script, choreograph the action, plan the output, and carry out, or subcontract, the actual event. Typically, they will also prepare to demonize and marginalize anyone who dares to challenge the narrative they present to the world.

The War on Terror is a master class in manufactured and managed war triggers. My own studies have concentrated on the two-part operation of the fall of 2001 – the September 11 airplane incidents and the immediately following anthrax letter attacks. These were manufactured war triggers, and they were successful in winning the support of both the US population and its representatives for foreign wars and restrictions on domestic civil rights.

A *Washington Post*-ABC poll initiated on the evening of 9/11 reportedly found that:

“nearly nine in 10 people supported taking military action against the groups or nations responsible for yesterday’s attacks even if it led to war. Two in three were willing to surrender ‘some of the liberties we have in this country’ to crack down on terrorism”. (MacQueen, 36)

Meanwhile, on September 11 cowed members of Congress fled for their lives on receiving information that a plane was headed toward the Capitol. That evening they assembled on the Capitol steps to sing

God Bless America and to begin what was, in effect, their complete capitulation to those who had manufactured this war trigger.

On September 14, 2001 the Authorization for Use of Military Force was passed with a vote of 98-0 in the Senate and 422-1 in the House.

By late October members of Congress had begun to recover somewhat, and the USA Patriot Act, restricting domestic civil rights, met more opposition in the House than had the rush to war, passing by a vote of 357-66. Its fate in Senate, however, was more typical of such cases: 98 to 1.

These outcomes in Congress demonstrate the remarkable success, in the short term, of the manufactured war triggers of the fall of 2001. The effects of such operations, however, are temporary, so the perpetrators have had no choice but to continue managing and manufacturing war triggers to maintain the fraudulent War on Terror. The FBI (and parallel federal police agencies in other Western countries) busily entrap and recruit young people as fodder for the War on Terror, while in other cases, False Flag attacks are carried out using wholesale invention. These initiatives have had a mixed success. For example, the official account of the Boston Marathon bombing is widely accepted despite its contradictions and absurdities; but the story of the Syrian chemical weapons attack of 2013 failed to accomplish its apparent aim of greatly expanded direct US military involvement in Syria. Likewise, sceptics of the recent claim of Russian “*novichok*” use in the UK are already vocal.

We would do well to remember that the on-going production of managed and manufactured war triggers takes great resources and cannot forever remain leak-proof. It carries serious risks for war planners. The successful and definitive exposure of even one of these frauds before the people of the world could affect the balance of power overnight.

Our task is clear. We must mobilize both our investigative resources and our communication resources to nullify the efforts of those who specialize in the construction and encouragement of war

13. *Triggering War: The Urgent Need to Understand Catalytic Events that Initiate*

triggers and who wish to keep the war system robust. We lost over 100 million people to war in the 20th century. **Are we really going to let this happen again?**

Sources

The Junius Pamphlet: The Crisis in the German Social Democracy, in *Rosa Luxemburg Speaks*, edited by Mary-Alice Waters. New York: Pathfinder Press, 1970.

John Keegan, *A History of Warfare*. New York: Alfred Knopf, 1993.

Randolph Bourne, "The State ('War is the Health of the State')", 1918.

Col. Harry Summers, *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War*. Presidio Press, 1982.

Gerry Docherty and Jim MacGregor, *Hidden History: The Secret Origins of the First World War*. Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing, 2013

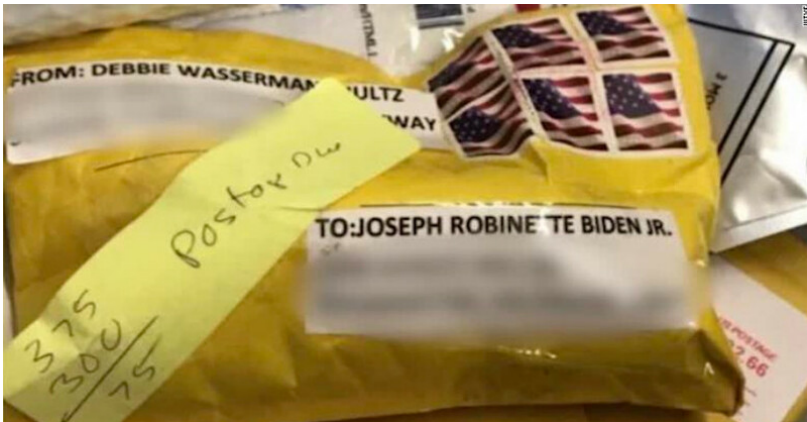
Robert B. Stinnett, *Day of Deceit: The Truth about FDR and Pearl Harbor*. New York: Touchstone, 2001.

Graeme MacQueen, *The 2001 Anthrax Deception: The Case for a Domestic Conspiracy*. Atlanta: Clarity Press, 2014.

14. Pipe Bombs: Frantic Denunciations of the False Flag Concept

In 2018 a number of pipe bomb incidents occurred in the US. While the attacks themselves may have been minor burps in the violence of the time, I regarded the attempts in the mainstream media to discredit the concept of false flag attacks as important. I took the opportunity to point out the weakness of these mainstream denunciations.

Published in [Global Research](#), 1 Nov 2018



14. *Pipe Bombs: Frantic Denunciations of the False Flag Concept*

Onto the 24-hour reality show that is U.S. politics, 15 package bombs recently made their entrance.

The devices were sent to vocal opponents of Mr. Trump, most of them prominent members of the Democratic Party. The incident became public on October 25, less than two weeks before the November 6 elections that mark the middle of Trump's first term.

Now, it is an interesting question as to whether the designated perpetrator, **Cesar Sayoc**, is a lone wolf terrorist or a patsy acting on behalf of larger forces. I am encouraged to see researchers exploring the second possibility. But my focus in this article is different.

The suggestion that the package bomb incidents might be false flag attacks—attacks by opponents of Trump deceptively imputing the attacks to his supporters to discredit them before the elections—was rapidly put forth. Among the fastest off the mark were right-wing pundits, so it was easy enough for various “liberals” (whatever this term means today in the U.S.) to characterize the false flag suggestion as a variety of right-wing conspiracy theory, and as both intellectually ridiculous and morally disgusting. The evident aim has been to stigmatize the concept and drive it from responsible political discourse.

Among the most prominent of the denunciations appeared in CNN and *The New York Times*.

The article by CNN Editor-at-large **Chris Cillizza**'s was entitled, “Debunking the despicable ‘false flag’ theory on the mail bombs.”¹ He quoted Rush Limbaugh's claim that a “Democratic operative” could be responsible for the attacks in order to make it look as if “the Republicans are a bunch of insane lunatics.” Cillizza noted that although we may be tempted to dismiss such “conspiracy crap” without comment, we must not. To refuse to comment on it is “to let it fester.” We must publicly challenge it. His article, it seems, was meant to be a model of such debunking.

¹Chris Cillizza, “Debunking the despicable ‘false flag’ theory on the mail bombs”, CNN, October 25, 2018

Debunking the despicable ‘false flag’ theory on the mail bombs



Analysis by Chris Cillizza, CNN Editor-at-large
Updated 2:57 PM EDT, Fri October 26, 2018

It was not a good model.

Cillizza concentrated on what he believed to be the logistical impossibilities in Limbaugh’s scenario. He named two steps in the scenario:

1. “Someone or someones who wanted to help Democrats—and the media, I guess, somehow?—would send a series of pipe bombs to prominent Democrats across the country.”
2. “Then Democrats or the media or, again, someone, would have to have coordinated with the state and local police—not to mention federal authorities—so that law enforcement said that these were functional bombs (even though, again, according to this theory, they weren’t).”

He feels that simply to have named these steps is to have shown how ridiculous the hypothesis is.

Really?

There is nothing impossible about Step 1. Surely Cillizza is not saying that the faction of the U.S. intelligence community hostile to Trump—nicely represented by **James Clapper** and **John Brennan**, two recipients of the package bombs—is incapable of fashioning a few clumsy devices and sending them through the mail? The material in the 2001 anthrax envelopes was much more sophisticated and difficult to acquire than the non-functional “pipe bombs,” yet the U.S. intelligence community remains a prime suspect in these attacks.

14. *Pipe Bombs: Frantic Denunciations of the False Flag Concept*

As for the purpose in sending out such bombs, one of the first questions we ask when confronted by a violent event of this sort is, *Cui bono?* Who benefits? I cannot see how Trump and his supporters benefit, whereas the benefit to mainstream Democrats—of the Clinton variety, no threat to the established order—is obvious. They get to claim the status of nonviolent, sane victim.

What about Cillizza's Step 2? I confess I am defeated by his prose. I do not know what he is trying to say. But let me speculate that he is claiming this conspiracy theory involves too many people (various levels of police, for example) and that it involves an impossibly complex deception—policing agencies portraying inoperative devices as operative.

Once again we might fruitfully examine the anthrax attacks. There was an impressive amount of coordination involved in these attacks. As far as policing was concerned, this was mainly achieved by the FBI chasing away other levels of police while keeping strict control over its own personnel when they wandered too near the truth.

But the coordination in the anthrax case went far beyond policing. Media were deeply implicated. The media faithfully set out the story they were handed by authorities: the attacks appeared to have been carried out by al-Qaeda, with a strong possibility of Iraqi involvement. This story was successfully propagated, for example, through a wide variety of newspapers, from *The New York Times* and *Washington Post* to the *Guardian*. By the end of 2001—less than four months after the attacks began—Homeland Security, the FBI and the White House had been forced to admit that neither al-Qaeda, nor Iraq, nor domestic Muslims, appeared to have had anything to do with these attacks. Instead, they came from the heart of the US Military-Industrial-Intelligence community. As to who, precisely, in this community carried out the attacks, there remains disagreement; but even a sketchy familiarity with the anthrax attacks knocks out of Cillizza's Step 2 objections.²

²Most comments on the anthrax attacks in this essay are based on my book, *The*

A useful rule of thumb is that if a thing has happened it is possible. We know a violent, coordinated and complex false flag attack is possible in the U.S. because it happened.

But if this was the best CNN could do, what about *The New York Times*? **Kevin Roose** produced a piece somewhat longer, although not much more thoughtful, than the CNN editor's.³

Roose let us have it with the old chestnut, “conspiratorial thinking has always been with us”, and then proceeded to dance lightly from the grassy knoll to the moon landing to 9/11 without troubling us with sources, evidence or other bothersome material.

If you are like me you will find yourself, in an increasingly bad mood, asking: has this young fellow carefully researched all of these incidents? Has he, in fact, carefully researched *a single one of them*?

Like the CNN editor, Roose spends his time countering claims that the package bombs sent to prominent enemies of Mr. Trump might have been sent by people wanting to discredit Trump and his allies. He places these “conspiracy theorists” on the political right and associates them with Trump’s presidency. More than this, he uses, and explains, the term “false flag” and tries hard to discredit it. “False flag philosophy—the idea that powerful groups stage threats and tragic events to advance their agendas—is now a bizarrely common element of national news stories.”

This statement is a sign of progress in the opening of the American mind. We should celebrate the good news that the concept of false flag is common in political discourse, common enough that *The New York Times* feels a need to discredit it. This achievement came through much labour by many people over many years.

That Roose finds the concept “bizarre” is, of course, to be regretted, but this merely testifies to his naivety and his poor knowledge of false

2001 Anthrax Deception: *The Case for a Domestic Conspiracy* (Atlanta, GA: Clarity Press, 2014, isbn.nu). See also FBI whistleblower [Richard Lambert's lawsuit](#), paragraphs 50 ff.

³Kevin Roose, “‘False Flag’ Theory on Pipe Bombs Zooms From Right-Wing Fringe to Mainstream,” *The New York Times*, October 25, 2018.

14. *Pipe Bombs: Frantic Denunciations of the False Flag Concept*

flag attacks, of which there have been plenty in human history.⁴

As a matter of fact, the particular type of false flag attack being discussed in the present case, where Group A attacks itself and blames Group B, is centuries old. In China it used to be called the Stratagem of Wounded Flesh.⁵

The notion that the false flag concept and the conspiracy concept are the exclusive property of the political right is absurd. They are ideas available to, and used by, all those who genuinely care about what is going on around them and wish to have an adequate intellectual toolbox. I am not on the political right and I am not a supporter of Rush Limbaugh, Ann Coulter and the like, but I do not for that reason choose to shut down my brain.

Although we may not want to admit it, repetition is half the battle in public fights and debates. Let us use the term “false flag” repeatedly and ensure that it remains where it apparently is at the moment: in the center of U.S. political discourse.

Sources

⁴For examples of false flags, see [53 Admitted False Flag Attacks](#), *Washington's Blog & Global Research*, 24 Feb 2015.

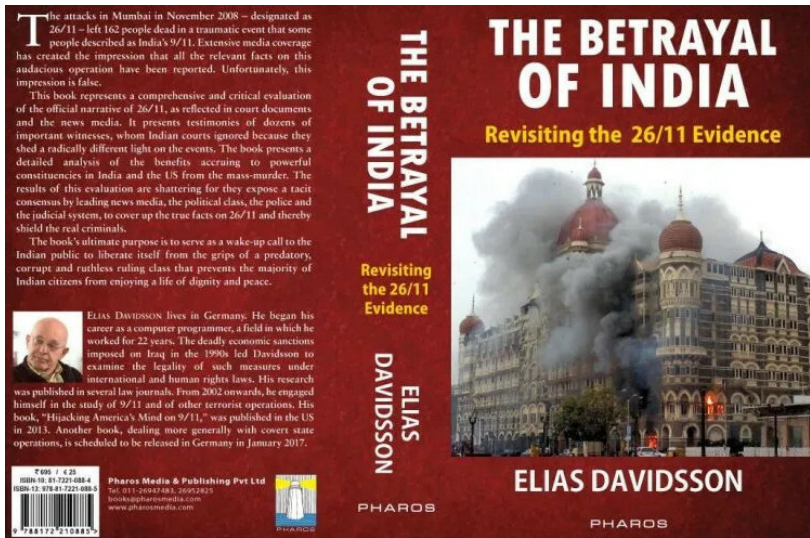
⁵The Wounded Flesh Stratagem can be found at least as early as the 14th century CE in the novel, *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (*San Guo Yan Yi*). It can also be found as one among many stratagems in the later compilation, *Thirty-six Stratagems*. The Wikipedia [article on the latter text](#) offers an interpretative translation of *ku rou ji*: “inflict injury on oneself to win the enemy’s trust”. If the pipe bomb case is an instance of *ku rou ji*, the enemy of the perpetrators would be the U.S. population itself.

15. **The Betrayal of India: A Close Look at the 2008 Mumbai Terror Attacks**

This piece is a review of a book by the late researcher and advocate of peace and justice, Elias Davidsson. It is the only such review in this collection. I include it because it briefly took on a life of its own: Elias's book was so long and dense that many people were reluctant to tackle it and read my summation instead.

Book review of *The Betrayal of India: Revisiting the 26/11 Evidence* by Elias Davidsson [Global Research](#), 7 Jun 2017

15. *The Betrayal of India: A Close Look at the 2008 Mumbai Terror Attacks*



These days we rush from one media story to another, trying to keep up with the latest terrorist attack. Yesterday Paris; today London; tomorrow, who knows? These attacks are tragic enough when they are acts of violence by religious extremists who have outsmarted our police and intelligence agencies. But, of course, many of them are actually violent acts facilitated by our police and intelligence agencies, directly or indirectly. The tragedy in such cases lies not only in the immediate human suffering but in the way our civil society and elected representatives are betrayed, intimidated, disciplined and stripped of their power by our own security agencies. The War on Terror, which goes by different names in different countries but continues as a global framework for violent conflict, thrives on this fraud.

But if the very agencies that should be investigating and preventing these attacks are involved in perpetrating them, what is civil society to do to protect itself? Who will step in to study the evidence and sort out what really happened? And who will investigate the official investigators? Over the years, civilians from different walks of life have stepped forward—forming groups, sharing information and

methods, creating a tradition of civilian investigation.

One such investigator is **Elias Davidsson**. Some readers will be familiar with his meticulous book, *Hijacking America's Mind on 9/11* or his more recent work, *Psychologische Kriegsführung und gesellschaftliche Leugnung*. Davidsson has now produced a book on the 2008 attacks that occurred in Mumbai, India. The book is entitled, *The Betrayal of India: Revisiting the 26/11 Evidence* (New Delhi: Pharos, 2017).

To remind ourselves of these attacks—that is, of the official story of these attacks as narrated by the Indian government—we can do no better than to consult *Wikipedia*, which seldom strays from government intelligence narratives:

“The 2008 Mumbai attacks were a series of attacks that took place in November 2008, when 10 members of Lashkar-e-Taiba, an Islamic militant organization based in Pakistan, carried out a series of 12 coordinated shooting and bombing attacks lasting four days across Mumbai. The attacks, which drew widespread global condemnation, began on Wednesday, 26 November and lasted until Saturday, 29 November 2008, killing 164 people and wounding at least 308.”

This description, however faulty, serves to make clear why the events were widely portrayed as a huge crime—India's 9/11. When we bear in mind that both India and Pakistan are armed with nuclear weapons, and when we consider that these events were widely characterized in India as an act of war supported by Pakistan (Davidsson, 72-74; 511 ff.; 731 ff.), we will understand how dangerous the event was for over a billion and a half people in south Asia.

We will also understand how easy it was, on the basis of such a narrative, to get a bonanza of funds and equipment for the Mumbai police (735-736) and why it was possible, given the framing of the event as an act of war, for India's armed forces to get an immediate

15. *The Betrayal of India: A Close Look at the 2008 Mumbai Terror Attacks*

21% hike in military spending with promises of continuing increases in subsequent years (739 ff.).

Wikipedia's paragraph tells a straightforward story, but the straightforwardness is the result of much snipping and smoothing. Both Pakistan and Lashkar-e-Taiba denied responsibility for the attacks (65; 513) and, Davidsson argues, they did so for good reason.

In his Conclusions at the end of the book Davidsson encourages us to assess separately the actual attacks and the Indian state's investigation of the attacks (865 ff.) It is "highly plausible," he says, "that major institutional actors in India, the United States and possibly Israel, were complicit in conceiving, planning, directing and executing the attacks of 26/11" (873); but the evidence of a deceptive investigation is even stronger:

"The first definite conclusion of this book is that India's major institutions, including the Central government, parliament, bureaucracy, armed forces, Mumbai police, intelligence services, judiciary and media, have deliberately suppressed the truth regarding 26/11 and continue to do so. I could discover no hint of a desire among the aforementioned parties to establish the truth on these deadly events (865)."

This distinction is useful for civil society investigators. We will frequently find it easier to prove that an investigation is deceptive, and that it is obscuring rather than illuminating the path to the perpetrators, than to directly prove the event itself to have been fraudulent. And there are two good reasons to pay attention to evidence of a cover-up. First, to cover up a crime is itself a crime. Second, those covering up a crime implicate themselves in the original crime. If they were not directly involved in the commission of the crime, they are at least accessories after the fact. To begin by exposing the fraudulent investigation, therefore, will often be wise. When this has been

done we shall often find that we can begin to discern the path to the attack itself.

Davidsson gives a wealth of evidence about both the attacks and the investigation, but for this brief review I shall focus on the investigation.

Here are three recurring themes in his study that may serve to illustrate the strength of the cover-up thesis.

(1) Immediate fingering of the perpetrator

When officials claim to know the identity of a perpetrator (individual or group) prior to any serious investigation, this suggests that a false narrative is being initiated and that strenuous efforts will soon be made to implant it in the mind of a population. Thus, for example, **Lee Harvey Oswald** was identified by officials of the executive branch as the killer of **President John F. Kennedy**—and as a lone wolf with no associates—on the afternoon of the assassination day, long before an investigation and even before he had been charged with the crime. And we had major news media pointing with confidence, by the end of the day of September 11, 2001, to **Osama bin Laden** and his group—in the absence of evidence.

In the Mumbai case the Prime Minister of India implied, *while the attack was still in progress*, that the perpetrators were from a terrorist group supported by, or at least tolerated by, Pakistan (65; 228; 478; 512; 731).

Likewise, immediately after the attacks, **Henry Kissinger** attempted to implicate Pakistan. Three days prior to the attack on the Taj Mahal Palace Hotel in Mumbai, one of the main attack sites, Kissinger had been staying in the hotel. He “sat with top executives from Goldman Sachs and India’s Tata group in the Taj to ‘chat about American politics’” (331). Kissinger’s presence on the scene with Indian elites (the Tata family is one of India’s wealthiest, and the Tata Group owns the Taj) would be peculiar enough to cause raising of the eyebrows, but when combined with his immediate fingering of Pakistan it becomes extremely suspect. As Davidsson shows,

15. *The Betrayal of India: A Close Look at the 2008 Mumbai Terror Attacks*

what investigation there was came much later, and even today the case against Pakistan remains full of contradictions, unsupported allegations, and absurdities.

(2) Grotesque failure by official investigators to follow proper procedures

Incompetence is a fact of life, but there are times when the incompetence theory is strained to the breaking point and it is more rational to posit deliberate deception. In the case of the Mumbai investigation, Davidsson depicts its failures as going well beyond incompetence.

- Neither the police, nor the judge charged with trying the sole surviving suspect, made public a timeline of events (188-189; 688-689). Even the most basic facts of when a given set of attacks began and when they ended were left vague.
- Key witnesses were not called to testify. Witnesses who said they saw the terrorists commit violence, or spoke to them, or were in the same room with them, were ignored by the court (e.g., 279 ff.).
- Contradictions and miracles were not sorted out. One victim was apparently resurrected from the dead when his testimony was essential to the blaming of Pakistan (229-230). A second victim died in two different places (692), while a third died in three places (466). No one in authority cared enough to solve these difficulties.
- Eyewitnesses to the crime differed on the clothing and skin color of the terrorists, and on how many of them there were (328-331). No resolution was sought.
- At least one eyewitness confessed she found it hard to distinguish “friends” from terrorists (316). No probe was stimulated by this odd confusion.
- The number of terrorists who committed the deeds changed repeatedly, as did the number of terrorists who survived (29 ff.; 689).

- Crime scenes were violated, with bodies hauled off before they could be examined (682-683).
- Identity parades (“line-ups”) were rendered invalid by weeks of prior exposure of the witnesses to pictures of the suspect in newspapers (101; 582).
- Claims that the terrorists were armed with AK-47s were common, yet forensic study of the attack at the Cama Hospital failed to turn up a single AK-47 bullet (156).
- Of the “hundreds of witnesses processed by the court” in relation to the attacks at the Café Leopold, Taj Mahal Palace Hotel, Oberoi-Trident Hotel or Nariman House, “not a single one testified to having observed any of the eight accused kill anyone” (40).
- Indian authorities declined to order autopsies on the dead at the targeted Jewish center in Nariman House. The dead, five out of six of whom were Israeli citizens (427), were instead whisked back to Israel by a Jewish organization based in Israel, allegedly for religious reasons (453). Religious sensitivity seems to have extended to a large safe at the crime scene, which the team also transported to Israel (454).

(3) Extreme secrecy and the withholding of basic information from the population, with the excuse of “national security”

- The surviving alleged terrorist had no public trial (661).
- No transcript of his secret trial has been released (670).
- One lawyer who agreed to defend the accused was removed by the court and another was assassinated (670).
- The public was told there was extensive CCTV footage of the attacks, despite the mysterious malfunctioning of the majority of CCTV cameras on the days in question (97-98; 109 ff.; 683 ff.); but only a very small percentage of the claimed footage

15. *The Betrayal of India: A Close Look at the 2008 Mumbai Terror Attacks*

was ever released and it suffers from serious defects—two conflicting time-stamps and signs of editing (111).

- Members of an elite Indian commando unit that showed up with between 475 and 800 members to battle eight terrorists (534) were not allowed to testify in court (327; 428-429).
- The “confession” of the suspect, on which the judge leaned heavily, was given in secret. No transcript of this confession has been released to the public and the suspect later renounced the confession, saying he had been under threat from police when he gave it (599 ff.; 681).
- The suspect, after being convicted and sentenced to death, was presumably executed, but the hanging was done secretly in jail and his body, like the bodies of the other dead “terrorists,” was buried in a secret place (37; 623).

It is difficult to see how the investigation described above differs from what we would expect to see in a police state. Evidently, the “world’s largest democracy” is in trouble.

Meanwhile, motives for the “highly plausible” false flag attack, Davidsson notes, are not difficult to find. The attacks not only filled the coffers of national security agencies, creating as they did the impression of a permanent threat to India, but also helped tilt India toward those countries claiming to take the lead in the War on Terror (809 ff.; 847). The FBI showed great interest in the attacks from the outset. It actually had a man on the scene during the attacks and sent an entire team directly after the event (812 ff.). The Bureau was, remarkably, given direct access to the arrested suspect and to his recorded confession (before he even had a lawyer), as well as to eyewitnesses (651-652; 815). The New York Police Department also sent a team after the conclusion of the event (816-817), as did Scotland Yard and Israeli police (651; 851). There seems to have been something of a national security fest in relation to Mumbai as ideas of closer cooperation in matters of security were discussed (e.g., 822).

In case Israel seems too small to belong with the other players in

this national security fest, Davidsson reminds us that India is Israel's largest customer in defense sales (853).

So, what can we learn from Davidsson's book? For patient readers, a great deal: this 900-page study is as free of filler and rhetoric as it is rich in detail. (In correspondence the author told me that he was determined to produce a work dense with primary source material so that it could be of maximum help to activists in India striving for an official inquiry.) For readers with less patience, Davidsson has provided regular summaries. And both sets of readers will find that the book discusses not only details of the Mumbai attacks, but patterns of deception common in the War on Terror.

For all these reasons, this book is a highly significant achievement and is of objective importance to anyone interested in the War and Terror—the structure and motifs of its ongoing fictions and the methods through which civil society researchers can lay bare these fictions.

Part III.

**9/11 Primary Source
Evidence**

Conversion of the essays in this Part to PDF format has been partial. There are tables, figures, annotations, and formulae that are missing or incomplete. We include these essays primarily for the text content: for the additional material we recommend going to <https://ratical.org>.

16. 118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers

“118 Witnesses” was the first article I wrote on the topic of 9/11. I had not seriously followed dissident 9/11 research until 2005-6, and although I was aware, from video clips posted online, of firefighters who spoke of explosions, it was not until I read David Ray Griffin’s article, “Explosive Testimony: Revelations about the Twin Towers in the 9/11 Oral Histories” (Jan 2006) that I learned of the oral history project of the Fire Department of New York and the importance of the eyewitness evidence in this collection. I decided to put all my other obligations to one side in order to study this evidence, having no idea how many years I would end up devoting to this false flag attack.

Published in Journal of 9/11 Studies, August 2006/Volume 2

Introduction

One of the greatest mysteries of September 11, 2001 is the collapse of the Twin Towers. Claims that explosions contributed to the collapses

were made on 9/11 and have persisted, but studies supportive of the U.S. government's account of events have ignored or denied these claims. A great deal is at stake in this debate. If explosions were critical to the collapses, the official al Qaeda narrative may need to be radically altered or abandoned altogether.

In January, 2006 an article by David Ray Griffin appeared entitled, "Explosive Testimony: Revelations about the Twin Towers in the 9/11 Oral Histories."¹ Drawing on a collection of oral histories from the New York Fire Department (FDNY), Griffin argued the case for controlled demolition of the towers. I found myself intrigued by the data he had used and impressed by his method, but I decided there was room for further research. I wanted answers to two questions.

1. Are the roughly 31 witnesses to explosions quoted by Griffin the total of all witnesses to explosions in these sources, or are there others he does not mention?
2. Are there witnesses in these sources whose testimony supports the non-explosive collapse of the Towers—the U.S. government's perspective?

I decided to read the primary sources in order to answer these questions. This paper gives the results of my research.

I am interested, in this paper, in direct perception and immediate interpretation. I want to know what witnesses saw, heard and thought on 9/11 at the scene of the crime. Although I shall discuss briefly the fact that some witnesses later changed their minds about what they had experienced, this is not my central focus.

I do not claim to have proven that the Towers were brought down with explosives, but I believe the eyewitness testimony assembled and discussed here strengthens the argument that explosions were critical to the collapses.

¹January 26, 2006. <http://www.911truth.org/article.php?story=20060118104223192>

The Appendices give the evidence I have culled from the oral histories and will allow the reader to form an independent judgment.

The Body of Evidence

According to Jim Dwyer of the New York Times, the FDNY oral histories 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.”² 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. Mr. Von Essen’s prophetic act has given us a remarkably rich body of narrative material.

Initially, the city of New York 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. The New York Times then posted them on its internet site, where they have been available (with some deletions) to the public since August, 2005.³

As we learn from the oral histories themselves, the interviews took place in various FDNY offices and were conducted by a variety of FDNY officers. Sometimes only the interviewer and the interviewee were present, while at other times additional persons were present. Locations, dates, times, and names of those present are all meticulously recorded.

It is impossible to tell simply by reading the recorded interviews if the atmosphere in which the interviews were conducted was coercive in any way, but I have found no evidence of this. In many cases the interviewer simply asks the interviewee to recount what he or she experienced on 9/11. Thereafter, some interviewers intervene

²“City to Release Thousands of 9/11 Oral Histories Today.” August 12, 2005.

³http://graphics8.nytimes.com/packages/html/nyregion/20050812_WTC_GRAPHIC/met_WTC_histories_full_01.html

frequently with questions, while others are largely silent. Interventions typically seek to establish details of times and locations, of the actions of various chiefs and firefighters, and of the progress of operations. Interviewers usually do not show any special interest in the topics central to my concerns—the collapses of the Towers and the use or non-use of explosions in these collapses—but their curiosity and attention are sometimes crucial to the eliciting of critical information.⁴ There are very few cases where the interviewer may be said to have “led” the witness toward the explosion option.⁵

Most interviewees appear to have given their testimony spontaneously, although some obviously read from a report they had written.⁶ For the most part, interviewees appear to have been given the opportunity to structure their narratives as they wished.

As we know, the New York firefighters were used by the U.S. government after 9/11 as symbols of heroism, but there are in this collection very few heroic narratives. Many accounts are actually structured as anti-heroic narratives—the firefighters arrive to save people and end up running for their lives as the Towers collapse.⁷ Others are outright chaos narratives, where people mill around hopelessly with no plan and where their skills are useless.⁸

I find many of the stories powerfully told, with vulnerability and humanity. Patriotism is no more than an occasional flash in these accounts, and there are extremely few witnesses who try to use their experiences to advance the U.S. government's war on terror.

Despite variations in the stories, as a body of narrative the collection gives prominence to five perceptions that were shocking to the witnesses:

⁴Note the role of the interviewer in the following exchange:

⁵The only obvious case of leading that I have found is the following:

⁶The clearest example of a written report is that of Hugh Mettham, 9110441.

⁷E.g., Firefighter Myers, 9110052; EMT Rodriguez, 9110480.

⁸E.g., EMT Longo, 9110059.

1. the perception of the Towers burning;⁹
2. the perception of body parts littering the streets as the firefighters and medics arrive on the scene;¹⁰
3. the perception of people in the Towers leaping to their deaths;¹¹
4. the perception of the Towers collapsing, and, especially, the perception of the initiation of these collapses;
5. the perception of, and entrapment in, the cloud of pulverized building flowing down the streets after the collapses.¹²

It is the fourth of these shocking perceptions that is the focus of the present study.

The Surprising Collapses

Although the 9/11 Commission Report acknowledges that fire chiefs on the scene thought the collapse of the Towers was impossible,¹³ it is worth emphasizing the unanimity of the FDNY personnel on this point. Here are typical comments:

“...it took me a long time before I could accept the fact that even after you could see that the tower wasn't there you said it had to be there somewhere. You couldn't believe that it had come down.” (Captain Michael Donovan, 9110205)

“I was kind of in disbelief that the building was actually collapsing. I kind of stopped to say, well, maybe that was a piece of the facade. I

⁹E.g., as in Paramedic Pierce, 9110485, p. 3.

¹⁰E.g., as in EMT Penn, 9110203, p. 4.

¹¹E.g., as in Firefighter Myers, 9110052, pp. 5-6.

¹²E.g., as in Deputy Chief Medical Officer Prezant, 9110212, pp. 8ff.

¹³*The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004), pp. 291, 302, 320.

couldn't believe that the entire building was going to collapse in one heap."(Captain Charles Clarke, 9110250)

"Once again, I'm doing this 23 years...This changed all the rules. This changed all the rules. This went from a structure to a wafer in seconds, in seconds. I couldn't believe the speed of that tower coming down. I heard the rumble, I looked up, debris was already 50 feet from the ground..." (Sergeant James Canham, 9110370)

"I've worked in Manhattan my whole career in high rises and everything else...you looked back, all you see--you know how fast those buildings came down...it just doesn't click that these buildings can come down...you just couldn't believe that those buildings could come down...there's no history of these buildings falling down." (Lieutenant Warren Smith, 9110223)

"whoever in their right mind would have thought that the World Trade Center would ever fall down...Nobody in the world, nobody ever would ever have thought those buildings were coming down." (EMS Captain Mark Stone, 9110076)

Hypotheses

Many hypotheses have been put forward to explain the collapse of the Twin Towers, but we can think of these hypotheses as falling into two sets, the set of hypotheses according to which explosions were a critical factor in the collapses (which I shall call the set of explosion hypotheses, or EH) and the set according to which explosions were not a critical factor in the collapses (non-explosion hypotheses, or NEH). EH would include, for example, suggestions of explosives on the planes, mini-nukes in the buildings, or multiple pre-positioned charges—the last suggestion being, for good reasons, the most popular—which cut the columns, pulverized the building, and so on. NEH would include various combinations of failed trusses, weakened core and perimeter columns, sagging floors and the like, typically said to have been caused by a combination of airplane im-

pact and heat from burning jet fuel, which somehow resulted in progressive and total collapse of the buildings.¹⁴

Testing the Hypotheses through Observation

Let me begin by stressing that I am interested here only in how these sets of hypotheses are verified and falsified through *the direct accounts of witnesses*. I exclude all evidence, even where it is indirectly based on eyewitness accounts, that involves measurement, analysis of physical materials, or photographic or seismic records. Obviously, all these forms of evidence are valid, but they are not my focus in this paper.

1. How, then, can EH be tested by the observations of those present at the scene? What, among such observations, will tend to verify EH and what will tend to falsify it?

If witnesses perceive or think they perceive explosions that they judge to be critical to the collapse of the towers,¹⁵ this will constitute

¹⁴Two fairly recent articles arguing for the controlled demolition hypothesis are David Ray Griffin, “The Destruction of the World Trade Center: Why the Official Account Cannot Be True.”

- <http://www.911review.com/articles/griffin/nyc1.html>
- and Steven Jones, “Why Indeed Did the WTC Buildings Collapse?” <http://www.physics.byu.edu/research/energy/htm7.html>

Non-explosion hypotheses were usefully summarized by Rodger Herbst in his May, 2004, “Mysteries of the Twin Towers.”

<http://www.septembereleventh.org/documents/rodgwtcpdf.pdf>

Of course, since Herbst’s article was written NIST’s final report has appeared: National Institute of Standards and Technology, *Final Report on the Collapse of the World Trade Center Towers*. Department of Commerce, U.S.A., Sept. 2005.

¹⁵EH is not concerned with minor electrical or gas explosions such as might accompany any major fire. It is concerned with explosions that directly contributed to the fall of two 110-story buildings. No single witness can establish such causa-

positive evidence in support of EH. All testimony that supports NEH will count against EH.

Whether or not silence on the part of witnesses—no mention of explosions—should count against EH is a difficult matter. Arguments from silence have many dangers. I am prepared to say this: the nature of observational evidence is such that the greater the number of witnesses, the richer the detail of their observations, and the more their testimonies complement each other, the stronger the case will be. I see no way to set a decisive boundary, a number of testimonies beneath which EH fails and beyond which it succeeds. There will be an irreducible degree of subjective judgment.

2. How can NEH be tested by the observations of those present at the scene? What will tend to verify and what will tend to falsify it?

We can divide non-explosion hypotheses into two main sub-sets, those that focus on the initial causes of structural failure of the Towers and those that focus on the progressive and total collapse of the Towers. The hypothesis of the National Institute of Standards and Technology is in the former class. NIST has a clear hypothesis concerning the initiation of the collapses of the upper stories of the Towers, but it has nothing of substance to say about progressive and total collapse.¹⁶ Even if our main interest lay in the initiation of the

tion, but the accumulation of accounts where the explosion directly precedes the collapse and is held by witnesses to have caused it makes causation increasingly plausible. The accounts in Appendix B are of this sort.

¹⁶NIST's now famous "global collapse ensued" hides a multitude of academic sins. As the authors of the report must be aware, they have given no evidence to support their view that the collapse of upper floors led, or should have led, to progressive and total collapse. See *Final Report*, p. 146.

Jim Hoffman has written an excellent critique of the NIST report, "Building a Better Mirage: NIST's 3-Year \$20,000,000 Cover-up of the Crime of the Century." Version 1.0, Dec. 8, 2005.

<http://911research.wtc7.net/essays/nist/index.html>

collapse of top floors (which it does not), we would find that the evidence supporting this is, for the most part, hidden from observers and, where visible, is ambiguous and could easily support EH.¹⁷ We therefore find that NIST's hypothesis, and similar hypotheses focusing on initial causes, offer us little that we can test through observation. This does not mean these hypotheses are false, it simply means we must pass over them in silence when we are looking for positive evidence from observers. The proponents of these hypotheses will have to look elsewhere for supporting evidence.

Of the second sub-set of NEH, the most common over the years since 9/11 has been the well-known "pancake" hypothesis.¹⁸ Regardless of what the initiating causes of collapse may be, says this hypothesis, progressive and total collapse came about through successive, linked and cumulative falling or "pancaking" of floors.

The pancake hypothesis became very influential as an explanation of Tower collapse soon after 9/11. It was later adopted in the 9/11 Commission Report of 2004¹⁹ and it continues to be influential among those unfamiliar with research on the collapses. The evidence and argument assembled against this hypothesis seem to me, however, to be definitive, and it is not surprising that the 2005 NIST report avoids endorsing pancaking. I believe that this hypothesis is simply no longer viable.²⁰

At the time the interviews with members of the FDNY were being

¹⁷This includes the buckling or bowing of perimeter columns described in the NIST report (p. 30 ff.), which could have had various causes.

¹⁸See Herbst's "Mysteries of the Twin Towers."

¹⁹P. 308.

²⁰See, e.g., Griffin's, "The Destruction of the World Trade Center." See also:

Kevin Ryan, "Propping Up the War on Terror: Lies about the WTC by NIST and Underwriters Laboratories."

http://www.scholarsfor911truth.org/RyanK_PostingVersion.htm

Nila Sagadevan, "Free-falling Bodies: Collapse Theory Fails Reality Check".
http://www.911blimp.net/prf_FreeFallPhysics.shtml

Judy Wood, "A Refutation of the Official Collapse Theory".
<http://janedoe0911.tripod.com/BilliardBalls.html>

conducted, the pancake hypothesis was well known and was felt by many people to have been proven correct. I have no doubt that this is why FDNY members make fairly common mention of pancaking.

What are we to do with this testimony?

We notice, first of all, that not all witnesses regard pancaking and critical explosions as mutually exclusive. Williams Reynolds says:

"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..." ²¹

Second, we can in most cases not tell for certain what witnesses mean when they speak of pancaking. Perhaps some of them simply mean that they saw progressive collapse of the building, starting near the top and continuing on down.

(This difficulty is not restricted to the term "pancaking:" it applies to several terms I have used in my research. When people speak of the buildings "imploding," for example, they may merely mean that the buildings collapsed rapidly on themselves. But I believe most of the terms on which my research focuses, such as "explosion" and "bomb," are less subject to ambiguity.)

I have decided that it is important, regardless of the status of the pancake hypothesis today, to record all those cases in the oral histories where witnesses appear to support this hypothesis. These cases are, at the very least, important as evidence of how theories about the collapses evolved among witnesses over time. The oral histories show that many people who originally thought they had witnessed critical explosions were later persuaded that they had not, and it appears that the pancake hypothesis was the main alternative they were offered.

In any case, I have been able to find only one other type of report in this material that clearly supports NEH, namely cases where witnesses directly deny that they witnessed explosions.

²¹9110288, p. 3.

In short, support for NEH, for the purposes of this study, consists of testimony denying explosions and testimony supporting the pancake hypothesis.

Falsification of NEH is quite straightforward. NEH and EH cannot both be true, so all evidence that supports EH weakens NEH. Note that it weakens not only the pancake hypothesis but all non-explosion hypotheses. Where observational evidence is concerned, falsification should be thought of as a cumulative process, and we shall want to look at both the quantity and quality of our evidence.

Evidence Supporting Sets of Hypotheses

- (i) I have established seven categories of evidence to help organize the cases that will count in favour of EH:
 - a. cases where witnesses use the words “explode,” “explosion” or variants to describe what they perceived;
 - b. cases where witnesses use the term “blast” to refer to what they saw or heard;
 - c. cases where witnesses use the terms “blew up,” “blew out” or variants to describe what they perceived;
 - d. cases where witnesses use the terms “bomb” or “secondary device” (a term for an explosive device timed to go off after caregivers have gathered to give aid) to describe what they perceived;
 - e. cases where witnesses use the terms “implode,” “implosion” or variants to describe what they perceived;
 - f. cases that I judge to be strongly suggestive of planned demolition;

- g. other cases that are, in my judgment, suggestive of critical explosions.

I have decided on the following exclusions.

All cases will be excluded where sounds are described whose interpretation is ambiguous.

Thus, "bang" and "boom" are excluded (though I have included "ba-ba-ba-boom"), unless accompanied by a more explicit term such as "explode," since they might have non-explosive causes such as floors falling on other floors. The ubiquitous "rumble" is excluded, as is the very common "roar" and a host of similes and metaphors referring to freight trains, jet planes and the like. All these sounds might be expected to accompany a catastrophic collapse of a 110 story building, whatever the cause of the collapse.

Although I have accepted references to "volcano," I have excluded "earthquake" and related metaphors and descriptions from my list, thereby excluding one of David Ray Griffin's main categories.²² I recognize that Griffin has good reasons for including selected cases of the shaking of the earth: when this shaking occurs very early in the sequence of events, and especially before there is any visible sign of collapse in the Towers, it suggests the shaking has an explosive origin and is not simply the expected accompaniment of a massive building collapse. But I have decided to err on the side of caution and exclude all such references, leaving it to other researchers to sort the wheat from the chaff.

I have included "blast" references only in selected cases, and especially when these appear to refer to what witnesses saw or heard, as opposed to what they felt. Many witnesses refer to feeling the massive pressure wave that accompanied or followed the collapse, and they sometimes use the term "blast" in this connection. But such a pressure wave would be expected to accompany the sudden collapse of large buildings and is freely described by the 9/11 Commission Re-

²²"Explosive Testimony," pp. 4-5.

port.²³ Again, as with the shaking of the earth, I have tried to err on the side of caution. A researcher more familiar than I with the signs of explosions and blast waves might be able to sort out these cases.

I have excluded all references to possible effects of explosions where the explosions themselves are not named or described. I therefore exclude descriptions of lobby damage found when the firefighters arrived, which may be evidence of early explosions low in the building, as well as the debris cloud resulting from the mid-air pulverization of the Towers. Throughout, I have tried to keep my focus on what the witnesses themselves *perceived or thought they were perceiving*.

When we apply the above criteria and restrictions we are left with 177 cases from 118 witnesses. (The former number is higher than the latter because a given witness may use more than one term or category in an account.) The cases are listed according to category in Appendix A and the testimony is given *in extenso*, in alphabetical order according to the names of the witnesses, in Appendix B.

(ii) I have found it sufficient to establish three categories of evidence for the much smaller number of cases offering evidence that supports NEH:

- h. cases where witnesses deny perceiving explosions;
- i. cases where witnesses use the words “pancake,” “pancaking” or variants to describe what they perceived, while omitting reference to explosions;
- j. cases where, although they do not use the above words, witnesses describe processes that suggest pancaking in the absence of explosions.

Note that valid cases may not be retrospective (someone explicitly tells us that he or she decided *after the event* that what was seen

²³“The building collapsed into itself, causing a ferocious windstorm.” P. 305

was pancaking), nor may they be indirect (a person sees the event on television or passes on the opinion of a friend).

When we apply the above criteria and restrictions we are left with ten cases from ten witnesses. These are given, according to category, in Appendix C.

Failure to Mention Explosions: the Argument from Silence

If there were, in fact, explosions, why do the majority of FDNY witnesses whose testimony has been recorded not mention explosions? I believe that this argument from silence must be faced, despite its problematic nature. Let us consider the numbers. We have 118 witnesses out of a pool of 503. Over 23 per cent of our group are explosion witnesses. In my judgment, this is a very high percentage of witnesses, especially when we consider that:

- a. Interviewers 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.
- b. Some FDNY witnesses were not near the Towers when collapse occurred.²⁴
- c. Some witnesses were preoccupied with issues other than the collapses: their accounts reveal little interest in the events on which we are focusing.²⁵
- d. Some accounts are extremely succinct and include little detail.²⁶

²⁴E.g., as in Lieutenant Lowney, 9110468.

²⁵E.g., as in Firefighter Saracelli, 9110033.

²⁶E.g., as in Firefighter Winkler, 9110236.

- e. Many accounts include references that are, while ambiguous, not inconsistent with explosions. In this category I include “rumble,” “boom” and the like.

In my judgment, the lack of references to explosions among the majority of witnesses is easily explained and does little to weaken EH.

The Quality of the Cases

Since one of the main aims of my research has been to take seriously the perceptions and interpretations of FDNY witnesses (in a way that the 9/11 Commission Report and the NIST report do not), I find myself reluctant to “explain away” statements that these witnesses have made. I believe it is fair to say, however, that the cumulative impact of the NEH witnesses is weak not merely because of the paucity of these accounts but because most of them can, without difficulty, be accommodated within EH. Of the ten cases, I would say that Terranova’s (9110168) is the strongest. He hears the rumble and the succession of booms but interprets these within the pancake framework, because, he says, he directly saw this pancaking. Fair enough.

The Sanchez account (9110128) I would rate a close second, but its reference to a shaking of the earth early in the sequence of events could indicate explosion. Several other accounts include similar difficulties: in addition to the ambiguity already mentioned (what do they mean by “pancaking?”) we find references to “the earthquake feel” (Harris, 9110108); the odd expression “machine gun” to refer to pancaking (Salvador, 9110474); and reference to the pancaking starting much lower (70th floor of the South Tower) than it should have (Holowach, 9110114).

In my view, as evidence in support of the set of non-explosion hypotheses this list of cases is not strong. It can be accommodated by the alternative set of hypotheses.

What of the EH cases? Can they be accommodated by the set of non-explosion hypotheses? I do not believe so.

begin by facing the simple number of individual witnesses (118) and the even greater number of references, direct or indirect, in their accounts to explosions.

We next have to deal with the rich, mutually supportive detail of these accounts. True, there are apparent inconsistencies: one person will refer to a single big explosion, another will say there were three explosions, while yet another will claim to have heard seven. I have made no attempt to sort out all these claims and cannot pretend to know if they are ultimately compatible. But, on the other hand, I cannot read this material without being struck by the ways in which the witnesses' testimony is not merely cumulative but complementary and multidimensional.

Griffin has discussed this multidimensionality while making his case for planned demolition, and I direct the reader to his discussion.²⁷ Among the phenomena to which he draws our attention are: the horizontal ejection of debris early in the buildings' collapses; the huge clouds of fine dust; the explicit discussion by the firefighters, in the midst of these events, of the possibility that they were witnessing planned demolition; and multiple, heard "pops" with apparently related, visually perceived "flashes," which occur in patterns, temporally and spatially, in ways that suggest planned demolition. I fail to see how any of the non-explosion hypotheses put forward to date, including the pancake hypothesis, can accommodate all of these phenomena.

The Changing of Minds

As will be apparent to anyone who reads through Appendix B, many members of the FDNY came to believe, in the period between 9/11

²⁷"Explosive Testimony." See also his "The Destruction of the World Trade Center."

and their interviews, that they had been mistaken in interpreting what they perceived as evidence of explosions. Some suggest in their interviews that they now (as of the interview date) realize they witnessed non-explosive collapse, with the implication that they face the task of fitting what they originally perceived into the new framework. A few adopt the new framework readily; others do so reluctantly; and still others are unwilling to do so at all. I have not attempted in Appendix B to delete references to change of mind: on the contrary, I have included them because I find them fascinating and instructive. In some cases we can almost feel the struggle of the interviewee to accept the new interpretive frame.

Charles Wells appears to be making a valiant effort to avoid mentioning explosions before he at last gives in:

“We got to the point of being in between the Vista Hotel and the World Trade Center, at which point we heard a -- we felt a loud -- a very strong vibration, shaking, and a loud noise like a subway train coming through a station at speed, like a jet engine at full throttle. It was a roaring sound...

[then, later in the narrative]

Everybody's heads were all popping up now. Everybody is digging out, so I ran into a couple of firefighters and I said, ‘Well, you know, what the hell happened?’ Some kind of an explosion, he goes, and that's what I thought it was...”²⁸

Maybe the non-explosion interpretation gained ground as the result of reflection, reading and a gradual maturing of judgement. In this case we might speak of a process of education. But maybe the change in interpretation resulted from an undercutting of witnesses’

²⁸Charles Wells, 9110163, p. 8.

perception by the theories and claims of “experts,” institutional superiors and government leaders, in which case we might prefer to speak of the “re-education” or indoctrination of the FDNY witnesses.

I mentioned earlier the concern of Mr. Von Essen that the oral histories be recorded “before they became reshaped by a collective memory.” Now we see the soundness of his intuition. Early in 2004 Rodger Herbst suggested that, in explaining the collapse of the towers, explosion hypotheses came first and were only gradually supplanted by “politically correct revisionist theories.”²⁹ We now have solid evidence suggesting that, for the FDNY, non-explosive collapse is, indeed, a revisionist theory.

The Oral Histories, the 9/11 Commission Report, and the NIST Report

The 9/11 Commission and NIST both resorted to legal threats against the city of New York in order to obtain the 503 oral histories.³⁰ They succeeded in gaining access to this material, and we would expect them to make use of it.

It appears (references are somewhat unclear) that the Commission did, in fact, make fairly extensive use of the oral histories in composing the crucial Chapter 9 of its 2004 Report, which deals with the crashing of the planes into the Towers and the subsequent collapse of these buildings.³¹ The Report refers to the oral histories to verify the condition of civilians in the stairwells of the Towers, the nature of rescue actions taking place on various floors of the buildings, and so on. It appears to regard the oral narratives as trustworthy;

²⁹“Mysteries of the Twin Towers,” pp. 1 ff.

³⁰Dwyer, “City to Release Thousands of 9/11 Oral Histories Today.”

³¹The Commission’s notes do not always make it easy for us to identify its sources, but I assume that the “500 internal FDNY interview transcripts” referred to in note 209, p. 554 are our oral histories and that many of the notes to chapter 9 (99, 102, 109, 116, 117, 119 and so on) include references to this material.

establishes no critical distance from them; seems to consider them straightforward descriptions of the events of the day.

But what about all the references in the FDNY material to explosions? The Report makes no mention of them.

Chapter 9 contains the only reference to explosion hypotheses in the entire 9/11 Commission Report:

“When the South Tower collapsed, firefighters on upper floors of the North Tower heard a violent roar, and many were knocked off their feet...those firefighters not standing near windows facing south had no way of knowing that the South Tower had collapsed; many surmised that a bomb had exploded...”³²

The note supporting this statement is to a body of later (2004) interviews of firefighters by the Commission, not to the 503 oral histories. Why is this? And what are we to make of the

paragraph? A reader unfamiliar with the evidence of the oral histories might conclude that the explosion hypothesis was restricted to a set of firefighters situated in the North Tower when the South Tower collapsed; that the firefighters holding this hypothesis were, moreover, a subset with impeded perception; and that these firefighters mistook the collapse of the South Tower for the explosion of a bomb. As the reader will discover from Appendix B, all three statements are extremely misleading as general indications of the nature of explosion testimony. FDNY members speaking of explosions were in a wide variety of locations; many were looking directly at the Towers when they felt they perceived explosions; and they were quite capable of distinguishing the collapse from the explosions they felt were associated with it.

How is it that oral histories worthy of reference one moment are

³²9/11 Commission Report, p. 306. I exclude the references to bomb threats aboard three of the four allegedly hijacked planes, which are discussed in the Report, pp. 6-13. Although there are materials here from which a form of EH could be constructed, the Report declines the opportunity to do so by accepting the FBI's conclusion that there was no evidence of explosives at the collapse site and that the bomb threat was therefore fake (p. 13).

completely ignored as soon as they challenge the official narrative?

And what about the NIST final report? NIST had the oral histories, but its report declines to describe the nature of the testimony therein. There is brief mention of “documents of investigative first-person interviews” obtained from the FDNY but we learn nothing about these documents.³³ When speaking of the FDNY, the report praises the quality of the judgments FDNY personnel made about the condition of the buildings on 9/11,³⁴ but we find not a single reference to FDNY testimony about explosions.

In the Report’s Executive Summary we read: “NIST 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.”³⁵ In support of this the Abstract says that the visual evidence from videos and photos “clearly showed that the collapse initiated at the fire and impact floors,”³⁶ as if this were an uncontroversial assertion and as if it settled the matter. If we expect a fuller discussion of the explosion hypothesis in the body of the text we will be disappointed. We find a simple repetition of these same few lines.³⁷

Once again we discover that the testimony of the FDNY is quickly resorted to when it is helpful to the official narrative and is quietly pushed to one side when it threatens to disturb this narrative. We have known for some time that these reports silence the voices of direct witnesses; now we know they silenced 118 voices.

³³Final Report, p. 163.

³⁴Final Report, p. pp. 166-167.

³⁵Final Report, p. xxxviii.

³⁶Final Report, p. xxxviii.

³⁷Final Report, pp. 146, 176.

Conclusions

The two questions with which I began my research have now been answered:

1. Griffin's 31 witnesses to explosions in the FDNY oral histories are a subset of a much larger body of witnesses, which I have estimated as having 118 members.
2. Support for non-explosive collapse is present in this material but is scarce. I have found ten witnesses.

I do not know whether the FDNY witnesses constitute a representative sample of 9/11 witnesses, but it is possible that they do. Certainly, there is no lack of testimony to explosions from those outside the FDNY,³⁸ and I see no obvious reason why firefighters and medics would be more prone than others to feel that they were witnessing explosions. If they constitute a representative sample, then a minimum of 23% of all witnesses to the Towers' collapses appear to have perceived, or thought they perceived, explosions that brought down the Towers.

The implications of this for our understanding of September 11, 2001 are very, very serious.

Appendix A: List of Explosion Cases by Category

EXPLOSION CASES (TERM): 83 CASES

John Coyle, 9110406; Frank Cruthers, 9110179

Paul Curran, 9110369; Kevin Darnowski, 9110202

³⁸See, e.g., Griffin, "Explosive Testimony" as well as video footage such as that in "9/11 Revisited: Were explosives used?"

<http://www.911revisited.com/video.html>

16. *118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

John Delendick, 9110230; Richard Banaciski, 9110253
Dominick DeRubio, 9110064; Karin Deshore, 9110192
George DeSimone, 9110129; Brian Dixon, 9110166
Michael Donovan, 9110205; James Drury, 9110098
Kevin Duggan, 9110345; Christopher Fenyo, 9110295
Brian Fitzpatrick, 9110256; Gary Gates, 9110065
Kevin Gorman, 9110434; Steve Grabher, 9110241
Stephen Gregory, 9110008; Brian Becker, 9110019
Gregg Hansson, 9110017; Mala Harrilal, 9110186
Russell Harris, 9110015; Timothy Hoppey, 9110229
James Ippolito, 9110342; Timothy Julian, 9110386
Edward Kennedy, 9110502; George Kozlowski, 9110308
John Lynn, 9110389; Michael Macko, 9110506
John Malley, 9110319; Julio Marrero, 9110162
Patrick Martin, 9110510; Edward Martinez, 9110494
Orlando Martinez, 9110183; Richard Boeri, 9110302
Linda McCarthy, 9110213; James McKinley, 9110072
Craig Monahan, 9110016; Gregg Brady, 9110184
Murray Murad, 9110009; Keith Murphy, 9110323
Kevin Murray, 9110020; Robert Norris, 9110071
Michael Ober, 9110093; Janice Olszewski, 9110193
Joseph Patriciello, 9110378; Thomas Piambino, 9110493
Joseph Rae, 9110294; Gerard Reilly, 9110435
William Reynolds, 9110288; Juan Rios, 9119937
Angel Rivera, 9110489; Terence Rivera, 9110343
Kenneth Rogers, 9110290; William Ryan, 9110117
Stanley Rybak, 9110263; Patrick Scaringello, 9110030
Howie Scott, 9110365; Edward Sheehy, 9110226
Richard Skillington, 9110279; Richard Smiouskas, 9110210
Thomas Spinard, 9110445; Mark Steffens, 9110003
John Sudnik, 9110198; Jay Swithers, 9110172
David Timothy, 9110156; Albert Turi, 9110142
Thomas Turilli, 9110501; Timothy Burke, 9110488

Appendix A: List of Explosion Cases by Category

Thomas Vallebuona, 9110418; Stephen Viola, 9110439
William Wall, 9110285; Charles Wells, 9110163
Daniel Williams, 9110289; Edward Cachia, 9110251
Fernando Camacho, 9110318; Frank Campagna, 9110224
Craig Carlsen, 9110505; Jason Charles, 9110486
Roy Chelsen, 9110475; John Citarelli, 9110264
Louis Cook, 9110103; BLAST CASES (TERM): 5 CASES
John Coyle, 9110406; Brian Dixon, 9110166
Patrick Richiusa, 9110305; William Simon, 9110115
Jay Swithers, 9110172;

BLOW UP CASES (TERM): 19 CASES

Albert Turi, 9110142; Jason Charles, 9110486
Dean Coutsouros, 9110049; Kenneth Rogers, 9110290
Howie Scott, 9110365; Michael Ober, 9110093
Patricia Ondrovic, 9110048; Joseph Petrassi, 9110449
Stephen Gregory, 9110008; Paul Hyland, 9110374
Kirk Long, 9110509; Joseph Meola, 9110287
John Delendick, 9110230; Richard Banaciski, 9110253
Brian Dixon, 9110166; Michael Donovan, 9110205
Gary Gates, 9110065; Gerard Gorman, 9110420
James Curran, 9110412

BOMB CASES (TERM): 31 CASES

Stanley Trojanowski, 9110292; Albert Turi, 9110142
Thomas Turilli, 9110501; Timothy Burke, 9110488
Kenneth Rogers, 9110290; John Rothmund, 9110112
Richard Smiouskas, 9110210; Thomas Spinard, 9110445
Jay Swithers, 9110172; Janice Olszewski, 9110193
Richard Picciotto, 9110211; Gerard Reilly, 9110435
William Reynolds, 9110288; Angel Rivera, 9110489
Gregg Hansson, 9110017; Timothy Hoppey, 9110229

16. *118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

Timothy Julian, 9110386; Walter Kowalczyk, 9110095
John Malley, 9110319; Julio Marrero, 9110162
John McGimpsey, 9110477; Keith Murphy, 9110323
John Delendick 9110230; George DeSimone, 9110129
Michael Donovan 9110205; Robert Dorritie, 9110299
James Drury, 9110098; James Duffy, 9110444
Brian Fitzpatrick, 9110256; Gerard Gorman, 9110420
Alan Cooke, 9110040

IMPLOSION CASES (TERM): 10 CASES

James Walsh, 9110459; William Walsh, 9110442
Kevin Quinn, 9110339; Timothy Hoppeym, 9110229
David Loper, 9110349; Maureen McArdle-Schulman, 9110110
Michael Mejias, 9110149; Mary Merced, 9110144
Murray Murad, 9110009; Thomas Fitzpatrick (Deputy Commissioner), 9110001

DEMOLITION CASES (DESCRIPTION): 20 CASES

Albert Turi, 9110142; Timothy Burke, 9110488
Edward Cachia, 9110251; Kenneth Rogers, 9110290
Frank Sweeney, 9110113; Kevin Murray, 9110020
Daniel Rivera, 9110035; Steve Grabher, 9110241
Stephen Gregory, 9110008; Maureen McArdle-Schulman, 9110110
Michael Mejias, 9110149; Joseph Meola, 9110287
Richard Banaciski, 9110253; Dominick DeRubbio, 9110064
Karin Deshore, 9110192; Brian Dixon, 9110166
James Drury, 9110098; Christopher Fenyo, 9110295
Thomas Fitzpatrick, 9110001; James Curran, 9110412

OTHER CASES (DESCRIPTION): 10 CASES

Dean Coutsouros, 9110049; Frank Sweeney, 9110113

Appendix B: Explosion Cases, Alphabetical: Text and Context

John Picarello, 9110240; Barrett Hirsch, 9110336
Paul Mallery, 9110312; Maureen McArdle-Schulman, 9110110
David Moriarty, 9110228; John Murray, 9110407
Gary Gates, 9110065; Jerry Gombo, 9110100

**Appendix B: Explosion Cases, Alphabetical:
Text and Context**

Richard Banaciski, 9110253
South Tower:

We were there I don't know, maybe 10, 15 minutes and then I just remember there was just an explosion. It seemed like on television they blow up these buildings. It seemed like it was going all the way around like a belt, all these explosions...Not thinking that this building is coming down. We just thought there was going to be a big explosion, stuff was going to come down. [pp. 3-4]

Brian Becker, 9110019
South Tower [As experienced from inside NT.]

I'd say we were in the 30th or 31st, 32nd Floor, or something like that, and a few of the guys were lying wiped out on the floor, you know, taking a break with their masks off and lying in the hallway when there was a very loud roaring sound and a very loud explosion, and the--it felt like there was an explosion above us... [p. 12]

...

[Again on the subject of the collapse of S T as experienced in NT]

16. *118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

Q. What did you hear when the building starting collapsing the second time? Did you feel -- just started coming down? You didn't hear anything, feel anything?

A. We felt -- our whole building that we were in, when World Trade Center 2 collapsed, that was the first one to collapse. We were in World Trade Center 1. It was a tremendous explosion and tremendous shaking of our building. [p. 20]

North Tower:

So we just ran as a unit to the overpass again, and we took a look up, and it was like one -- it was like, holy shit. It was like -- because it was like -- I guess the building was kind of -- I don't remember specifically, but I remember it was, like, we got to get out of here. So I think that the building was really kind of starting to melt. We were -- like, the melt down was beginning. The collapse hadn't begun, but it was not a fire any more up there. It was like -- it was like that -- like smoke explosion on a tremendous scale going on up there.[p. 17]

Richard Boeri, 9110302 South Tower:

We had our backs to the tower and under that pedestrian bridge walking south, myself, Eddie Kennedy and the officer, when you heard the crackling. You looked up and you saw the one floor explode on itself and the top start to slide. [p. 4]

Gregg Brady, 9110184 North Tower:

Appendix B: Explosion Cases, Alphabetical: Text and Context

We were standing underneath and Captain Stone was speaking again. We heard -- I heard 3 loud explosions. I look up and the north tower is coming down now, 1 World Trade Center.

...

At that time, when I heard the 3 loud explosions, I started running west on Vesey Street towards the water. [p. 7]

Timothy Burke, 9110488 South Tower:

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 rumor 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. [p. 8]

Edward Cachia, 9110251 South Tower:

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. [p. 5]

Fernando Camacho, 9110318 South Tower:

As we came in through the revolving doors, the lights went out. A second or two later everything started to

16. 118 Witnesses: *The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

shake. You could hear explosions. We didn't know what it was. We thought it was just a small collapse. As I looked straight ahead of me, I saw total darkness. Everything was coming our way like a wave. [p. 4]

Frank Campagna, 9110224 North Tower:

That's when it went. I looked back. You see three explosions and then the whole thing coming down. I turned my head and everybody was scattering. [p. 8]

Craig Carlsen, 9110505 South Tower:

I guess about three minutes later you just heard explosions coming from building two, the south tower. It seemed like it took forever, but there were about ten explosions. At the time I didn't realize what it was. We realized later after talking and finding out that it was the floors collapsing to where the plane had hit.

We then realized the building started to come down. [p. 6] North Tower:

The second one coming down, you knew the explosions. Now you're very familiar with it. [p. 10]

Jason Charles, 9110486 South Tower:

...we start walking over slowly to the curb, and then I heard an explosion from up, from up above, and froze and was like, oh shit, I'm dead because I thought debris was going to hit me in the head and that was it.

Appendix B: Explosion Cases, Alphabetical: Text and Context

Then everybody stops and looks at the building and then they take off. [p. 14] North Tower:

...we don't even get to the back of the building. We start walking back there and then I heard a ground level explosion and I'm like holy shit, and then you heard that twisting metal wreckage again. Then I said shit and everybody started running... [p. 29]

[After both towers have fallen he's in another building trying to evacuate it when he sees the television.]

Those guys had a TV set and that's when I found out we were under attack, because prior to that I thought Tower 2 blew up because the engine from the plane hit Tower 2 and exploded inside. It was like stupid, but that's what I thought. [p. 35]

Roy Chelsen, 9110475

North Tower: [He gets out of the NT and then this happens.]

All of a sudden we heard this huge explosion, and that's when the tower started coming down. We all started running. [pp. 8-9]

John Citarelli, 9110264 South Tower:

Right as he said that, I heard a loud roar, "boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom," and it was getting louder. I looked around, and we were looking at each other. What is that noise? I just looked out the window of the lobby. I could see stuff out of the window of the lobby hitting the street, and I just dove into the corner of the wall. [pp. 4-5]

16. 118 Witnesses: *The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

North Tower:

I turned, I took maybe a couple more steps, and then I heard another explosion, it sounded like. I looked up, and the north tower was starting to come down. [p. 11]

Louis Cook, 9110103 North Tower:

I made it up onto the -- I guess you call it the concourse level, the mezzanine level, and onto the foot bridge when I started to hear -- I thought I heard an explosion of some sort, but I kind of dismissed it. I figured, ah, it's just something burning upstairs...and then I just remember feeling a rumble and hearing this rumbling sound that was really intense. It actually shook my bones...So I ran. [pp. 6-7]

Alan Cooke, 9110040

...what happened at that time, it seemed like an explosion was coming from there. I thought an explosion was coming from there. That's when everybody started running... [p. 5]

...

...I thought I was going to die. I really did. I thought what happened was that there was an explosion at the World Trade Center. Then I thought there was another one at the Seaport. I thought that was a secondary... [p. 6]

Dean Coutsouros, 9110049 North Tower:

Appendix B: Explosion Cases, Alphabetical: Text and Context

I happened to be looking up at it, and from the fire floor down, it was just like a really loud crackling noise, it sounded like a million firecrackers, and just a wave, right from the fire floor down, just a wave that started to come down. [p. 3]

John Coyle, 9110406 South Tower:

I started running after him and looking over my shoulder.

The tower was--it looked to me--I thought it was exploding, actually. That's what I thought for hours afterwards, that it had exploded or the plane or there had been some device on the plane that had exploded, because the debris from the tower had shot out far over our heads. [pp. 7-8]

...

But nobody knew what had happened. I still thought it had exploded, something had exploded.

...

At that point I had no idea what had happened. It seemed that the thing had blown up. [p. 10] North Tower:

Everybody I think at that point still thought these things were blown up. So I was fully expecting anything else to blow up. [p. 12]

[After being near WTC 7's collapse he's speaking to his family on the phone.]

While I was down at Battery Park I finally got through on my phone to my father and said, 'I'm alive. I just wanted to tell you, go to church, I'm alive. I just so narrowly escaped this thing.' He said, 'Where were you? You were

16. *118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

there?' I said, 'Yeah, I was right there when it blew up.'
He

said, 'You were there when the planes hit?' I said, 'No, I was there when it exploded, the building exploded.' He said, 'You mean when it fell down?' I said, 'No, when it exploded.'

I still didn't realized what had happened. I totally thought it had been blown up. That's just the perspective of looking up at it, it seemed to have exploded out. But that I guess was the force of the upper stories collapsing down. [pp. 15-16]

Frank Cruthers, 9110179

And while I was still in that immediate area, the south tower, 2 World Trade Center, there was what appeared to be at first an explosion. It appeared at the very top, simultaneously from all four sides, materials shot out horizontally. And then there seemed to be a momentary delay before you could see the beginning of the collapse. [p. 4]

James Curran, 9110412 North Tower:

We started filing out and following the line of the building. I got just to underneath the north walkway. A guy started screaming to run. When I got underneath the north bridge I looked back and you heard it, I heard like every floor went chu-chu-chu. Looked back and from the pressure everything was getting blown out of the floors before it actually collapsed. [pp. 10-11]

Paul Curran, 9110369

South Tower [Experienced while low in the NT.]:

Appendix B: Explosion Cases, Alphabetical: Text and Context

With that, all a sudden the tower went completely -- a horrendous noise, a very, very tremendous explosion, and a very heavy wind came through the tower. The wind almost knocked you down. [p. 5]

Kevin Darnowski, 9110202 South Tower:

At that time I started walking back up towards Vesey Street. I heard three explosions, and then we heard like groaning and grinding, and tower two started to come down. [p. 8]

John Delendick, 9110230 South Tower:

We heard a rumbling noise, and it appeared that that first tower, the south tower, had exploded, the top of it. That's what I saw, what a lot of us saw. [p. 5]

...

I remember asking Ray Downey was it the jet fuel that blew up. He said at that point he thought there were bombs up there because it was too even. As we've since learned, it was the jet fuel that was dropping down that caused all this. But he said it was too even.

Q. Symmetrical?

A. So his original thought was that he thought it was a bomb up there as well. [pp. 5-6]

...

We didn't know the building came down. We just knew the top of the building exploded and didn't know what happened to the rest of the building. You just couldn't see anything. [p. 7]

16. *118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

Dominick DeRubbio, 9110064 South Tower:

After a while we were looking up at the tower, and all of a sudden someone said it's starting to come down.

Q. This would be the north tower coming down?

A. This would be the first one.

Q. Or the south tower?

A. This one here. It was weird how it started to come down. It looked like it was a timed explosion, but I guess it was just the floors starting to pancake one on top of the other. [p. 5]

Karin Deshore, 9110192 South Tower:

I had no clue what was going on. I never turned around because a sound came from somewhere that I never heard before. Some people compared it with an airplane. It was the worst sound of

rolling sound, not a thunder. I can't explain it, what it was. All I know is--and a force started to come hit me in my back. I can't explain it. You had to be there. All I know is I had to run because I thought there was an explosion.

I was unaware what was happening. I thought it was just a major explosion. I didn't know the building was collapsing...I just felt like the darkness the loneliness and being alone was the worst thing I ever experienced in my life and not being able to breathe. There was no air.

Whatever this explosion was simply sucked all the oxygen out of the air. You couldn't breathe and the feeling of suffocation... [pp. 10-11]

Appendix B: Explosion Cases, Alphabetical: Text and Context

North Tower:

Somewhere around the middle of the World Trade Center, 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.

I went inside and told everybody that the other building or there was an explosion occurring up there and I said I think we have another major explosion... [p. 15]

...

So here these explosions are getting bigger and louder and bigger and louder and I told everybody if this building totally explodes, still unaware that the other building had collapsed, I'm going in the water. [p. 16]

...

I'm still standing there trying to figure out what my next move should be, when the same sergeant says fucking shit, it's coming at us, and that's a quote.

Again I didn't see what was happening behind me, but knowing of all the explosions I thought here was another explosion coming and this sound again and this wave of this force again. [pp. 17-18]

George DeSimone, 9110129 South Tower:

16. *118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

The next thing I know, we heard a little bit of a rumbling, and then white powder came from the first collapsed building. I thought it was an explosion initially. We got hit with the powder. We tried to run. [p. 6]

North Tower:

After that, I still thought it was an explosion. I thought it was some kind of thermal explosion where I'm either going to get burnt -- and I had kind of ideas that it was going to be something like Hiroshima where all this heat was coming at me and we were going to get burnt -- or if the heat didn't burn me, I thought that all the parts coming out of this building, the windows, metal, all the things like that, that I might be severed in half. [p. 7]

...

I don't think we understood the magnitude of what was going on. I was fearful that there were bombs in the building. That was my first thought, being the military kind of guy that I am. [p. 10]

Brian Dixon, 9110166 South Tower:

I was watching the fire, watching the people jump and hearing a noise and looking up and seeing

-- it actually looked -- the lowest floor of fire in the south tower actually looked like someone had planted explosives around it because the whole bottom I could see -- I could see two sides of it and the other side -- it just looked like that floor blew out.

I looked up and you could actually see everything blew out on the one floor. I thought, geez, this looks like an

Appendix B: Explosion Cases, Alphabetical: Text and Context

explosion up there, it blew out. Then I guess in some sense of time we looked at it and realized, no, actually it just collapsed. That's what blew out the windows, not that there was an explosion there but that windows blew out. [p. 15]

...

As I just got in under the entrance there, I got just a little ways back and it was just like -- you hear the noise, a boom, and then a blast of air. [p. 16]

Michael Donovan, 9110205 South Tower:

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. The Vista International Hotel was my first impression, that they had blown it up. [pp. 13-14]

...

Q. So you knew the south tower came down? You knew it collapsed?

A. No, you couldn't see it. I thought the Millennium Hotel had been blown up. [p. 17]

Robert Dorritie, 9110299 South Tower:

I guess we got about three-quarters of the way across when we were deciding which way to go into the south tower.

That's when I looked up, and the tower started coming down, which at the time I said I thought it was a secondary device. I had warned the guys about secondary devices on the way down... [p. 4]

16. *118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

James Drury, 9110098 South Tower:

We were in the process of getting some rigs moved when I turned, as I heard a tremendous roar, explosion, and saw that the first of the two towers was starting to come down. [p. 6]

North Tower:

...we started to hear the second roar. That was the north tower now coming down. I should say that people in the street and myself included thought that the roar was so loud

that the explosive - bombs were going off inside the building. Obviously we were later proved wrong. [p. 7]

...

...seeing that first tower come down was unbelievable. The sound it made. As I said I thought the terrorists planted explosives somewhere in the building. That's how loud it was, crackling explosive, a wall. [p. 12]

James Duffy, 9110444 North Tower

Q. When either tower came down, did you have any advanced warning?

A. Oh, no. I didn't know what it was when we were inside. I didn't know the building had collapsed, actually. I thought it was a bomb. I thought a bomb had gone off. That's why I really didn't know until after.

Q. Afterwards?

Appendix B: Explosion Cases, Alphabetical: Text and Context

A. Yeah, that that's when it came down. I wasn't expecting that. I thought it was a bomb or something that went off. [pp. 9-10]

Kevin Duggan, 9110345 South Tower:

...we were standing there, and then we just heard this real loud roar. We looked up and we could see the south tower.

Looked like the middle of it was just exploding out, and at that point, one of the officers just said, "Run"... [p. 7]

Christopher Fenyo, 9110295 South Tower:

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... [p. 5]

...

At that point a debate began to rage because the perception was that the building looked like it had been taken out with charges. We had really no concept of the damage on the east side of 2 World Trade Center at that point, and at that point many people had felt that possibly explosives had taken out 2 World Trade, and officers were gathering companies together and the officers were debating whether or not to go immediately back in or to see what was going to happen with 1 World Trade at that point. The debate ended pretty quickly because 1 World Trade came down. [pp. 6-7]

North Tower

16. *118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

There was an explosion at the top of the Trade Center and a piece of Trade Center flew across the West Side Highway and hit the Financial Center... [p. 3]

Brian Fitzpatrick, 9110256
North Tower:

...that's when we heard a tremendous noise and it was coming from the south tower, and we looked up and it was coming down...

I remember making it into the tunnel and it was this incredible amount of wind, debris, heat. I remember falling down, getting back up, and the guys were just falling all over each other. [pp. 3-4]

Then we exited out by the marina, the North Cove Yacht Harbor, where we all basically just took a knee and we waited a couple of minutes. Everybody was in shock. We didn't know what happened. We just thought it was debris or an explosion or a secondary explosion or another bomb inside the building or another plane. [p. 5]

Thomas Fitzpatrick, 9110001 South Tower:

All we saw was a puff of smoke coming from about 2 thirds of the way up. Some people thought it was an explosion. I don't think I remember that. I remember seeing, it looked like sparkling around one specific layer of the building. I assume now that that was either windows starting to collapse like tinsel or something. Then the building started to come down. My initial reaction was that this was exactly the way it looks when they

Appendix B: Explosion Cases, Alphabetical: Text and Context

show you those implosions on TV. I would have to say for three or four seconds anyway, maybe longer. I was just watching. [pp. 13-14]

Gary Gates, 9110065 South Tower:

I looked up, and the building exploded, the building that we were very close to, which was one tower. The whole top came off like a volcano. [p. 6]

...

So the explosion, what I realized later, had to be the start of the collapse. It was the way the building appeared to blowout from both sides. I'm looking at the face of it, and

all we see is the two sides of the building just blowing out and coming apart like this, as I said, like the top of a volcano. [pp. 6-7]

Jerry Gombo, 9110100 South Tower: collapse:

...it felt sort of like an earthquake. The sky darkened and you heard this thunderous roar. It was like a volcano, if you will, not that I ever experienced a volcano, but I guess that's the way I could describe it, and this cloud just coming down. The ground was shaking and this roar... [p. 12]

North Tower:

No sooner did we get, I would say, several yards down Vesey Street heading east to west when the second tower came down, and once again this huge mushroom cloud... [pp. 18-19]

16. *118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

Gerard Gorman, 9110420

[After both towers have collapsed.]

...at that point I did not know the first building collapsed still. Didn't know. We thought it was a missile attack or something like that. We thought we were under attack. They

didn't have any idea that this building could collapse. [p. 21]

...

[A couple of minutes before the NT collapse he's trying to figure out what the earthquake was that he just felt.]

So on the overhang I remember seeing a frigging Bomb Squad cop and I asked him, what the hell blew up? [p. 23]

Kevin Gorman, 9110434 North Tower:

...and as I was looking at him I heard the explosion, looked up, and saw like three floors explode, saw the antenna coming down, and turned around and ran north. [p. 6]

Steve Grabher, 9110241

South Tower:

I looked over my shoulder and you could see the whole top of the south tower leaning towards us. It looked like it was coming over. You could see the windows pop out just like in the picture, looked like a movie. I saw one floor of windows pop out, like poof, poof. I saw one and

Appendix B: Explosion Cases, Alphabetical: Text and Context

a half floors pop out. It looked almost like an explosion.
[pp. 10-11]

Stephen Gregory, 9110008 South Tower:

At that point in time I called Manhattan. I was answered. I asked them if they were aware of an explosion at the World Trade Center. I told them basically what I thought had happened... [pp. 8- 9]

...

...I thought that when I looked in the direction of the Trade Center 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

16. *118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

any flashes? I said, yes, well, I thought it was just me. He said no, I saw them, too.

I don't know if that means anything. I mean, I equate it to the building coming down and pushing things down, it could have been electrical explosions, it could have been whatever. But it's just strange that two people sort of say the same thing and neither one of us talked to each other about it. I mean, I don't know this guy from a hole in the wall. I was just standing next to him...

Q. On the television pictures it appeared as well, before the first collapse, that there was an explosion up on the upper floors.

A. I know about the explosion on the upper floors. This was like eye level. I didn't have to go like this. Because I was looking this way. I'm not going to say it was on the first floor or the second floor, but somewhere in that area I saw to me what appeared to be flashes. [pp. 14-16]

Gregg Hansson, 9110017 North Tower:

Then a large explosion took place. In my estimation that was the tower coming down, but at that time I did not know what that was. I thought some type of bomb had gone off. [p. 15]

Mala Harrilal, 9110186

North Tower: [He's out in a boat by now, quite far from the scene.]

Q. But you weren't involved with that part, because you were already out of the area, you were by the boat loading people?

A. Right, because we heard the explosion. [p. 7]

Appendix B: Explosion Cases, Alphabetical: Text and Context

Russell Harris, 9110015 South Tower:

I was on the side of the church. I looked and all this debris just started exploding everywhere, and I turned around to run... [p. 7]

Barrett Hirsch, 9110336 North Tower:

Then I noticed, like, the top of the tower seemed to shoot up a little bit and start to fall down a little bit, and that's when Bill Simon and I, who was my partner, just bolted... [p. 4]

Timothy Hoppey, 9110229 South Tower:

...that's when we heard the rumble. I looked up, and it was just a black cloud directly overhead. At that point I was thinking it was a secondary explosion. It looked to me like it was much lower than where the planes had gone in. [p. 5]

...

I thought the top half of the building was falling off, and I was thinking of it falling outward, not really imploding upon itself like it did. [p. 6]

Paul Hyland, 9110374 North Tower:

I just saw the top half of the north tower sink and sort of just sat down on itself, sat down, and then just started shattering and just blowing out like a Christmas tree. [pp. 11-12]

16. *118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

James Ippolito, 9110342

South Tower [As experienced from within the NT.]

...we were taking a break on 30, and that's when we heard a rumble, outside explosion, and I think that was the other building coming down... [p. 5]

North Tower:

Started to walk towards it, and that's when the building came down. I heard an explosion and turned around and the building was coming down. [p. 8]

Timothy Julian, 9110386 South Tower:

...that's when I heard the building collapse.

First I thought it was an explosion. I thought maybe there was bomb on the plane, but delayed type of thing, you know, secondary device.

Q. I was convinced for a week it was secondary devices.

A. You know, and I just heard like an explosion and a then a cracking type of noise, and then it sounded like a freight train, rumbling and picking up speed, and I remember I looked up, and I saw it coming... [p. 10]

Edward Kennedy, 9110502

South Tower:

We took two steps, there was a tremendous boom, explosion, we both turned around, and the top of the building

Appendix B: Explosion Cases, Alphabetical: Text and Context

was coming down at us. With this I just turned to Richie and said run. [p. 7]

...

When the building exploded, they ran down Liberty towards the water... [p. 9]

Stephen Klee, 9110300 South Tower:

A. No, I was just trying to find out -- no, there was no -- it was still dusty out there, and you really couldn't see. I didn't even realize that two came down. I thought another

bomb or a plane hit the building. That's what I thought it was. [p. 7]

George Kozlowski, 9110308 North Tower:

As we were walking, we heard--we thought it was another plane coming. It was like a big shhhhh. A thousand times louder than that. It sounded like a missile coming and we just started booking. We took off like bats out of hell.

We made it around the corner and that's when the shit hit the fan right then and there. We heard that loud and then ba boom. I just--it was like an earthquake or whatever. A giant. giant explosion. [p. 8]

...

Then this big gust came and I just went flying, maybe 30, 40 feet. Tumbling.

16. *118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

I got up, got on my hands and knees because all of the white shit was all over me. I just kept crawling. My ears were like deaf, you know, when you hear a giant firecracker or something. [p. 9]

Kirk Long, 9110509

South Tower: [The collapse is experienced from inside the NT.]

When the building shook, I was right next to an elevator shaft with Andy, crawling down the hallway. I was waiting for a flame to come up from the basement because I believed something in the basement blew up. Nothing like that happened, so I was waiting for a flame to come down from a plane. Nothing like that happened. Still at that time I never knew that the south tower had gone down. [pp. 4-5]

David Loper, 9110349 South Tower:

Then all of a sudden there was like a loud -- almost like a rushing sound, a roar, and we looked up and we could see it looked like an implosion and the building kind of went in and out and kind of like shook...We were looking up and then this thing started coming down... [p. 10]

John Lynn, 9110389 South Tower:

...our attention was drawn to the south tower. There was some kind of explosion, you might say, up in the area where the fire was. Actually, in hindsight, that was the start of the collapse. [p. 3]

Appendix B: Explosion Cases, Alphabetical: Text and Context

Michael Macko, 9110506 South Tower:

We were making our way down West Street. We got just about south of the north overpass, about 50 feet past that, when the first collapse occurred. I looked up. I was awed by--I thought it exploded at the top. Everybody I guess at that point started running... [p. 4]

Paul Mallery, 9110312 South Tower

I said it sounds just like this, this is exactly what it sounds like, here's another one, thinking it was a third plane. Meanwhile the sound to me was four distinct events. They all sounded the same. The two plane crashes and the two collapses, except the collapses lasted longer. [p. 8]

..

I don't know if this is nuclear attack. I don't know what this is any more. [p. 9]

John Malley, 9110319 South Tower:

As we walked through those revolving doors, that's when we felt the rumble. I felt the rumbling, and then I felt the force coming at me. I was like, what the hell is that? In my

mind it was a bomb going off.

The pressure got so great, I stepped back behind the columns separating the revolving doors.

16. *118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

Then the force just blew past me. It blew past me it seemed for a long time. In my mind I was saying what the hell is this and when is it going to stop? Then it finally stopped, that pressure which I thought was a concussion of an explosion. It turns out it was the down pressure wind of the floors collapsing on top of each other. [p. 5]

North Tower:

At that point I didn't know the building came down. I thought I was still in the explosion. I didn't know the whole building had come down. [p. 9]

Julio Marrero, 9110162 South Tower:

...I heard a loud bang. We looked up, and we just saw the building starting to collapse. I looked over and started to scream at my partner, which he was inside the vehicle...

...

I was screaming from the top of my lungs, and I must have been about ten feet away from her and she couldn't even hear me, because the building was so loud, the explosion, that she couldn't even hear me. [pp. 4-5]

North Tower

That's when I just broke down and cried at Bellevue Hospital, because it was just so overwhelming. I just knew that what happened was horrific. It was a bombing. [pp. 15-16]

Patrick Martin, 9110510 South Tower:

Appendix B: Explosion Cases, Alphabetical: Text and Context

...it was right then that we heard the noise.

My lieutenant said he looked down at the first floor, and he auto [?] see the first floor of the south tower like exploding out. I looked up. I looked up, and the sky was filled with that debris cloud. You could see the debris coming down, pretty much toward us. [p. 5]

Edward Martinez, 9110494 South Tower:

...because of the fog that was there, you couldn't see above. Your distance was limited. Once I heard that, I heard like a big explosion, a tremendous explosion, let me put it that way and rumbling sound.

At that time I started seeing things coming down. [pp. 4-5]

Orlando Martinez, 9110183 South Tower:

Q. This is the first building collapsing?

A. Right. There was an explosion and after we started running... [p. 9]

Maureen McArdle-Schulman, 9110110 South Tower:

And the building had red fire, a ring of fire. They started pumping and bouncing and I'm standing there staring. Finally somebody yelled "run." [p. 7]

...

I just called him [her husband] and told him I was going in the tower. The tower just imploded. [p. 11]

16. 118 Witnesses: *The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

North Tower:

We're standing there and I look up. The second tower starts with the ring of fire. Some puffing and bouncing. [p. 12]

Linda McCarthy, 9110213

South Tower:

A. So when that one went down. I thought the plane was exploding, or another plane hit. I had no idea it was coming down. But I couldn't see it gone, because I couldn't see it really in the first place with all the smoke...So I didn't know what it was. I heard like an earthquake. I said run for your lives, run. [pp. 6-7]

John McGimpsey, 9110477

South Tower: [From inside Marriott Hotel.]

We didn't know actually what was going on. We weren't sure if those noises were--sounded like another plane, bomb, something like that... [p. 5]

James McKinley, 9110072 South Tower:

Then all of a sudden I heard this huge explosion, I didn't know what it was cause nobody was telling me anything...I was this close to it, and I didn't know what was going on. After that I heard this huge explosion, I thought it was a boiler exploding or something. Next thing you know this huge cloud of smoke is coming at us, so we're running. [p. 4]

Appendix B: Explosion Cases, Alphabetical: Text and Context

Michael Mejias, 9110149

South Tower: [Apparently he is confusing it with the NT.]

The building started collapsing, the north tower started collapsing. It tipped down first and then the thing fell within itself. It was an amazing sight to see. It was really unbelievable. I thought I was watching a movie with special effects...

But it didn't really -- we were safe because we were surrounded by other buildings. If the tower would have fell towards West Street instead of imploding on itself, we would have had a problem, but, you know, it just came within itself, just tipped. [p. 8]

Joseph Meola, 9110287 South Tower:

As we are looking up at the building, what I saw was, it looked like the building was blowing out on all four sides. We actually heard the pops. Didn't realize it was the falling -- you know, you heard the pops of the building. You thought it was just blowing out. [p. 5]

Mary Merced, 9110144 South Tower:

So I'm running, and I'm worried about the chief, that he's there. Nobody expected those buildings to implode. They were thinking, it's going to topple. [p. 12]

North Tower:

Then everybody is going to run, because we didn't see where the building toppled because we didn't know it imploded because you couldn't see anything. [p. 16]

16. *118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

Craig Monahan, 9110016 South Tower:

When it sounded like the explosion stopped, the steel hitting, when it all seemed to stop, this just like a fire storm of wind and material, a sandstorm kind of, just came and wailed by, really flew past us quick. [p. 8]

David Moriarty, 9110228 North Tower:

I looked up, and it appeared as if the north tower -- it almost appeared to be liquefied. The very top of it began to cascade out and down, almost in a rolling motion. [p. 7]

Murray Murad, 9110009 South Tower:

Then it came down. From the implosion, we all got thrown and all that stuff came in the house... [p. 9]

...

I didn't want to take one because they had a couple of firetrucks that were hanging out right in front of him. I don't know what firetrucks they were, but they looked kind of beaten up from the explosion. [p. 10]

North Tower:

A. All the debris from the collapse of--

Q. So it was outside?

A. It was inside. From the implosion, everything just came inside. [p. 13]

Appendix B: Explosion Cases, Alphabetical: Text and Context

Keith Murphy, 9110323

South Tower: [As experienced from the ground floor of the NT.]

I had heard right before the lights went out, I had heard a distant boom boom boom, sounded like three explosions. I don't know what it was. At the time, I would have said they sounded like bombs, but it was boom boom boom and then the lights all go out. I hear someone say oh, shit, that was just for the lights out. I would say about 3, 4 seconds, all of a sudden this tremendous roar. It sounded like being in a tunnel with the train coming at you. It sounded like nothing I had ever heard in my life, but it didn't sound good. All of a sudden I could feel the floor started to shake and sway. We were being thrown like literally off our feet, side to side, getting banged around and then a tremendous wind started to happen. It probably lasted maybe 15 seconds, 10 to 15 seconds. It seemed like a hurricane force wind. It would blow you off your feet... [pp. 19-20]

John Murray, 9110407 South Tower:

...we were standing there watching the north tower and not even paying attention to the south tower.

Then you look up and it's like holy shit, the building didn't come down, it shot straight out over our heads, like straight across West Street. Holy shit, there is no fucking way we are going to out run this thing. [p. 6]

Kevin Murray, 9110020 North Tower:

16. 118 Witnesses: *The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

When the tower started -- there was a big explosion that I heard and someone screamed that it was coming down and I looked away and I saw all the windows domino -- you know, dominoing up and then come down. We were right in front of 6, so we started running... [p. 15]

Robert Norris, 9110071

South Tower: [He hears what he thinks is a third plane, but it is actually the collapse of the ST.]

...I heard what was a third plane coming in. I heard the propulsion of an engine and then an explosion.

We looked up and saw these huge chunks. There's one particular piece of this building that fell in its entirety that I'll never forget... [p. 11]

North Tower: [He describes the NT collapse in a similar manner.]

I remember being over there, and did I hear yet another--what I thought was a propulsion of a plane, and then an explosion, and then we all dove to the floor. [pp. 17-18]

Michael Ober, 9110093 South Tower:

Then we heard a rumble, some twisting metal, we looked up in the air, and to be totally honest, at first, I don't know exactly...but it looked to me just like an explosion. It didn't look like the building was coming down, it looked like just one floor had blown completely outside of it...

...

Appendix B: Explosion Cases, Alphabetical: Text and Context

After hearing this and looking up and seeing the building, what I thought was an explosion, everyone was running... [pp. 4-5]

Janice Olszewski, 9110193 South Tower:

I didn't think it was safe. I didn't know what was going on. I thought more could be happening down there. I didn't know if it was an explosion. I didn't know it was collapse at that point. I thought it was an explosion or secondary device, a bomb, the jet-plane exploding, whatever. [p. 7]

Patricia Ondrovic, 9110048 South Tower:

My partner and I grabbed our stretcher, went to put it in the back of our vehicle, and at that time, I think it was the lobby of the building behind us blew out. Everybody started running, I didn't see him again that day. He got thrown one way, I got thrown the other way.

...I was still on Vesey, cause the building that blew up on me was on Vesey.

...There was no where safe to go...I thought that they blew up our triage sector...The paramedic from Cabrini, that's where he was. I was just talking to him 20 minutes before everything blew up. [pp. 4-7]

...

At that point I got really upset. I said, do you realize they just blew up our triage sector? Everybody back there is dead, everybody back there is gone. [p. 9]

16. *118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

Joseph Patriciello, 9110378 South Tower:

...I happened to be looking up and saw the explosion or the building fail with the ensuing fireball and cloud. It didn't appear to me at that moment the building was coming down.

But when the noise level began to pick up, it was obvious that something wrong was going on. We all proceeded to run... [p. 4]

Joseph Petrassi, 9110449 North Tower:

We came out of the building and we were looking up and the tower seemed to blow out...You could feel the stuff hitting you on the back as you were running. [p. 3]

Thomas Piambino, 9110493 South Tower:

The south tower had fallen, but at that time I didn't know what it was. All I heard was a tremendous explosion. The tower I was in shook really bad. [p. 5]

North Tower:

...and then the north tower started to fall, and my perception was that when I looked back at the tower as it was starting to come down -- I was booking -- was that there was -- I thought it exploded, and I didn't realize it had collapsed. It looked to me like an explosion...I wound up taking refuge behind an ESU truck, I believe it was, a Police Department ESU truck, I think, and I just rode it out

Appendix B: Explosion Cases, Alphabetical: Text and Context

until first there was the explosion or the concussion, and then there was very, very strong wind, and then there was the black... [pp. 9-10]

John Picarello, 9110240 South Tower:

In about a second or two, you just heard like a ba-ba-ba-boom, and everything just came down and everything was pitch-black. [p. 6]

Richard Picciotto, 9110211

South Tower: [As heard from inside the NT.]

...drop your tools, drop your masks, drop everything, get out, get out, get out. My thinking was either--I thought a bomb hit the other building and brought it down, and if there's a bomb in that one, there's a bomb in this one. [p. 6]

Kevin Quinn, 9110339 South Tower:

Looking up at the towers and it looked like it just basically imploded. [p. 2]

Joseph Rae, 9110294 South Tower:

We started walking north to just about the second foot-bridge, which would be 6 World Trade, and all of a sudden we heard the explosion and the building started to come down and I ran... [p. 3]

16. *118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

Gerard Reilly, 9110435 South Tower:

So we probably were in the building maybe a minute in the lobby of the tower, whichever one we were in, and that's when it came down. But I thought it was an explosion in the

hotel, because all the debris came down, it was pitch-black, the whole building shook. [p. 4]

...

I told him I thought it was a bomb in the hotel, because nobody said the building collapsed. [p. 5]

William Reynolds, 9110288 South Tower:

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... [p. 3]

...

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. [p. 4]

...

Q. You're talking about the north tower now; right?

A. Before the north tower fell. He said, 'No.' I said, 'Why not? They blew up the other one.' I thought they blew

Appendix B: Explosion Cases, Alphabetical: Text and Context

it up with a bomb. I said, 'If they blew up the one, you know

they're gonna blow up the other one.' [p. 8]

Patrick Richiusa, 9110305 North Tower:

...then it was dead silent. There was no noise after 1 Trade Center fell. It was like something out of a movie. It was really loud and then it was -- maybe it was just my hearing from the blast. [p. 10]

Juan Rios, 9119937 South Tower:

...I was hooking up the regulator to the O-2, when I hear people screaming and a loud explosion...So I just started to run... [p. 3]

Angel Rivera, 9110489

South Tower: [The collapse is experienced from inside the Marriott hotel.]

...when we hit the 19th floor, something horrendous happened. It was like a bomb went off. We thought we were dead. The whole building shook. The brick coming out of -- the door to the hallway into the hotel blew off like somebody had thrown it all over the place. It shook all over the place. We were thrown on the floor...The building was still shaking and we're still hearing explosions going on everywhere, so we decided let's get out of here. [pp. 4-5]

North Tower: [Again from inside the Marriott.]

16. 118 Witnesses: *The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

Mike Mullan walked one flight up, and then the most horrendous thing happened. That's when hell came down. It was like a huge, enormous explosion. I still can hear it.

Everything shook. Everything went black. The wind rushed, very slowly [sound], all the dust, all the -- and everything went dark. We were rolling all over the floor, banging against the walls... [p. 7]

...

When the second tower came down, we had no idea what was going on. We thought another plane, another bomb, another as a second device. [p. 9]

Daniel Rivera, 9110035

South Tower: [This witness is very close to ST when it collapses.]

Then that's when I kept on walking close to the south tower and that's when that building collapsed.

Q. How did you know that it was coming down?

A. That noise. It was a noise.

Q. What did you hear? What did you see?

A. It was a frigging noise. At first I thought it was--do you ever see professional demolition where they set the charges on certain floors and then you hear 'pop, pop, pop, pop, pop'? That's exactly what--because I thought it was that. When I heard that frigging noise, that's when I saw the building coming down. [p. 9]

Terence Rivera, 9110343 South Tower:

Appendix B: Explosion Cases, Alphabetical: Text and Context

As I run towards it, I know that I'm not going to escape the -- escape it, so I dive under -- I don't know even know which rig it was. I dive under a rig. At the same time it felt like an explosion. I got bounced around underneath the rig. [p. 7]

Kenneth Rogers, 9110290 South Tower:

...we were standing there with about five companies and we were just waiting for our assignment and then there was an explosion in the south tower, which according to this map, this exposure just blew out in flames. A lot of guys left at that point. I kept watching. Floor after floor after floor. One floor under another after another and when it hit about the fifth floor, I figured it was a bomb, because it looked like a synchronized deliberate kind of thing. [pp. 3-4]

John Rothmund, 9110112 South Tower:

At that time we were looking at the top of the towers and all the rubble and people coming off, and all of a sudden you heard -- it sounded like another airplane, or a missile. It was like a slow shake. The whole ground just vibrated and shook. [pp. 5-6]

North Tower:

Again, we didn't know what was going on. We thought it was a bomb, you know, like planes were dropping from the sky or missiles were hitting. We didn't know what the hell was going on. [p. 14]

16. *118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

William Ryan, 9110117

[Seems to be after both collapses.]

Q. What did you think you were responding to at that point?

A. Well, we knew we had fire. We knew we had partial collapse.

Q. From an explosion or --

A. Yes. Well, we heard a loud boom when we were getting ready to dock the ferry. Probably the jet fuel igniting, I assume. [p. 3]

Stanley Rybak, 9110263 South Tower:

...then the -- then everything just came right through. The dust and the explosion knocked the windows out, and so I was momentarily on the ground. [p. 5]

Anthony Salerno, 9110309 North Tower:

Putting out all those fires, in that interim, the second building had come down. I remember hearing a lot of explosions, the street turning completely gray, gray clouds of smoke all over the place. Everybody had stopped what they were doing and ran back up the block. [p. 4]

Patrick Scaringello, 9110030 South Tower:

Appendix B: Explosion Cases, Alphabetical: Text and Context

I started to treat patients on my own when I heard the explosion from up above. I looked up, I saw smoke and flame and then I saw the top tower tilt, start to twist and lean. [p. 4]

North Tower:

I was assisting in pulling more people out from debris, when I heard the second tower explode. [p. 5]

Howie Scott, 9110365 South Tower:

We just made our turn to go in towards the lobby of tower two. For whatever reason, I just happened to look up and saw the whole thing coming down, pancaking down, and the explosion, blowing out about halfway up. [p. 6]

Edward Sheehey, 9110226 South Tower:

We were probably just at West Street, just at the street. Then the south tower -- we heard an explosion, looked up, and the building started to collapse. [p. 3]

William Simon, 9110115 North Tower:

Then we hear a rumble, and we see a blast of smoke and a slight ball of flame coming out from the silhouette of the building, and we watched the antenna collapse into the building. [p. 9]

Richard Skillington, 9110279 North Tower:

16. *118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

I looked up. I saw a helicopter, and I was trying to figure out what he was doing. Then the second tower exploded and started coming down. [p. 4]

Richard Smiouskas, 9110210 South Tower:

All of a sudden there was this groaning sound like a roar, grrrr. The ground started to shake. It

looked like an earthquake. The ground was shaking. I fell to the floor. My camera bag opened up. The cameras went skidding across the floor. The windows started exploding in. [pp. 8-9]

...

...I didn't know exactly what was going on outside. I'm thinking maybe the building snapped in half. I'm thinking maybe a bomb blew up. I'm thinking it could have been a nuclear. [p. 9]

Thomas Spina, 9110445 South Tower:

I don't know what time later a loud rumble -- it sounded like an explosion. We thought it was a bomb... and number two tower comes down. [p. 9]

Mark Steffens, 9110003 South Tower:

We got to maybe one block north of where the Battery Tunnel exits onto West Street there, and then, boom, a massive explosion. Right in front of us we saw what looked like a fireball and smoke. It was rolling this way. [p. 5]

Appendix B: Explosion Cases, Alphabetical: Text and Context

North Tower:

Then there was another it sounded like an explosion and heavy white powder, papers, flying everywhere. [pp. 6-7]

John Sudnik, 9110198 South Tower:

The best I can remember, we were just operating there, trying to help out and do the best we could. Then we heard a loud explosion or what sounded like a loud explosion and looked up and I saw tower two start coming down.

Frank Sweeney, 9110113 South Tower:

I bent over to pick up the hose, and I hear what sounded like firecrackers and a low rumble. I look up, and the south tower -- I could see the top part of the siding overlapping the bottom side of the siding...I ran... [p. 9]

Jay Swithers, 9110172 South Tower:

I took a quick glance at the building and while I didn't see it falling, I saw a large section of it blasting out, which led me to believe it was just an explosion. I thought it was a secondary device, but I knew that we had to go. [p. 5]

...

So I assumed that the vehicle had not been in the - what I thought was an explosion at the time, but was the first collapse. [p. 9]

16. *118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

David Timothy, 9110156 North Tower:

The next thing I knew, you started hearing more explosions. I guess this is when the second tower started coming down. [p. 12]

Stanley Trojanowski, 9110292 South Tower:

After the collapse of number Two World Trade Center, which I actually thought was a bomb that went off because the north tower was blocking my view, debris and everything started falling, people were running... [p. 3]

...

I made my way underneath the scaffolding again and just tried to outlast the collapse, which I thought was just another bomb going off. [p. 4]

Albert Turi, 9110142 South Tower:

The next thing I heard was Pete say what the fuck is this? And as my eyes traveled up the building, and I was looking at the south tower, somewhere about halfway up, my initial reaction was there was a secondary explosion, and the entire floor area, a ring right around the building blew out. I later realized that the building had started to collapse already and this was the air being compressed and that is the floor that let go. [p. 14]

Thomas Turilli, 9110501

Appendix B: Explosion Cases, Alphabetical: Text and Context

South Tower: [This appears to be at, or just before, the collapse of the ST. They are in the NT and have just sent some men up in the elevator.]

The door closed, they went up, and it just seemed a couple seconds and all of a sudden you just heard like it almost actually that day sounded like bombs going off, like boom, boom, boom, like seven or eight, and then just a huge wind... [p. 4]

[They get down the stairs.]

At that point we were kind of standing on the street and I looked to my left and actually I noticed the tower was down. I didn't even know what it was when we were in there. It just seemed like a huge explosion. [p. 6]

Thomas Vallebuona, 9110418 South Tower:

...I heard 'boom', an exploding sound, a real loud bang. I looked up, and I could see the Trade Center starting to come down, the south tower, which I guess I was about a block away from. [p. 5]

North Tower:

And 'ba-boom' again, the same sound, the same noise, the same shuddering, shrilling noise of the metal falling as it cascades down. [p. 9]

Stephen Viola, 9110439

South Tower: [Collapse experienced from inside NT.]

16. *118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

Our guy went in with 13 truck, and he was coming down with the guy from 13 truck to bring the elevator to us, and when he was either going up or coming down the elevator, that's when the south tower collapsed, and it sounded like a bunch of explosions.

You heard like loud booms, but I guess it was all just stuff coming down... [p. 3]

William Wall, 9110285 North Tower:

At that time we heard an explosion. We looked up and the building was coming down right on top of us... [p. 9]

James Walsh, 9110459 North Tower:

The building didn't fall the way you would think tall buildings would fall. Pretty much it looked like it imploded on itself. [p. 10]

William Walsh, 9110442 North Tower:

I just remembered seeing two floors of heavy fire from the north side of World Trade Center one and the West side of World Trade Center one. All of a sudden things collapsed one floor, and then within a second or so it just imploded. [p. 28]

Charles Wells, 9110163 South Tower:

We got to the point of being in between the Vista Hotel and the World Trade Center, at which point we heard a

Appendix C: Non-Explosion Cases by Category: Text and Context: 10 Cases

-- we felt a loud -- a very strong vibration, shaking, and a loud noise like a subway train coming through a station at speed, like a jet engine at full throttle. It was a roaring sound... [p. 6]

[After digging himself out of the collapse rubble.]

Everybody's heads were all popping up now. Everybody is digging out, so I ran into a couple of firefighters and I said, "Well, you know, what the hell happened?" Some kind of an explosion, he goes, and that's what I thought it was... [p. 8]

Daniel Williams, 9110289 South Tower:

I turned my face back towards the buildings as -- looking up at the south tower. It seemed like the one floor exploded, but in retrospect I'm thinking that was the compressive force of the building coming down that blew it out. I remember yelling, "Run." [p. 4]

Appendix C: Non-Explosion Cases by Category: Text and Context: 10 Cases

DENIAL OF EXPLOSION: 2 CASES

James Murphy, 9110323

South Tower: [This is the sound as heard from around the ground floor of the NT.]

I was looking down towards West Street, because that's where it seemed that it was coming from. You just heard

16. *118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

-- I thought it was a third plane that hit, because when we were going in there was a couple of cops. When we made the right onto Liberty, they said, "Be careful, guys, there's a third plane heading in." So that's what I thought it was.

It just seemed like a long time that it was -- it didn't seem like an explosion. It was like boom, boom, and then just got louder and louder. It got louder and louder, and then all of a sudden I was looking out onto West Street and the whole area turned from gray to black in a hurry.

Glen Rohan, 9110404 North Tower:

We got approximately to Vesey, a little further past Vesey, I would say about 200 feet from the tower, when we heard a noise. I wouldn't even call it an explosion, but it was

enough to make you look up. When we looked up, you could see things coming off the sides of the building of what was then number One World Trade Center. We looked at it for probably about five seconds before I realized that this building is coming down.

PANCAKING (TERM): 7 CASES

Craig Dunne, 9110490 North Tower:

I believe we were there maybe two minutes, two and a half minutes. We heard the rumble, looked up, and the antenna started leaning and the whole building started pancaking towards us, coming down.

Dennis Fischer, 9110402 North Tower:

Appendix C: Non-Explosion Cases by Category: Text and Context: 10 Cases

...we heard the rumbling. We looked up, that I remember as plain as day. I looked up and I saw from the top, I actually watched it with my own eyes, I saw the top start to pancake down. I remember looking at the proby I was with. We looked at each other in amazement. The time seemed to like stand still for a second. We looked at each other. We looked back up. We looked back at each other. It seemed like a bunch

of time went by. It was probably like a fraction of a second. Everybody started just running the other way.

Sammuel Harris, 9110108 South Tower:

As I related back to Chief Gombo – or I was getting ready to walk out and tell Chief Gombo what I was told, that's when tower one started to pancake and collapse. The only thing that I remember was the guy in front of me who was standing there in awe of just the earthquake feel, for myself as well.

Scott Holowach, 9110114 South Tower:

Shortly after that, sure enough, I heard – I don't know even -- I guess a rumbling sound. I looked up and I see the whole 70th floor basically like buckle out and start crumbling down the outside of the building. At the time I grabbed two other guys and said let's get the hell out of here. We dove into the building and after the rumbling stopped --

Q. Would have been south tower collapsing?

A. The south tower.

16. *118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

Q. You could see it from your position?

A. Yes. I visually watched the 70 floor. It looked like almost it was buckling outwards and then it just went down the outside of the building, just like scaled the outside of the building and it just started pancaking...

Robert Salvador, 9110474 North Tower:

...and then the north tower started coming down. I heard the same -- same pancaking, like a machine gun coming and glass flying, so I closed -- shut the door, got out of the rig, and ran -- started running across the street.

Tiernach Cassidy, 9110413 North Tower:

We start walking down Cortlandt Street from Broadway, going west, and we're carrying the stokes basket, myself and the team I was with, the other four guys. We started hearing the pancaking of the north tower now.

I looked at the officer I was with. We both looked at each other like what's that? Not thinking the second one would be coming down.

Q. What did it sound like?

A. It sounded like a plane just getting ready to land, just getting closer, coming in; a bowling ball getting closer when it's ready to hit that sweet spot, you know. But it didn't take us long to realize what it was. We didn't look up. We just ran ...

Rosario Terranova, 9110168 South Tower:

While we were discussing this, I remember hearing Chief Ganci say, "Oh, shit," you know, so we all looked up, and you could hear this rumble coming. We looked up at the south tower, which is the No. 2 tower, and all of a sudden we began to see like a pancake. I mean, it's as simple as that. If you could imagine you had two cards in your hand, and you just clapped your hands, and they just closed on each other. That's what it looked like, like a toy, and we began to see the pancake, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, one floor after another, as quick as you can imagine it.

PANCAKING (DESCRIPTION): 1 CASE

Luis Sanchez, 9110128 South Tower:

Five minutes later I just heard this loud noise. It was like an earthquake. It was shaking, and things was going down. I looked everywhere. There was nothing going on. I looked to the side, looked to my friend. There was nothing going on. When I looked up, I saw the top of the building floor by floor was coming down, collapsing. I was oh. (Inaudible.)

A. "...Then that's when I kept on walking close to the south tower and that's when that building collapsed."

Q. "How did you know that it was coming down?"

A. "That noise. It was a noise."

Q. "What did you hear? What did you see?"

A. "It was a frigging noise. At first I thought it was--do you ever see professional demolition where they set the charges on certain floors and then you hear 'pop, pop, pop, pop, pop, pop'?" [Daniel Rivera, 9110035, p. 9]

16. *118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers*

Q. "What did you think you were responding to at that point?"

A. "Well, we knew we had fire. We knew we had partial collapse."

Q. "From an explosion or –"

A. "Yes..." [William Ryan, 9110117, p. 3]

17. Eyewitness Evidence of Explosions in the Twin Towers

This is the somewhat edited transcript of the talk I gave at the 2011 Toronto Hearings. There is considerable repetition of material presented in the “[118 Witnesses](#)” article, but I have decided to include this piece for two reasons. First, it is, I believe, a better general introduction to the topic. Second, it deals with the main criticisms of the previous article that I noted over the intervening years.



- [Excerpts \(with slides\)](#) (19:49) [Picture in Picture]
- [Complete Presentation](#) (1:08:55) [Picture in Picture]
- Slide Set in [Powerpoint](#) and [PDF](#) formats.

17. *Eyewitness Evidence of Explosions in the Twin Towers*

Paul Lemos Statement, 1 September 2001

All of a sudden I looked up and about twenty stories below...the fire...I saw, from the corner, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom...just like twenty straight hits, just went down and then I just saw the whole building just went 'pshew'...and as the bombs were goin' people just started running and I sat there and watched a few of 'em explode and then I just turned around and I just started running for my life because at that point the World Trade Center was coming right down..."

Many of us are convinced that the twin towers of the World Trade Center were brought down on September 11, 2001 through controlled demolition. But the question at once arises: if this is what happened, would somebody not have noticed?

The answer is that many people did notice. There is a good deal of eyewitness evidence for the demolition of buildings 1 and 2. This paper will give a brief overview of this evidence.

Before we look at the evidence, we must first confront one of the most common objections in response to it. Eyewitness evidence, say the objectors, is "soft," untrustworthy, and unreliable. According to such critics, it does not matter how many eyewitnesses there are to an event or who these eyewitnesses are or how their accounts relate to each other; the best plan is just to dismiss everything they say. This is an odd view. There is no support for it either in social scientific studies of eyewitness testimony or in the scholarly literature on criminal investigation.¹

¹The importance of eyewitnesses in criminal investigation is affirmed in such publications as: Charles Regini, "The Cold Case Concept," FBI Law Enforcement

Eyewitness evidence certainly has its vulnerabilities: we know that eyewitnesses can misperceive, misremember and deceive. However, as with other kinds of evidence, we have developed ways of checking to see if what the witnesses report is accurate. For example, we look for *corroborating evidence* – further eyewitness evidence as well as evidence of entirely different kinds.

Moreover, eyewitness evidence is highly relevant to the investigation of explosions. The National Fire Protection Association’s manual on fire and explosion investigations states clearly that in an explosion investigation, “the investigator should take into consideration all the available information, including witness statements.”²

The present paper offers not only an overview of eyewitness evidence of explosions but also a critique of the handling of this evidence by the 9/11 Commission and the National Institute of Standards and Technology. But both of these organizations make extensive use of eyewitness evidence and obviously consider it valid and important. Therefore, disagreements with NIST and the 9/11 Commission on the legitimacy of eyewitness testimony are not at the level of principle but at the level of application.

One especially important source of eyewitness testimony is the

Bulletin, Aug. 1997; Charles Welford and James Cronin, “Clearing up Homicide Clearance Rates,” National Institute of Justice Journal, April, 2000; and Vivian Lord, “Implementing a Cold Case Homicide Unit: A Challenging Task,” FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, Feb. 2005. Among social scientists an attack against naive acceptance of eyewitness evidence (and especially against a naive view of human memory) was led some time ago by Harvard’s Elizabeth Loftus. See, for example, her *Eyewitness Testimony* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1979). But Loftus did not claim to have made eyewitnesses unnecessary. As she said in a book co-authored with James Doyle in 1997, “Despite the inaccuracies of eyewitness testimony and the misconceptions of jurors, the legal system can neither afford to exclude eyewitness testimony legally nor ignore it. Sometimes it is the only evidence available, and it is often correct.” *Eyewitness Testimony: Civil and Criminal*. Lexis Law Publishing, Charlottesville, 3rd ed., p. 7.

²NFPA 921: Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigations. NFPA publication. Massachusetts, USA., 2004. Section 21.16.

17. *Eyewitness Evidence of Explosions in the Twin Towers*

oral histories of the Fire Department of New York (technically, World Trade Center Task Force Interviews), released in 2005 by the City of New York.³ The *New York Times* had taken the city to court to obtain the release of the documents, and when the material was released the newspaper hosted the oral histories in the form of a series of separate PDF files on its website.

The oral histories were collected by the World Trade Center Task Force of the FDNY after New York City fire commissioner Thomas Von Essen decided it would be important to have a record of what the members of the department experienced on that day. The Task Force interviews comprise 10-12,000 pages of statements by

approximately 500 “FDNY firefighters, emergency medical technicians and paramedics collected from early October, 2001 to late January, 2002.”⁴

Professor David Ray Griffin, with the help of able researchers, was the first scholar to ferret out fascinating descriptions of explosions from this material.⁵ The author of the present paper published a subsequent article after reading the oral histories, “118 Witnesses: the Firefighters’ Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers.”⁶

The presentation and analysis below build on this earlier work. As the evidence is presented, three important points will emerge. First,

³“Explosive Testimony: Revelations about the Twin Towers in the 9/11 Oral Histories.” January 26, 2006. Available online at: <http://www.911truth.org/article.php?story=20060118104223192>

⁴Graeme MacQueen, “118 Witnesses: the Firefighters’ Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers.” *Journal of 9/11 Studies*, 2006, p. 47. Available online at: http://www.journalof911studies.com/articles/Article_5_118Witnesses_WorldTradeCenter.pdf

⁵“Explosive Testimony: Revelations about the Twin Towers in the 9/11 Oral Histories.” January 26, 2006. Available online at: <http://www.911truth.org/article.php?story=20060118104223192>

⁶Graeme MacQueen, “118 Witnesses: the Firefighters’ Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers.” *Journal of 9/11 Studies*, 2006, p. 47. Available online at: http://www.journalof911studies.com/articles/Article_5_118Witnesses_WorldTradeCenter.pdf

the conviction that the Towers came down because of explosions was common on 9/11. Second, there is substantial eyewitness evidence supporting this conviction. Third, this evidence has been ignored or suppressed by both the 9/11 Commission and NIST.

The explosion hypothesis was common on 9/11

In discussions of the events of 9/11, it is often implied that the original, obvious, and natural hypothesis concerning the destruction of the Twin Towers is some variety of gravity-driven collapse. It was obvious to everyone on 9/11, we are led to believe, that the Towers came down because the buildings simply could not withstand the plane strikes and subsequent fires and therefore gave way. Those who say the buildings came down because of explosions – who hold to an “explosion hypothesis” in the broad sense – are, according to this view, late arrivals. They are folks, it is argued, who came along after 9/11 and over-thought an initially simple situation due to a conspiratorial mind-set.

In fact, it is easy to prove that this is a falsification of history. Proponents of the explosion hypothesis were extremely common on 9/11, especially at the scene of the crime. Many people made their judgment on the basis of what they directly perceived while close to the buildings, while others accepted as a matter of course that complete and energetic pulverization of these enormous buildings must have entailed explosions. Below are five of many examples supporting these views.

1. In a video clip preserved from 9/11, ABC television reporter N. J. Burkett is seen standing close to the Twin Towers. He draws our attention to the firefighters at the scene and to the burning buildings themselves. Suddenly, the South Tower begins to come apart behind him. As the pulverized debris shoots into

17. *Eyewitness Evidence of Explosions in the Twin Towers*

the air, Burkett says: “A huge explosion now, raining debris on all of us. We better get out of the way!”

Mr. Burkett’s statement shows no evidence of over-thinking the situation or of a conspiratorial mindset. He certainly did not come along after 9/11: he expressed his judgment before the debris of the building had even reached the ground. Then he ran for his life. Half an hour later he would run for his life again as the North Tower came down.⁷

2. In CNN’s same-day coverage of the events of 9/11, Mayor Giuliani was asked questions about explosions in the Twin Towers on two separate occasions. The second occasion is a press conference at about 2:39 p.m. A female reporter (off screen) asks the Mayor: “Do you know anything about the cause of the explosions that brought the two buildings down? Was it caused by the planes or by something else?”⁸ Notice that she does not ask if there were explosions: she assumes there were. She does not ask if these explosions brought down the Towers: she assumes they did. She merely wants to know what caused the explosions – the planes or “something else.”
3. In footage known as the “Matthew Shapoff video,” acquired from NIST through a Freedom of Information Act request, there are several people (off screen) chatting while they watch the events at the World Trade Center unfold at a distance and film them with their video camera. Suddenly, through their camera we see the North Tower begin to throw pulverized debris in all directions in huge plumes as it disintegrates. After a horrified, “oh, my God!” we hear a male voice, presumably that of Shapoff, exclaim as follows: “That was a bomb that did that! That was a fuckin’ bomb that did that! There’s no

⁷A lengthy and important video clip showing Burkett fleeing from both collapses can be found here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rBO2rlo_QbQ

⁸<http://www.archive.org/details/cnn200109111421-1503>

The explosion hypothesis was common on 9/11

goddamn way that could have happened!”⁹ Again, this is a spontaneous reaction to what Shapoff was observing.

4. New York firefighter Christopher Fenyo, in a passage from the World Trade Center Task Force interviews, speaks of a debate that began among firefighters who were on the scene. The debate started after the destruction of the South Tower but before the destruction of the North Tower – in other words, between about 10:00 and 10:30 a.m.

“...At that point a debate began to rage because the perception was that the building looked like it had been taken out with charges.”

As with Shapoff, the statement concerns not just explosions generally but the intentional destruction of the building with explosives. That is, people were already debating a subcategory of the explosion hypothesis, the controlled demolition hypothesis, before 10:30 on the morning of 9/11.

5. The FBI’s name for its investigation of the 9/11 incidents is PENTTBOM, which stands for “Pentagon/Twin Towers Bombing Investigation.” Is it possible that when this name was assigned someone in the FBI thought a bombing had taken place? (Recall that according to the current official narrative there was no bombing at any of the affected locations.) On the day of 9/11, *USA Today*’s foreign correspondent Jack Kelley was seen telling his TV audience that the FBI’s “working theory” at that time was that “at the same time two planes hit the building...there was a car or truck packed with explosives underneath the building, which exploded at the same time and brought both of them down.”¹⁰ Given that Kelley was later

⁹<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mv6LfwLeRxo>

¹⁰<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=npAbNl2ihY>. Jack Kelley eventually had to resign from USA Today in disgrace.

17. *Eyewitness Evidence of Explosions in the Twin Towers*

shown to have routinely fabricated stories for *USA Today*, his allegations about the FBI would have to be corroborated. However, the general hypothesis ascribed here to the FBI - the buildings were brought down through the use of explosives - was common on 9/11. For example, Albert Turi, FDNY Chief of Safety, told NBC's Pat Dawson not long after the destruction of the Towers that, in Dawson's words, "according to his [Turi's] theory he thinks that there were actually devices that were planted in the building."¹¹

These five examples have been offered in support of the contention that the explosion theory, even in its most robust form (deliberate destruction through

explosives), was familiar to eyewitnesses on the day of 9/11. It was widely accepted as a reasonable theory. That many people held this theory does not mean it is correct, but it suggests that if this theory is to be rejected it must be rejected on the basis of evidence, not because it is regarded as late, unnatural, exotic or conspiratorial.

There is strong eyewitness evidence supporting the explosion hypothesis

The eyewitness evidence is strong in terms of both quality and quantity. The quality of the evidence is found in the richly detailed, mutually corroborating accounts of what was witnessed. At the same time, the quantity of evidence is impressive in both the number and variety of eyewitnesses who discuss explosions in their statements.

http://www.usatoday.com/news/2004-04-22-report-one_x.htm

¹¹<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4VBUOo2isRM>

There is strong eyewitness evidence supporting the explosion hypothesis

Quality

A conversation between Dennis Tardio and Pat Zoda about the destruction of the North Tower was captured on film by the Naudet brothers on the day of 9/11.¹²

Tardio and Zoda repeatedly affirm each other's accounts, both with words and with hand gestures. The hand gestures are like a series of karate chops starting high and going quickly downward. The witnesses evidently want to suggest that there were many discrete, energetic events that they observed, and that these started high up and then moved rapidly down the building at regular intervals.



Zoda says, as he moves his hand: “Floor by floor, it started poppin’ out.” Tardio concurs and uses the same hand gesture: “It was as if they had detonated, detonated (Zoda:”Yeah, detonated, yeah”), you know, as if they were planted to take down a building: boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom.” Zoda adds: “All the way down. I was watching and running.”

These are firefighters and they are used to encountering the standard sorts of explosions that occur in building fires. But they do not

¹²The clip from the Naudet film is available online at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jODfN8oZWe0>.

17. Eyewitness Evidence of Explosions in the Twin Towers

talk about smoke explosions, or

“boiling-liquid-expanding-vapor” (BLEVE) explosions, or any of the other expected forms of explosion. Instead, they are talking about, and acting out with dramatic gestures, something altogether different. They say that what they saw resembled a controlled demolition.

The next example is Paul Lemos, who, on 9/11, was in the vicinity of the World Trade Center to participate in the filming of a commercial. Lemos was interviewed on videotape on 9/11 near the World Trade Center, with WTC-7 still standing in the distance.¹³ He was filmed by a different film maker at a different location than the fire-fighters just described. This footage appears to be *entirely independent of the Tardio/Zoda footage just discussed*. However, when Lemos begins describing the demise of the North Tower, he uses the same hand gestures as Tardio and Zoda: rapid chops that start high and move at regular intervals down the building.



¹³The Lemos interview is available online at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z4AcOsaz0LI>

There is strong eyewitness evidence supporting the explosion hypothesis

Here is what he says as he performs his gestures:

“All of a sudden I looked up and about twenty stories below...the fire...I saw, from the corner, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom...just like twenty straight hits, just went down and then I just saw the whole building just went ‘pshew’...and as the bombs were goin’ people just started running and I sat there and watched a few of ‘em explode and then I just turned around and I just started running for my life because at that point the World Trade Center was coming right down...”

Lemos is even bolder than Tardio and Zoda, in that he does not qualify his statement by saying “as if they had detonated.” He refers openly to “bombs” and he says he watched them “explode.” In any case, the Tardio/Zoda footage and the Lemos footage are both rich in detail and mutually corroborating. The rich detail is apparent from the transcript, and the corroboration comes not just from the language used but also the hand gestures. These men clearly perceived the same event and came away with the same idea – that explosive devices in the buildings were used to bring them down.

Lemos also tells an interesting anecdote about a conversation with a person who was introduced to him as an architect, which is relevant to the tampering with and suppression of eyewitness evidence. Lemos states, “...now, they told me afterwards it wasn’t explosions. I was talking to one of the architects that they pulled in.” It is unclear who “they” is referring to in this statement, but a reasonable supposition can be made that “they” refers to the authorities on the scene. Therefore, it appears that the authorities had an architect there on 9/11 telling people like Paul Lemos what they had and had not perceived.

Regardless of whether or not this “architect” had a sinister purpose, we can be sure of the following facts about the architect: (1) unlike

17. Eyewitness Evidence of Explosions in the Twin Towers

Lemos, he was not himself an eyewitness (he had been “pulled in” to the scene); (2) he would not have had time to carry out a thorough canvassing of eyewitnesses; (3) he certainly did not have time to do a comprehensive review of photographs and videos of the collapse; and (4) there is little possibility he could have studied the remains of the building in any detail – either the steel or the dust. Despite all of this, he feels he can tell an eyewitness what that eyewitness did not perceive. Not only is the architect making an unwarranted judgment, his behavior is extremely irregular insofar as it makes conducting an unbiased investigation much more difficult. Homicide investigations, fire investigations, and explosion investigations have strict principles, and in each case it would be unheard of to walk onto a crime scene and taint the evidence by interfering with an eyewitness.

This discussion of the architect is also important because of its wider significance. In the months following 9/11, many eyewitnesses muted, qualified and even rejected their own initial judgments after hearing that authorities had adopted a structural failure hypothesis that had no room for explosions. The structural failure hypothesis that was most common during that period, and that was widely advanced as correct, was the “pancake” hypothesis of sequentially failing floors. The pancake hypothesis has since that time been discredited and abandoned (it was specifically rejected by NIST) but in the early days it did a fine job of weakening the confidence of eyewitnesses who thought they had perceived explosions.

Examples of firefighters revising their judgment of what they had perceived on the basis of what authorities were saying at the time are common in the World Trade Center Task Force interviews.

Dominick DeRubio says in his description of the destruction of the South Tower: “It was weird how it started to come down. It looked like it was a timed explosion, but I guess it was just the floors starting to pancake one on top of the other.”

James Drury says in his statement about the North Tower:”

There is strong eyewitness evidence supporting the explosion hypothesis

...we started to hear the second roar. That was the north tower now coming down. I should say that people in the street and myself included thought that the roar was so loud that...bombs were going off inside the building. Obviously we were later proved wrong...”

John Coyle starts his important statement about the South Tower in a very tentative way:

“The tower was—it looked to me—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.”

All of these witnesses recall their initial impressions of what they saw and thought (and in the case of Drury and Coyle the initial impressions of their friends and colleagues who were also on the scene), and then try to back away from these impressions. Thus, we have clear evidence of both how common the explosive demolition theory was on 9/11, and how it was later marginalized— not by sound science but by speculative theories given a stamp of approval by authority figures.

Returning now to the issue of corroboration, there are additional evidentiary sources that corroborate the descriptions given by Zoda, Tardio and Lemos of regular, descending energetic events. First, here are three examples of corroborating eyewitness testimony.

Ross Milanytch, an employee at nearby Chase Manhattan Bank, says of the South Tower: “It started exploding...It was about the 70th floor. And each second another floor exploded out for about eight floors, before the cloud obscured it all.”

John Bussey, a reporter for the *Wall Street Journal*, said this of the South Tower:

“Off the phone, and collecting my thoughts for the next report, I heard metallic crashes and looked up out of the

17. *Eyewitness Evidence of Explosions in the Twin Towers*

office window to see what seemed like perfectly synchronized explosions coming from each floor, spewing glass and metal outward. One after the other, from top to bottom, with a fraction of a second between, the floors blew to pieces.”¹⁴

Kenneth Rogers of the New York Fire Department said this about his experience with the South Tower:

“...we were standing there with about five companies and we were just waiting for our assignment and then there was an explosion in the south tower... A lot of guys left at that point. I kept watching. Floor after floor after floor. One floor under another after another and when it hit about the fifth floor, I figured it was a bomb, because it looked like a synchronized deliberate kind of thing.”

Corroboration can be even more impressive when it involves an entirely different form of evidence. Paul Lemos explicitly says that he was watching the North Tower, and, more specifically, a corner of the North Tower, when he saw the explosions. Evidence that corroborates his judgment that there were explosions occurring at a corner of the North Tower is found in high quality footage filmed during its destruction.¹⁵ This footage clearly shows a rapid sequence of forceful and focused ejections, apparently explosive, moving down the building. The size and velocity of these ejections can be measured, which means their existence and basic characteristics are not open to question.

¹⁴Note that Bussey has been given a structural failure hypothesis within which, in the full article, he situates his experience, apparently not realizing that his description of what he actually saw is incompatible with that hypothesis.

¹⁵A well-known video clip, shown on network television on 9/11 and variously magnified and analyzed, is available online at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kZKOKv0q8I8>.

There is strong eyewitness evidence supporting the explosion hypothesis

Thus, there is a high degree of corroboration among the different eyewitness accounts, and between eyewitness evidence and other evidence.

Some who object to this compilation of eyewitness testimony say that what these witnesses experienced may not have been explosions at all. Falling bodies, crashing elevators, snapping columns and even sonic booms have all been proposed as alternative explanations. These assertions can be addressed by analyzing, quite closely, the statements of another eyewitness.

The witness is Sue Keane. She was, on 9/11, an officer in the Port Authority Police Department (PAPD) where she had been for eight years. Before this she had spent 13 years in the U.S. Army, where she received training on how to respond to explosions.

Listed below are six common characteristics of explosions as described by former FBI explosives expert James Thurman in his book, *Practical Bomb Scene Investigation*.¹⁶ These characteristics are matched to selections from statements Sue Keane gave to the authors of the book, *Women at Ground Zero*.¹⁷ These statements, given within a few months of the 9/11 events, are supported by her separate handwritten submission to the Port Authority Police Department.

1. Sound: Keane: “A couple of minutes later, it sounded like bombs going off. That’s when the explosions happened.”
2. Positive blast pressure phase: “The windows blew in...we all got thrown.” “Each one of those explosions picked me up and threw me.”
3. Partial vacuum during positive blast pressure phase: “There

¹⁶Taylor & Francis. Boca Raton, 2006. This book is part of the series, *Practical Aspects of Criminal and Forensic Investigation*.

¹⁷Susan Hagen and Mary Caroub, *Women at Ground Zero: Stories of Courage and Compassion*. Alpha, 2002.

17. *Eyewitness Evidence of Explosions in the Twin Towers*

was this incredible rush of air, and it literally sucked the breath out of my lungs.”

4. Negative blast pressure phase: “Everything went out of me with this massive wind... Stuff was just flying past. Then it stopped and got really quiet, and then everything came back at us. I could breathe at this point, but now I was sucking all that stuff in, too. It was almost like a back draft. It sounded like a tornado.”
5. Incendiary or thermal effect: “...he threw me under the hose, which in a way felt great, because I didn’t realize until then that my skin was actually burning. I had burn marks, not like you’d have from a fire, but my face was all red, my chest was red.”
6. Fragmentation and shrapnel: “...there was stuff coming out of my body like you wouldn’t believe. It was like shrapnel. It’s still coming out.”

The handwritten PAPD report of this brave and obviously traumatized individual, which corroborates the above account in several crucial respects, is directly available in the PAPD documents released in 2003.¹⁸ One page of that report is reproduced as follows.

¹⁸The reports submitted by PAPD officers were released along with other materials in August, 2003 after The New York Times sued the city of New York to make them public. See Kevin Flynn and Jim Dwyer, “The Port Authority Files: Voices; Officers’ Sept. 11 Accounts: Catastrophe in the Details.” *New York Times*, August 30, 2003. The PAPD reports in their entirety were posted in 2003 by The Memory Hole and, although this site was hacked in 2009, the documents are available online at: <http://adam.pra.to/public/mir/www.thememoryhole.org/911/pa-transcripts/>

There is strong eyewitness evidence supporting the explosion hypothesis

PA 2285
11-72

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey
HAND-WRITTEN MEMORANDUM

③

To: _____

From: _____

Date: 1 1

Subject: _____

MASSIVE AMOUNTS OF Debris, CONCRETE DUST AND bodies OR PART were more frequent AT THIS POINT. THEN there was AN eerie silence AND IT WAS like you knew something WAS going TO happen, there JUST seemed to be ONE explosion AFTER ANOTHER. I WAS separated FROM the guys FROM the bridge (GWB) BY ANOTHER explosion, MASIVE AGAIN SUCKING THE AIR OUT OF YOUR LUNGS AND THEN JUST A WIND MORE intense THIS time WITH larger pieces OF Debris flying. When things cleared, there were still CIVILIANS IN the AREA AND myself, A NYPD cop AND 2 Firemen then attempted to get the rest OF the people out. Since I only knew how to get back to Tower 5, that is how we got the rest OF the group out across the plaza, BY looking up and only letting them go 2 or 3 at a time. This is STRIVING to get back to write I'll try again IN A few days.

On what reasonable grounds can we exclude Sue Keane's statements as we attempt to determine the causes of the destruction of the Twin Towers?

In summary, the eyewitness testimony of Tardio/Zoda, Lemos and Keane are examples of "quality," meaning evidence that is rich in detail. Below, the issue of "quantity" of eyewitness evidence is considered.

17. Eyewitness Evidence of Explosions in the Twin Towers

Quantity

It is difficult to formulate a complete account of eyewitnesses who describe, expressly or implicitly, explosions near the time of the destruction of the Twin Towers. Neither the FBI, nor the 9/11 Commission, nor the National Institute of Standards and Technology have published a count. I have compiled the most complete known list of witnesses to explosions at the Twin Towers. There are 156 such witness statements. The two graphs presented below summarize certain aspects of the list.

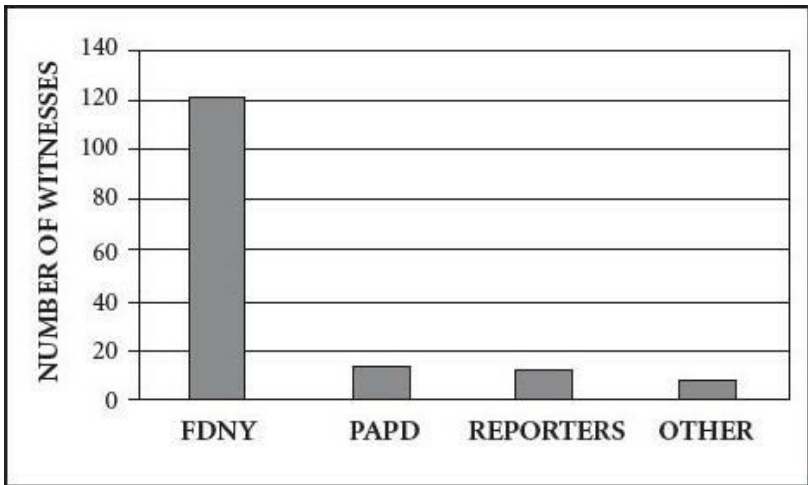


Figure 17.1.: Witnesses by profession or agency

Of the 156 eyewitnesses, 121 are from the Fire Department of New York. Another 14 witnesses are from the Port Authority Police Department. Thirteen are reporters, most working for major television networks. Eight are listed as “other,” usually people who worked in the vicinity of the Towers.

Members of the FDNY and PAPD are typically referred to as “first responders.” So 135 out of 156 witnesses, or 87% of the total, are first

There is strong eyewitness evidence supporting the explosion hypothesis

responders. This is significant because these people have much more experience with explosions than most people.

Moreover, their statements were given to superior officers as part of their professional duties, and the circumstances in which the statements were collected make this eyewitness evidence very strong.

The reporters also occupy an important position in the list because their accounts in most cases are directly captured on videotape. Their voice inflections and often their body language can be examined in detail. The reporters' accounts are also important because they are in most cases given spontaneously, with little reflection, very soon—minutes or even seconds—after the event they witnessed. Spontaneous witness statements are widely viewed as credible because there is little time for internal or external filtering of what is stated. In fact, the U.S. Federal Rules of Evidence typically do not admit into court statements made by witnesses outside of court, which are referred to as hearsay. However, one exception to the rule against hearsay is the “excited utterance” exception. The excited utterance exception allows hearsay to be admitted when it is “a statement relating to a startling event or condition made while the declarant was under the stress of excitement caused by the event or condition.” (Fed. Rules Evid. 803(2)) As expected, with respect to 9/11, the distorting tendencies in recollection have worked *against* the explosion hypothesis, for the simple reason that people progressively adjusted their stories as time went on to better accord with what they were being told by authority figures.¹⁹

Before discussing the next graph, it is appropriate to describe how

¹⁹This is what we expect. The tendency of people to adjust their memories in this way has been noted by social scientists researching eyewitness recollection. See Loftus and Doyle, p. 54: “The ‘contamination’ of recollection can occur through witnesses talking to other witnesses, through questions asked by authorities, by media accounts.” And in the same volume (p. 98): “it has been shown that highly credible people can manipulate others more readily. They can persuade others, they can change attitudes, and they can influence the behavior or others in countless ways.”

17. Eyewitness Evidence of Explosions in the Twin Towers

the list of explosion witnesses was compiled. Eyewitnesses are included in the list if they use, in their statement, at least one of the following terms: “explosion” (or the corresponding permutations of “to explode”), “blast,” “blow up” (or “blow out”) “bomb” (or “secondary device”), or “implosion.” There is also a category called “other CD,” which includes cases that do not use one of these terms, but that are in some respects strongly suggestive of controlled demolition. The point of this method is not merely to be able to quantify explosion reports, but to reduce the list compiler’s role in the interpretive process.

Eyewitnesses are included in the list not because an outside observer interprets what they witnessed as explosions, but because the eyewitnesses themselves interpret what they witnessed as explosions.

Additionally, there are processes available to investigators that can help check the quality of the evidence. The witnesses can be closely scrutinized (names, occupations, reliability, experience); motives for deception can be looked at; quality of sources can be examined; chain of custody for all witness accounts can be verified; and, of course, corroboration through other evidence of both similar and dissimilar kinds can be confirmed. Corroboration is so massive in the present case that the other processes have received less attention.

The “explosion” category is by far the largest, with 112 eyewitnesses. However, the “bomb” category, with 32 eyewitnesses, is extremely important as well. Most of the people on this list speaking of bombs are firefighters, and it is clear from their use of the word “bomb” that they are not talking about the sort of explosion they expect to encounter in a high-rise fire.

Now, there are three common objections to the demolition argument as based on eyewitness evidence. Two have been addressed already: eyewitness evidence is “soft” and can be disregarded; and eyewitnesses may have mistakenly reported explosions when, in fact, non-explosive events (such as falling elevators) were at issue. The

There is strong eyewitness evidence supporting the explosion hypothesis

third objection is the only one that can be taken seriously. It is this: there are many natural forms of explosion that occur in large fires, and the mere fact that there were explosions does not mean that explosives were used. It is an unjustified leap, claim these objectors,

to go from eyewitness statements about explosions to the controlled demolition hypothesis.

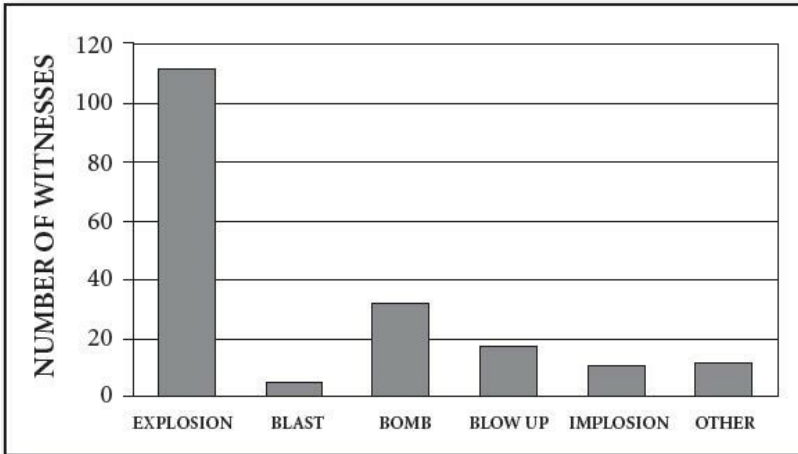


Figure 17.2.: Witnesses by term used

The types of explosions that typically accompany a fire are described in detail in various publications, probably most authoritatively in the National Fire Protection Association’s *Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigations*. There the NFPA describes four types of explosion that would have been expected to accompany the fires in the Twin Towers.

1. BLEVE (“boiling-liquid-expanding-vapor-explosion,” as with an exploding boiler)
2. Electrical explosion
3. Smoke explosion (i.e. backdraft)

17. *Eyewitness Evidence of Explosions in the Twin Towers*

4. Combustion explosion (e.g., natural gas, jet fuel vapor)

There are three characteristics of the eyewitness statements that rule out all four types of explosion. That is, these four sorts of explosions may well have occurred, but they do not account for the main explosions witnesses say they perceived. Here are the three characteristics that must be explained.

Identification

If the explosions encountered were the type typically encountered in fires, the firefighters would be expected to recognize them as such and name them. There are very few instances where they do so. On the contrary, they clearly feel these were different types of explosion than those they were used to encountering, as evidenced by, for example, the number of references to bombs.

Power

Many eyewitnesses clearly thought they were watching explosions destroy the Twin Towers (“I looked up, and the building exploded...The whole top came off like a volcano”) But none of the common four types of fire-related explosions could accomplish this. Recall that according to NIST, the Twin Towers were essentially intact beneath the point where they were hit by the planes. While BLEVEs and combustion explosions sometimes destroy structures such as wood frame houses, there are no examples of these explosions causing the destruction of such robust steel structures as are at issue here.

Also, there is no evidence that the right conditions for such explosions (for example, the necessary quantities of natural gas or jet fuel) existed in the Twin Towers at the time their dramatic destruction began.

Pattern

As described above, many eyewitnesses reported regular, rapid energetic events in sequence down the building, which cannot be explained by any of the four common types of explosion. If these patterned ejections are the result of explosions, they can only be explosions resulting from explosives.

Eyewitness evidence was ignored/suppressed by the 9/11 Commission and NIST

The discussion above gives a brief overview of the eyewitness testimony available to investigators. The last main point here is that this evidence has been ignored or suppressed by both the 9/11 Commission and NIST.

In its 585 pages, the 9/11 Commission Report contains one partial sentence referring to eyewitness reports of explosions at the time of collapse. The context is a discussion of firefighters who were on upper floors of the North Tower when the South Tower came down. The sentence fragment is as follows: "...those firefighters not standing near windows facing south had no way of knowing that the South Tower had collapsed; many surmised that a bomb had exploded..."²⁰ In other words, according to the 9/11 Commission, a subcategory of firefighters – those in upper floors of the North Tower with an impeded view—mistook the collapse of the South Tower for a bomb. The implication here is that the explosion witnesses, presumably few in number, made a mistake.

Of course, a careful examination of the available eyewitness testimony, as set forth above, would show that it is categorically false that all or most of the explosion witnesses were in the upper floors of the North Tower, and that only those with an impeded view thought

²⁰The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004), p. 306.

17. *Eyewitness Evidence of Explosions in the Twin Towers*

a bomb had exploded. The truth is that witnesses were in a great variety of locations and many of them had an exceptionally clear view of the Towers.

The National Institute of Standards and Technology gave even worse treatment to the eyewitness testimony. One of NIST's stated objectives is to "determine why and how WTC 1 and WTC 2 collapsed following the initial impacts of the aircraft."²¹ But in the 295 pages of this report, there is not a single reference to eyewitnesses who perceived explosions in the Twin Towers.

Some may argue that this is not surprising because NIST deals with hard evidence, not soft evidence. NIST is concerned with things like column size, temperatures reached, and the yield strength of steel; NIST does not deal with eyewitnesses. This is a misconception. The truth is that NIST openly discussed its attention to eyewitnesses.

Very early in its investigation of the Twin Towers, NIST adopted a sophisticated method of collecting eyewitness evidence, and the results can be seen in Chapter 7 ("Reconstruction of Human Activity") of the NIST final report. Telephone interviews, face-to-face interviews, and focus groups were all used.²² Note, for example, the following statement: "225 face-to-face interviews, averaging 2 hours each, gathered detailed, first-hand accounts and observations of the activities and events inside the buildings on the morning of September 11."²³ Although Chapter 7 is not about the destruction of the Towers, elsewhere NIST explicitly recognizes the relevance of eyewitness evidence to the understanding of how the buildings came down.²⁴ [33] Yet NIST somehow fails to note even one eyewitness reference to explosions or bombs, not only among its interviewees but also in the literature. It misses, for example, all of the 156 eyewitnesses used as the basis of this paper, even though it had access to

²¹NIST NCSTAR 1: Final Report on the Collapse of the World Trade Center Towers. National Institute of Standards and Technology. Sept. 2005, p. xxix.

²²NIST final report on the Towers, Chapter 7, p. 155 ff.

²³NIST final report on the Towers, p. 157.

²⁴NIST final report on the Towers, pp. xxxvii and 143.

Eyewitness evidence was ignored/suppressed by the 9/11 Commission and NIST

all of the sources used to compile the list.

The 9/11 Commission and the National Institute of Standards and Technology, apparently following the lead of the FBI, have violated standard principles of investigation. Whether this is evidence of incompetence or of deliberate cover-up is irrelevant to my present argument. Either way, it is obvious that the official investigations carried out to this point have been grossly inadequate and that a new and thorough investigation is essential.

18. Sonic Booms in the Collapse of the Twin Towers?

I wrote this letter in a spirit of annoyance. Very shortly after the 9/11 events the world began to be gifted with articles, sometimes co-authored, by a gentleman named Zdeněk Bažant. We were assured that he was a distinguished engineering professor and that his explanations of the destruction of the World Trade Center—not only supportive of the official story but useful in its initial construction—were to be taken seriously. But when I read his attempt to explain away eyewitness evidence of explosions (as sonic booms occurring during gravity-driven building collapse) I was offended. Having spent hundreds of hours studying the eyewitness evidence, I found his treatment flippant, superficial and unscientific.

Letter to the editors, *Journal of 9/11 Studies*, June 11, 2007

Bazant et al have recently written an ambitious article entitled, “Collapse of World Trade Center Towers: What Did and Did Not Cause It?”¹

¹<http://www.civil.northwestern.edu/people/bazant/PDFs/Papers/00%20WTC%20Collapse%20-%20What%20Did%20%26%20Did%20Not%20Cause%20It%20-%202005-2007.pdf>

18. *Sonic Booms in the Collapse of the Twin Towers?*

In the Abstract of the article they claim that “the present analysis proves” that “allegations of controlled demolition by planted explosives” have no scientific merit. Among the many phenomena they attempt to account for through this non-explosion hypothesis (more specifically, this gravity-driven progressive collapse hypothesis) are the sounds that numerous witnesses claim to have heard and that they identified as explosions. Their explanation of these apparent explosions, as given in the Abstract, is as follows:

“The exit speed of air ejected from the building by the crushing front of gravitational collapse must have attained, near the ground, 461 mph (206 m/s) on the average, and fluctuations must have reached the speed of sound. This explains loud booms...”

In the body of the article the analysis is expanded. We are told that the “velocity of the crushing front near the end of North Tower crush-down is...47.49 m/s (110 mph)” and that “the velocity of escaping air near the end of the crush-down” may range from 461 mph to 761 mph. The authors admit that the vent ratio, and therefore the velocity of escaping air, is “hard to estimate” and is bound to vary from floor to floor, yet they conclude: “Clearly, the fluctuations of air speed can reach the speed of sound, and thus create a sonic booms [sic], which are easily mistaken for explosions (attaining supersonic speeds requires that the orifice through which the air is venting be shaped somewhat like convergent-divergent nozzles, and it is not impossible that such configurations might intermittently develop.)

Despite the obviously speculative nature of these suggestions (“hard to estimate”, “not impossible”, “intermittently”), the authors of this article feel able to say confidently in their Conclusion that “the claims that...the loud booms heard during collapse, could be explained only by planted explosives are proven to be false.”

I have an interest in explosion explanations, having published an article in this Journal identifying 118 witnesses from the New York

City Fire Department who believe they perceived explosions implicated in the collapse of the towers.²

I wish, therefore, to comment on the sonic boom explanation. I will make three short points, the third of which is my most important.

The first requirement of the sonic boom hypothesis is for shaped orifices (“somewhat like convergent-divergent nozzles”) in the towers. It is difficult to know how we might test for the existence of these orifices. It would have been helpful if the authors could have directed us to photographic or other evidence, but they have not done so. Please note, in the absence of such evidence, that the greater the number of apparent explosions that must be explained, the greater the number of nozzle-shaped orifices that are required. What are the odds of finding enough shaped orifices to account for ten successive booms? (See FDNY witness, Craig Carlsen, 9110505.)

The authors likewise make no attempt to supply empirical evidence for the required air velocities of 461-761 mph. Are they thinking here of the strong winds associated with the towers’ collapses? Presumably not. These winds were of far too great a duration to be caused by the “jetting out” of air trapped between floors:

“Then the force just blew past me. It blew past me it seemed for a long time. In my mind I was saying what the hell is this and when is it going to stop?” (FDNY witness, John Malley, 9110319)

“We were being thrown like literally off our feet, side to side, getting banged around and then a tremendous wind started to happen. It probably lasted maybe 15 seconds, 10 to 15 seconds” (FDNY witness, Keith Murphy, 9110323)

In any case, there are far more obvious explanations for these severe winds, so perhaps they are not what the

²http://www.journalof911studies.com/articles/Article_5_118Witnesses_World-TradeCenter.pdf

18. *Sonic Booms in the Collapse of the Twin Towers?*

authors have in mind. Perhaps the authors are thinking of the puffs, often referred to as “squibs”, which can be observed in videos and photographs? But these do not fit the case either, because they often appear many floors below the “crushing front” and therefore cannot be the escaping air their hypothesis requires.³

If they have some other body of evidence in support of the posited escaping air at the required velocities—other than the “booms” themselves, the cause of which is precisely the center of this dispute—could they please explain?

Thirdly, these extreme air velocities are, on this hypothesis, attainable only “near the ground,” that is, near the termination of the collapse of the towers.

This is a claim that is easily testable. Since the firefighters’ explosion testimonies have already been collected and are ready to hand, I shall restrict myself to an examination of them. A wider study would, of course, include numerous explosion testimonies from other people.

Here, then, is the simple question I have put to the FDNY collection: Of the 118 explosion references, how many clearly refer to events in the last stages of tower collapse, the point where the “crushing front” is “near the ground?”

The answer is: none. The number of cases is zero.

By contrast, there are many cases that refer to explosions just before the collapse or at the beginning of the collapse. Such cases are, in fact, the rule, as anyone will discover who takes the time to consult the collection.

Here are a few cases involving the South Tower: Kevin Darnowski, 9110202:

“At that time I started walking back up towards Vesey Street. I heard three explosions, and then we heard like

³http://www.whatreallyhappened.com/IMAGES/wtc2_collapse_pops.wmv

groaning and grinding, and tower two started to come down.”

John Delendick, 9110230:

“We heard a rumbling noise, and it appeared that that first tower, the south tower, had exploded, the top of it. That’s what I saw, what a lot of us saw.”

James Drury, 9110098:

“We were in the process of getting some rigs moved when I turned, as I heard a tremendous roar, explosion, and saw that the first of the two towers was starting to come down.”

Gary Gates, 9110065:

“I looked up, and the building exploded, the building that we were very close to, which was one tower. The whole top came off like a volcano...”

Edward Kennedy, 9110502:

“We took two steps, there was a tremendous boom, explosion, we both turned around, and the top of the building was coming down at us. With this I just turned to Richie and said run.”

Joseph Rae, 9110294:

“We started walking north to just about the second foot-bridge, which would be 6 World Trade, and all of a sudden we heard the explosion and the building started to come down and I ran...”

18. *Sonic Booms in the Collapse of the Twin Towers?*

Patrick Scaringello, 9110030:

“I started to treat patients on my own when I heard the explosion from up above. I looked up, I saw smoke and flame and then I saw the top tower tilt, start to twist and lean.”

Thomas Vallebuona, 9110418:

“...I heard ‘boom’, an exploding sound, a real loud bang. I looked up, and I could see the Trade Center starting to come down, the south tower...”

Conclusion

It is incorrect, therefore, to state that “the claims that...the loud booms heard during collapse, could be explained only by planted explosives are proven to be false”. The authors have proven no such thing. At best, they have indulged in a brainstorm about possible causes of loud sounds in a gravity-driven collapse. The observations predicted by this brainstorm are in direct opposition to the actual observations of numerous, experienced, on-the- scene witnesses.

19. Waiting for Seven: WTC 7 Collapse Warnings in the FDNY Oral Histories

This article, written before the appearance of the analysis of Building 7's collapse by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, was framed as a response to a supporter of the official narrative, Ryan Mackey. Mackey was one of a series of authors who tried to lay to rest the questions raised by the foreknowledge of the building's collapse by arguing that it was, in effect, not foreknowledge but evidence-based prediction.

A more accessible and comprehensive treatment of the foreknowledge issue can be found in another article in the present collection: "[Foreknowledge of World Trade 7's Collapse: The Challenge to the Official Hypothesis](#)".

January 11, 2008

Abstract

On September 11, 2001 there were numerous advance warnings of World Trade Center 7's collapse, and many people have argued that these warnings are evidence that the

19. *Waiting for Seven: WTC 7 Collapse Warnings in the FDNY Oral Histories*

building was subjected to controlled demolition. But other researchers feel the warnings are compatible with the hypothesis of natural collapse from damage that the building sustained throughout the day. In this article I examine the arguments of one researcher, Ryan Mackey, who argues, using the oral histories of the New York Fire Department, that the collapse was natural and the warnings rational and based on direct perception. Although I agree with Mackey that the damage to Seven was serious and must be acknowledged as such, I argue that a close reading of the FDNY oral histories does not support his claims and does not remove the cloud of suspicion that hangs over the collapse warnings. The majority of FDNY members did not rationally conclude, on the basis of direct perception of damage to the building, that it was in danger of collapse; they accepted that it would collapse on the basis of what they were told.

In the debate over the collapse of World Trade Center 7, warnings of the building's collapse have come to play an important role. In addition to the numerous collapse warnings mentioned in written documents such as those I will be using in this article, we have seen a growing number of videotape fragments and interviews in which people appear to have been told in advance of Seven's collapse.¹ Many proponents of the controlled demolition hypothesis take these cases, both written and video, as evidence that the building's collapse was brought about deliberately. How could people have suspected or even known with certainty hours in advance that the building was go-

¹A very helpful website for the study of WTC 7 is: <http://wtc7.net/>

A useful compilation of relevant material, with good images of the collapse itself, can be found in the short film, "WTC7: The Smoking Gun of 9/11" (updated, March 10, 2007) at the link that follows. (I do not, however, endorse all parts of the video.)

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=2073592843640256739>

ing to collapse if this collapse was not under human control? These arguments typically try to place the event in historical context, stressing how unusual it was for a steel-framed skyscraper to undergo this kind of total collapse, whether from fire or from other possible causes. In this way they stress the peculiarity and the suspect nature of the advance warnings.

But those who think that Seven's fall was natural rather than deliberate have not shied away from the collapse warnings. They have simply interpreted them in a different way. In essence, they have said that the warnings were rational and expected given the severe damage Seven had sustained. These researchers may even consider collapse warnings, when combined with other factors, as evidence positively favouring the hypothesis of natural (non-demolition) collapse.

Mark Roberts, for example, has set forth a detailed collection of collapse warnings, many of which are drawn from the oral histories of the New York Fire Department,² and has tried to use these to support his hypothesis of a natural collapse.³ Ryan Mackey has used this material in a similar fashion.⁴ Since I find Mackey's reasoning more clear than Roberts' I will take him in this paper as representative of this position.

Here are four of Mackey's comments on the issue. All quotations are taken from his recent and lengthy monograph criticizing David Ray Griffin's book, *Debunking 9/11 Debunking*.⁵

²The approximately 500 FDNY oral histories can be found on the website of the *New York Times*:

http://graphics8.nytimes.com/packages/html/nyregion/20050812_WTC_GRAPHIC/met_WTC_histories_full_01.html

³See the eyewitness accounts in Part II of Mark Roberts' material at: <http://wtc7lies.googlepages.com/introduction>

⁴Ryan Mackey, *On Debunking 9/11 Debunking: Examining Dr. David Ray Griffin's Latest Criticism of the NIST World Trade Center Investigation* (Version 1.1, 21, September 2007; Original Release 31 August 2007)

<http://911guide.googlepages.com/ryanmackey>

⁵Mackey, p. 121-126.

19. *Waiting for Seven: WTC 7 Collapse Warnings in the FDNY Oral Histories*

- I. “Based on these numerous, corroborating accounts, coupled with video of the fires in WTC 7 and the fact that it burned for over six hours, there is indeed a better explanation than explosives for why the collapse was expected. There is some disagreement between firefighter accounts about exactly how many floors were burning or how intensely, but there can be no dispute that the fire persisted for hours, that the structure weakened, or that firefighters believed on this basis that the structure was likely to collapse.”
- II. “Dr. Griffin is faced with a difficult problem. He is attempting to equate prediction of the collapses with conspiracy to demolish WTC 7, or at the very least cognizance thereof. As numerous accounts indicate, both in official interviews and ordinary reporting, the FDNY collectively knew that WTC 7 was in danger of collapse hours before it finally fell. If Dr. Griffin wishes to maintain his theory, then he must make a painful choice:
 1. Accept that the FDNY was part of the plot to destroy WTC 7.
 2. Accept that the FDNY knew of the plot, but did nothing to stop it, and to this day refuses to talk about it.
 3. Propose that someone “in the know” tricked a high-ranking member of the FDNY into *thinking* that it would collapse, and:
 - a. This duped individual convinced many more firefighters that it would collapse;
 - b. Those so informed believed it would collapse;
 - c. Not a single FDNY member expressed doubts about what they were told, based on their own experience and the actual condition of WTC 7; and
 - d. The structure burned and showed unmistakable signs of weakening anyway.

All of these three choices suggest (and insultingly so) highly unlikely behavior on the part of the firefighters. None has the slightest support in evidence. The rational conclusion, again, is that their training and observation led them to conclude, correctly, that WTC 7 was in danger of collapsing.”

- III. “In summary, the ‘unique features’ of WTC 7’s collapse are completely logical, and were obvious to the rescue workers on site. Dr. Griffin’s suspicions, namely that the knowledge of collapse and more rapid removal of debris is proof of a conspiracy to destroy WTC 7, has no grounding in reality.”
- IV. “From the firefighter comments, there are a few elements common to virtually every single account that must be considered as credible:

- Fires persisted from the WTC 1 debris impacts up to the final collapse of WTC 7
- Fires were present on multiple floors
- Fires were considered a threat to the building’s structural integrity

It is the third point that poses the biggest problem to Dr. Griffin’s theory. Not one firefighter interview expresses doubt or surprise at the collapse of WTC 7, even though accounts do differ in other details.”

Before turning to Mackey’s central argument, I want to draw attention to two distinctions I believe he ought to have made more clearly, the distinction between certainty and uncertainty in a collapse warning, and the distinction between early and late warnings. These distinctions seem to me to be very important. To take extreme examples: if someone sees a building that has been burning for hours and is manifesting various signs of damage and says, “I’m worried about the possibility that this building might collapse, so I’m going

19. *Waiting for Seven: WTC 7 Collapse Warnings in the FDNY Oral Histories*

to establish a safety zone around this building” this is quite different from someone saying hours earlier when damage is much lighter, “I know for a certainty that, later on today, this building will collapse.” The second case invites much more skepticism about natural collapse than the first.

But let us return to Mackey. What is his argument? I believe the main points are as follows:

1. Building Seven was seriously damaged early in the day and this damage progressed as the day went on.
2. FDNY members at the scene, whose testimony has been preserved, directly perceived this damage.
3. These FDNY members rationally concluded from what they perceived that the building was in danger of collapse.
4. The collapse warnings in the FDNY collection are merely the manifestation of this rational conclusion.

I will focus on statements three and four in this article.

Mackey speaks, in his monograph, in support of the following principle, consistent with the scientific method: “Claims that can be verified, either through calculation and experiment or independent confirmation, are the most valuable (and you should consider verifying them yourself, if you are able).”⁶ This is a good principle, and in keeping with it I have investigated five questions in relation to the FDNY oral histories:

1. In the FDNY oral histories, how many FDNY members report hearing warnings of Seven’s collapse?
2. What was the degree of certainty in these warnings? If we create a binary system, how many firefighters can we classify

⁶FDNY oral history 9110469, p. 10.

as hearing that that the building *might* come down and how many can we classify as hearing that it *would* come down?

3. To the extent that we can determine times from the testimonies, how long before the actual collapse were the warnings received?
4. Who ascertained that the building was headed for possible or certain collapse—the FDNY members reporting the warnings or other parties such as their official superiors?
5. How many FDNY members gave causes of the expected collapse and what causes did they identify?

My method of answering these questions has been the old-fashioned one of reading the FDNY oral histories in their entirety. We can find most references through directed computer searches, but inevitably some cases slip through.

Although there is some degree of subjectivity in the decision as to what cases to include and how to classify cases, Appendices A and B represent my best attempts.

Appendix A lists the witnesses and Appendix B records my coding of each case. Please note that these lists and tables do not attempt to capture all references to damage to Seven and even less do they claim to capture all references to building Seven in the oral histories. They deal only with *collapse warnings*.

On the basis of the findings summarized in these appendices, the five questions posed may now be answered.

1. In the FDNY oral histories, there are about 60 FDNY members who report hearing warnings of Seven's collapse.
2. 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).

19. *Waiting for Seven: WTC 7 Collapse Warnings in the FDNY Oral Histories*

3. 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.
4. In five cases it is unknown who ascertained that the building was headed for possible or certain collapse. Of the remaining cases, seven FDNY members personally ascertained or affirmed the possible or definite collapse, while in 50 cases this judgment was made by others, typically official superiors. (There are two cases where the judgment was made on the basis of both self and other—hence the failure of these numbers to add up to the correct total.)
5. In 38 cases no cause of collapse is given. Of the remaining cases, no member gives other (non-fire) damage as sole cause of collapse; 15 members give fire alone as cause of collapse; and seven members give a combination of fire and other damage as cause of collapse.

Before turning directly to Mackey's argument, I note that almost half of the warnings where time can be estimated were received over two hours in advance of the building's collapse, and I also note that over half of the total collapse warnings are definite (we are dealing with more than suspicions and worries and estimates). These findings put a burden on any hypothesis of natural collapse.

But let us turn to the third statement I listed in my summary of Mackey's argument. Is it true that FDNY members rationally concluded from what they perceived that the building was in danger of collapse? Only seven appear to have done so, whereas 50 accepted the collapse prediction from others, typically superiors.

With regard to the fourth point in the argument, is it true that the collapse warnings were mainly the result of a rational conclusion

based on observation and training? No. As far as we can tell, no rational conclusion based on direct perception was made in the vast majority of cases.

Two additional claims made by Mackey merit comment. Among the “few elements common to virtually every single [FDNY] account,” he says, is this one: “Fires were considered a threat to the building’s structural integrity.” This is incorrect. In the 60 cases of collapse warning, the great majority of FDNY members do not report that they thought fire was a threat to the building’s structural integrity. In addition, says Mackey, “not one firefighter interview expresses doubt or surprise at the collapse of WTC 7.” This is also wrong, as we can see, for example, in the testimony of Kevin Howe:

“I remember when 7 World Trade came down and everybody was like shell shocked. I mean this was a 47 story building. We all ran. We were like oh, my god, here we go again. It just gave us the creeps.”
7

That most FDNY members seem to have accepted both the collapse warnings and the collapses themselves with few questions appears to be true and deserves to be discussed. But Mackey overstates his case and thereby weakens it.

As will be clear by now, my research refutes the claim that the FDNY witnesses as a body perceived with their own eyes that Seven was severely damaged and on that basis *concluded* that it was at risk of total collapse. My 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.

But if this is the case, how did the notion of total collapse arise in the first place?

The FDNY oral testimonies do not give a satisfactory answer to

⁷See the first hand accounts of Captain Chris Boyle (*Firehouse Magazine*, August, 2002) and Deputy Chief Peter Hayden (*Firehouse Magazine*, April, 2002):
<http://www.firehouse.com/terrorist/911/magazine/gz/boyle.html>
<http://www.firehouse.com/terrorist/911/magazine/gz/hayden.html>

this question.

A variety of high ranking individuals in the FDNY suggest in their testimonies that they concluded on the basis of their own observation that the building was going to collapse. As will be seen in Appendix C, which lists the seven cases of independent observation and assessment, Chiefs Fellini, Goldbach and Nigro felt the collapse warnings were supported by their own observations. And, outside the context of the formal oral histories conducted by the World Trade Center Task Force, there are

testimonies in *Firehouse Magazine* with Captain Boyle and Deputy Chief Hayden where these officers give signs of structural damage (the large hole supposedly created by debris from WTC 1, as well as creaking, leaning and bulging in WTC 7) that they say led them to worry about the stability of the building and, in Hayden's case, to conclude at about 2:00 p.m. that the building "was going to collapse."⁸ But many of us will not be satisfied with this answer. Hayden, for example, was on the scene before the collapse of either of the Twin Towers and got a good look at the damage the Towers sustained. On this basis he thought (and he says other members of the department agreed) "that there was going to be a partial collapse, a gradual collapse after a couple of hours of burning."⁹ We have independent testimony to the same effect from other FDNY members. In fact, when interviewees say in the FDNY oral histories that they were worried that the Twin Towers might collapse, it almost always turns out that what they were worried about was partial collapse--they worried, for example, that the portion of the building above the impact site might fall off (Appendix D). Almost without exception, they were staggered by the collapse that actually took place, which was sudden, violent, complete, symmetrical and extremely rapid. But if Hayden had only partial collapse in mind when he saw the Towers, with their obvious and major damage, on what basis did he conclude that WTC 7

⁸Hayden, p. 3.

⁹Hayden, p. 5.

was “coming down?” It is not clear what reasoning led him from “a visible bulge, it ran up about three floors”¹⁰ to the kind of collapse that eventually took place. It seems to me quite possible that this is a case where customary expectations had been destroyed by the collapses of the Towers. In fact, Hayden says, “under any normal circumstances, that’s a major event, a 47-story building collapsing. It seemed like a firecracker after the other ones came down...”¹¹

The two possibilities at issue here should be kept separate. The chiefs may have concluded that Seven was going to collapse on the basis of their pre-9-11 experience; or they may have concluded that Seven was going to collapse *on the basis of what they experienced on 9-11 itself with the collapse of the Towers*. These are not at all the same. If the collapses of the Towers are themselves suspect events, as they are for many of us, then we are not happy when someone treats these collapses as natural and makes conclusions accordingly.

There is another possibility that does not require anyone in the FDNY to have been “in the know.” I refer to one of the options Mackey apparently regards as outlandish:

“someone ‘in the know’ tricked a high-ranking member of the FDNY into *thinking* that it would collapse, and:

- e. This duped individual convinced many more fire-fighters that it would collapse;
- f. Those so informed believed it would collapse”

I have seen no direct evidence in the FDNY oral histories to support this hypothesis. But it is certainly not irrational to include it in our repertoire as a possibility and to explore it further. We have, as a comparison case, the important warning relating to the Twin Towers, made shortly before the collapse of the South Tower. I believe it is

¹⁰Hayden, p. 5.

¹¹FDNY oral history 9110160, pp. 17-18.

19. *Waiting for Seven: WTC 7 Collapse Warnings in the FDNY Oral Histories*

worth reminding readers of this warning so I will quote FDNY Chief Peruggia's account at length.¹²

"I was in a discussion with Mr. Rotanz and I believe it was a representative from the Department of Buildings, but I'm not sure. Some engineer type person, and several of us were huddled talking in the lobby and it was brought to my attention, it was believed that the structural damage that was suffered to the towers was quite significant and they were very confident that the building's stability was compromised and they felt that the north tower was in danger of a near imminent collapse.

I grabbed EMT Zarrillo, I advised him of that information. I told him he was to proceed immediately to the command post where Chief Ganci was located.."

Q. "They felt that just the one building or both of them?"

A. "The information we got at that time 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,

¹²Zarrillo's testimony in FDNY oral history 9110161, p. 6.

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.”

When Zarrillo carried Peruggia's startling news of imminent collapse to Chief Ganci, Ganci's response was, “who the fuck told you that?”¹³ 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 (see Appendix E), 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?

In my view, all three building collapses were peculiar in the extreme, and we have a perfect right to ask who determined that they were going to collapse and on what basis. We need not apologize for asking whether there might have been an “engineer type person” who told crucial members of the FDNY that Seven's stability was compromised, after which this warning was passed on and largely accepted by the rank and file. (Note Goldbach's statement in Appendix C that “they said it suffered some form of structural damage”—do we know who “they” refers to?) Exploring this possibility further remains an important task.

But if, as many in the 9-11 truth movement believe, the damage sustained by Seven in no way justified the collapse that eventually took place, how could so many of the firefighters have accepted without

¹³James Canham, FDNY oral history 9110370, p. 25.

question the warnings of such collapse? I cannot answer this question with certainty but I can make suggestions.

First, we should remember that Hayden is not the only one whose expectations were overturned by the earlier events of the day. With the collapse of the Towers,

normality had been fractured. (“I’m doing this 23 years...This changed all the rules. This changed all the rules. This went from a structure to a wafer in seconds, in seconds.”¹⁴) In the FDNY oral histories we can see the progressive adjustment to the abnormal even between the collapse of the South Tower and that of the North Tower. The first collapse was met with almost universal shock, but after that building came down people on the scene were less confident the second building would remain standing, and when it came down they were less surprised. (“At that point I stopped myself and thought to myself, you’ve got to be smart about this. The first tower came down. There’s a great chance that the second one might as well.”)¹⁵ There is nothing irrational here. 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.

Secondly, 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. (“At that point we were just I think, everybody, the emotions were fried.”¹⁶) They had seen chaos and horrors, and over three hundred of their companions were dead. They felt like a “defeated army;”¹⁷

¹⁴Glenn Asaeda, FDNY oral history 9110062, p. 24-25.

¹⁵Timothy Burke, FDNY oral history 9110488, p. 17.

¹⁶Zachary Goldfarb, FDNY oral history 9110145, p. 46.

¹⁷Hayden, p. 5.

they felt this was “just one of those wars we were just going to lose”¹⁸. Paramedic Delgado’s response to Seven’s collapse is indicative of this spirit: “they said it’s collapsing and I didn’t even give a shit anymore.”¹⁹

This resignation seems to have led to a kind of innocence, in which even quite precise demarcation of the collapse zone raised no doubts. In DeCosta Wright’s interview we have the following exchange:

Q. “Were you there when building 7 came down in the afternoon?”

A. “Yes.”

Q. “You were still there?”

A. “Yes, so basically they measured out how far the building was going to come, so we knew exactly where we could stand.”

Q. “So they just put you in a safe area, safe enough for when that building came down?”

A. “5 blocks. 5 blocks away. We still could see. Exactly right on point, the cloud stopped right there.”²⁰

I do not think it is too much to suggest that at this point in the day the firefighters had reached a stage allied to, although more extreme than, that reached by many in the general American population on 9-11. Shock and chaos had led to a willingness to accept interpretations of events that would normally have been rejected as unreasonable or unlikely.

There is a further matter we must become aware of if we wish to understand the strange lack of interest in Seven’s collapse in the

¹⁸FDNY oral history 9110004, p. 24-25.

¹⁹FDNY oral history 9110054, p. 11-12.

²⁰FDNY oral history 9110461, p. 7-8.

FDNY oral histories. It has to do with guidelines operative in at least some of the World Trade Center Task Force Interviews.

When Firefighter Michael Morabito attempted to talk about the collapse of Seven in his interview he was interrupted by his interviewer with the words, "They don't really want to know about 7."²¹ What are we to make of this? Was Seven targeted for exclusion in these interviews? I believe there was a principle of exclusion operative in at least a portion of the interviews, but the evidence suggests it was quite broad and relegated to secondary status virtually everything that occurred after the collapse of the Towers. When Lieutenant Michael Hadden asked his interviewer, "Do you want me to tell you what I did the whole day?" he received the reply, "No, no, that's fine. What we're interested in is the time around the collapse."²² It is clear from the context that the collapse in question was that of the Twin Towers. This guideline is confirmed by another interviewer, who said he wished to hear the interviewee's story until, "Roughly noon, somewhere around then."²³ Interviewer Monty Feiler was explicit at the start of his interview with Lieutenant Howard Hahn about his time frame. "What I'd like you to do is if you can just relate a scenario of what happened on the morning of September 11th, how you became involved, and go up to the second building collapse."²⁴ And Fire Marshal Pat Campbell used very similar language: "We are here to get a history today of the events that happened on September 11. What we are interested in is that from the time you became aware of the attack until the first plane hit the south tower until after the second tower had collapsed."²⁵

Not all interviewers, obviously, adhered to these guidelines (or were, perhaps, even aware of them): if they had, we would not have

²¹FDNY oral history 9110315, p. 3-4.

²²FDNY oral history 9110145, p. 51.

²³FDNY oral history 9110511, p. 2.

²⁴FDNY oral history 9110191, p. 2.

²⁵E.g., Charles Gschlecht's interview (FDNY oral history 9110274) by Murray Murad.

the little we do possess about the collapse of Seven. But we do encounter interviewers who terminated the interview abruptly once the collapses of the Towers had been dealt with. [^n1927]

I do not know why this guideline was established and whether it has a sinister or an innocent meaning. But the result has been that the collective narrative related by the FDNY climaxes with the collapse of the Towers and effectively ends shortly thereafter. Building Seven appears as an afterthought.

Restoring Seven's profile has been the work of the 9-11 truth movement. In my view the restoration should continue until the public is fully informed of this building, the peculiar nature of its collapse, and the equally peculiar foreknowledge of this collapse. I have three recommendations, which I add to those already made in the course of the article, for future research:

1. There should be a comprehensive study of the progressive damage sustained by WTC 7 on 9-11, taking into account all forms of evidence available and all sides and floors of the building. Of course, NIST's final report on Seven should include such a study, but not all of us are confident NIST will do the job responsibly. In any case, why wait for NIST?
2. There should be a comprehensive historical and comparative study of all collapses of steel-framed buildings, whether total or partial, so that instead of warring rhetoric we will have a solid set of cases with which to compare the collapse of Seven.
3. There should be a study of collapse warnings and foreknowledge of building collapses—I would suggest the scope be quite broad—so that we will know how normal or abnormal the collapse warnings are in the case of Seven.

Until these research projects are complete I will continue to regard the WTC 7 collapse warnings as one of the many serious 9-11

19. *Waiting for Seven: WTC 7 Collapse Warnings in the FDNY Oral Histories*

anomalies that force us to view the official narrative of the day with skepticism.

Appendix A

WTC 7 COLLAPSE WARNINGS

- Banaciski, Richard 9110253, p. 6-7; Burke, Timothy 9110488, p. 17
Cahill, Joseph 9110085, p. 16-17; Cassidy, Tiernach 9110413, p. 17
ff.
Castellano, Pete 9110398, p. 4; Charles, Jason 9110486, p. 41
Cherrington, Andre 9110036, p. 5; Congiusta, Frank 9110425, p. 4-
5.
Cook, Louis 9110103, p. 36-37; Cruthers, Frank 9110179, p. 8-9.
David, Roy 9110070, p. 5-6; Donato, Thomas 9110471, p. 5-6.
Drury, James 9110098, p. 10; Fellini, Frank 9110217, p. 3.
Felton, Jarjean 9110041, p. 16; Fitzpatrick, Brian 9110256, p. 7-8.
Fortis, Joseph 9110200, p. 13-15; Goldbach, Ray 9110150, p. 13-14.
Henricksen, John 9110069, p. 4; Holzman, George 9110467, p. 8.
Howe, Kevin 9110469, p. 10; Jezycki, Stephen 9110050, p. 8-9.
Kelty, Eugene 9110261, p. 11-12; Kennedy, Edward 9110502, p. 19.
Long, Matthew 9110021, p. 9-10; Lowney, Joseph 9110468, p. 5.
Mancuso, Anthony 9110271, p. 5; Marsilla, Fred 9110399, p. 8.
Massa, Richard 9110267, p. 5; Massa, Vincent 9110222, p. 17 ff.
McCarthy, Thomas 9110055, p. 10 ff; McGlynn, James 9110447,
p. 18-19, 29-30
McGovern, Kevin 9110301, p. 12; Mecner, Edward 9110391, p. 11.
Melarango, William 9110045, p. 7-8; Moribito, John 9110354, p. 18.
Moriarty, David 9110228, p. 11-12; Murray, Patrick 9110327, p. 12.
Muschello, Dominick 9110249, p. 17-18; Nigro, Daniel 9110154,
p. 10.
Palone, Michael 9110314, p. 4; Piccerill, Steve 9110119, p. 8.
Pilla, Steven 9110104, p. 13-14; Prezant, David 9110212, p. 25-27.
Quinn, Kevin 9110339, p. 3; Rosie, Peter 9110479, p. 6.

Ryan, William 9110117, p. 15-16; Salerno, Anthony 9110309, p. 5-6.
Scaringello, Patrick 9110030, p. 10; Smith, Thomas 9110246, p. 14.
Sohmer, Robert 9110472, p. 4-5; Stroebel, Russ 9110497, p. 5.
Sweeney, Frank 9110113, p. 14; Vasquez, Paul 9110397, p. 5.
Wallace, James 9110409, p. 4; Walsh, James 9110459, p. 18.
Weindler, Rudolf 9110462, p. 5-7; Weldon, Richard 9110307, p. 8.
Williams, Vandon 9110282, p. 6; Wright, DeCosta 9110054, p. 11-12.

Appendix B

COLLAPSE WARNINGS: ANALYSIS

Key:

- (1) "Degree of certainty" refers to the degree of certainty that appears to accompany the warning.

U = unknown

D = definite (e.g., "they knew 7 was coming down"; "we waited for 7 to come down") I = indefinite (e.g., "they were afraid 7 might come down")

- (2) "Time of warning" refers to the time at which the collapse warning is given.

U = unknown

2- = less than 2 hours before collapse 2+ = 2 or more hours before collapse 4+ = 4 or more hours before collapse

- (3) "Whose judgment?" has to do with who made the determination that WTC 7 was at risk of collapse.

U = unknown

S = self (the FDNY member, on the basis of his/her own observation and judgment, has determined that WTC 7 is in danger of collapse)

19. *Waiting for Seven: WTC 7 Collapse Warnings in the FDNY Oral Histories*

O = other (the FDNY member, on the basis of the observations and judgments of others, typically superiors, has determined that WTC 7 is in danger of collapse)

- (4) “Causes of collapse” refers to the causes of WTC 7’s vulnerability to collapse as stated in the account.

U = unknown F = fire

D = other damage

Each of the above classifications may be qualified by the addition of a question mark (e.g., “D?”). This indicates that I am making an estimate based on sketchy information. But note that uncertainties indicated by question marks have been ignored in the final computation of results.*

FDNY member	Degree of certainty	Time of warning	Whose judgment?	Causes of collapse
Banaciski, Richard 9110253	I	2+	O	F + D?
Burke, Timothy 9110488	D	U	O	U
Cahill, Joseph 9110085	D	2-	O	U
Cassidy, Tiernach 9110413	D	U	S	F + D
Castellano, Pete 9110398	I	U	O	U

FDNY member	Degree of certainty	Time of warning	Whose judgment?	Causes of collapse
Charles, Jason 9110486	D	U	O	U
Cherrington, Andre 9110036	I	U	O	F
Congiusta, Frank 9110425	D	2+	O	U
Cook, Louis 9110103	U	2-	O	F
Cruthers, Frank 9110179	D?	2+	U	F + D
David, Roy 9110070	I	2-(?)	O	U

TODO: Finish this table

Appendix C

THE SEVEN INDEPENDENTS: FDNY Members Who Personally Judged that Seven was Likely to Collapse

Note: I have given these testimonies as I have found them and have not added critique. But I should point out that some of them include speculation that is highly dubious.

(1) Cassidy, Tiernach, 9110413

On p. 17 Cassidy refers to the imminent collapse of WTC 7. Then on p. 19 he continues:

“So, yeah, then we just stayed on Vesey until building seven came down. There was nothing we could do. The

19. *Waiting for Seven: WTC 7 Collapse Warnings in the FDNY Oral Histories*

flames were coming out of every window of that building from the explosion of the south tower. So then building seven down. When that started coming down, you heard that pancaking sound again.”

On p. 21 ff. the interviewer—almost unique among interviewers in this collection-- pursues the issue of Seven’s damage:

Q. “Why was building seven on fire? Was that flaming debris from tower two—”

A. “From tower two.”

Q. “—that fell onto that building and lit it on fire?”

A. “Correct.”

Q. “Because it really got going, that building seven. I saw it late in the day, and like the first seven floors were on fire. It looked like heavy fire on seven floors.”

A. “It was fully engulfed. That whole building—there were pieces of tower two in building seven and the corners of the building missing and whatnot. But just looking up at it from ground level, however many stories it was, 40-some-odd, you could see the flames going straight through from one side of the building to the other. That’s an entire block.”

Q. “I wonder what was burning in there. What do you think was burning. There’s not a lot of wood in there.”

A. “You figure, that jet fuel, that explosion that hit, everything just came out. Remember that explosion? It was massive, that fireball. That jet fuel just—”

Q. “It was jet fuel, yeah. That must have been where it landed. That’s probably where a lot of the jet fuel went.”

A. “A 25,000 gallon tank I think it had?”

Q. "It had to go somewhere."

(2) Fellini, Frank, 9110217, p. 3

"The major concern at that time at that particular location was number Seven, building number seven, which had taken a big hit from the north tower. When it fell, it ripped steel out from between the third and sixth floors across the façade on Vesey Street. We were concerned that the fires on several floors and the missing steel would result in the building collapsing. So for the next five or six hours we kept firefighters from working anywhere near that building, which included the whole north side of the World Trade Center complex. Eventually around 5:00 or a little after, building number seven came down."

(3) Goldbach, Ray, 9110150, p. 13-14

"I then walked down a couple of blocks back to the site. We were north of the Winter Garden at that point. It might have been—it was Vesey Street. We walked all the way back down to Vesey Street. There was a big discussion going on at that point about pulling all of our units out of 7 World Trade Center. Chief Nigro didn't feel it was worth taking the slightest chance of somebody else getting injured. So at that point we made a decision to take all of our units out of 7 World Trade Center because there was a potential for collapse."

Q. "It was on fire, correct, Captain?"

A. "Yes, it was on fire at that time. Then they said it suffered some form of structural damage. These things were going on at the same time. The fact that we thought we found Ganci and Feehan and his place

19. *Waiting for Seven: WTC 7 Collapse Warnings in the FDNY Oral Histories*

at 7 World Trade Center. Made the decision to back everybody away, took all the units and moved them all the way back toward North End Avenue, which is as far I guess west as you could get on Vesey Street, to keep them out of the way.”

- (4) Kelty, Eugene, 9110261, p. 11-12

“And 7 World Trade was burning up at the time. We could see it. There was concern. I had gone up to take a look at it, because I knew that the telephone company building, which is 140 West Street, was next to 7 World Trade Center, and there was a concern that if 7 World Trade Center came down, what would happen to this building? We went in there, we checked it out. There were some people in there. We made them evacuate and I went in the back to see what was happening.

The fire at 7 World Trade was working its way from the front of the building northbound to the back of the building. There was no way there could be water put on it, because there was no water in the area. I went back and I reminded whoever the chief was, I don’t know if it was Chief McKavanagh or Chief Blaich, that with 7 World Trade Center in danger of collapsing, you had to be careful, because Con Edison had big transformers in the back that supplied the lower half of Manhattan. ...when I was coming back somewhere around I think it was 5:00 o’clock, 6:00 o’clock, 7 World Trade Center came down.”

- (5) Massa, Vincent, 9110222, p. 17-18

“But they weren’t letting guys too close. At this point Seven World Trade Center was going heavy, and they weren’t letting anybody get too close. Everybody was

expecting that to come down. We hung out for hours...I remember later on in the day it was getting close that they were more concerned about seven coming down. We had no idea what was going on on the east side. We were all on our side. On the west side it was pretty clear. The wind was blowing from west to east I believe. I remember later on in the day as we were waiting for seven to come down they kept backing us up Vesey, almost a full block. They were concerned about seven coming down, and they kept changing us, establishing a collapse zone and backing us up.

....

The whole time while we were waiting—there were hours that went by. Seven came down after 5 in the afternoon.”

(6) Nigro, Daniel, 9110154, p. 10

“The most important operational decision to be made that afternoon was the collapse had damaged 7 World Trade Center, which is about a 50 story building, at Vesey between West Broadway and Washington Street. It had very heavy fire on many floors and I ordered the evacuation of an area sufficient around to protect our members, so we had to give up some rescue operations that were going on at the time and back the people away far enough so that if 7 World Trade did collapse, we wouldn’t lose any more people. We continued to operate on what we could from that distance and approximately an hour and a half after that order was given, at 5:30 in the afternoon, 7 World Trade Center collapsed completely.”

(7) McGlynn, James, 9110447, p. 29-30

19. *Waiting for Seven: WTC 7 Collapse Warnings in the FDNY Oral Histories*

“Just when you thought it was over, you’re walking by this building and you’re hearing this building creak and fully involved in flames. It’s like, is it coming down next? Sure enough, about half an hour later it came down.”

Appendix D

WITNESSES WHO WERE STUNNED BY TOTAL COLLAPSE BUT MIGHT HAVE ACCEPTED DIFFERENT, LESSER FORMS OF COLLAPSE (EXAMPLES)

- (1) McGlynn, James, 9110447, p. 8

”Any time I’ve heard of a collapse, it was never an entire building like this turned out to be.”

- (2) Murray, Patrick, 9110327, p. 16- 17

”Early on, looking at the buildings, my personal belief, my personal immediate belief was that the top of the building was going to slide off of the south tower because damage that the plane did, it looked like it took out half the building on a number of floors, on multiple floors. But it was a fleeting thought. I don’t think anybody there believed in their heart that that building was going to collapse, even that the top would come off. But I don’t think anybody believed that that building was going to collapse the way it did.”

- (3) Carletti, Richard, 9110419, p. 4

”I turned to Tommy and I said, Tommy, this building is in danger of collapse. In my opinion, I didn’t think there was going to be a catastrophic collapse...”

- (4) Chiafari, Joseph (Lieutenant), 9110215, p. 14

"I was thinking in my mind, gee, if the thing was going to collapse, how it was going to weaken itself, most likely where it's burning at, it's most likely going to tip over and the remainder of the structure is almost going to like remain intact, so you had a good amount of like 20 or 30 floors that would maybe tip over on its side."

- (5) Cooke, Alan, 9110040, p. 4

"I heard a rumble. Both of us looked up and we saw a part of the building. I saw a part of the building coming down. I had thought it was just one piece of the building coming down. I didn't in my imagination didn't think it was the entire building coming down."

- (6) DeMarco, Diane, 9110331, p. 8

"I saw the antenna start to slide, but we thought at that point that it was going to topple over, not go straight down."

- (7) Delgado, Manuel, 9110004, p. 15

"It was tilting towards us, so it had been to be tilting eastward."

Q. "East?"

A. "Maybe southeast...At that point we hear the rumble and, you know, this is it. I figure I'm dead. I thought this tower was going to topple."

- (8) Dixon, Brian (Battalion Chief), 9110166,

19. *Waiting for Seven: WTC 7 Collapse Warnings in the FDNY Oral Histories*

p. 15-16

"The realization hit that it's going to fall down, the top's coming off. I was still thinking-- there was never a thought that this whole thing is coming down. I thought that that blew out and stuff is starting to fly down. The top is going to topple off there."

p. 19

"But I went back up and peered out. I'm expecting to look up and see that the top of the building fell into the street.

I look and what I see is about 20 stories left of a building and jagged edges on the south side. I was like 20 stories, maybe, or so and on the north side of that tower down to about maybe 10 or 15 stories on the south side of it.

It's like I can't believe the whole building is down. I was dumbfounded."

(9) Grabher, Steve (Chief), 9110241, p. 11

"The whole top was teetering, and I really thought just the top of the building was falling off."

(10) Guidetti, Pete, 9110084, p. 25

"In me saying that these buildings are coming down, I thought it was going to collapse, it was going to topple."

Q. "From above?"

A. "From above, like 30 stories, 20. Whatever was left above the plane crash in either tower would just give way and go this way and come down into the street. I did not think the whole building would pancake down."

See also, Supervising Fire Marshall Robert Byrnes, 9110206, p. 5-6 and Lieutenant Michael Cahill, 9110143, p. 7.

Appendix E

WITNESSES WHO WERE TOLD PLANES COULD NOT BRING DOWN THE TOWERS (EXAMPLES, EXCLUDING PERUGGIA)

- (1) Gribbon, Frank (Deputy Commissioner), 9110167, p. 21

"The one thing, I talked to Ray Goldbach and Tom Fitzpatrick when I got there and I looked up at them and I said do we have a collapse potential here. I remember them saying no, they are made to withstand a hit from planes."

- (2) Guidetti, Pete, 9110084, p. 23-26

"About 20 years ago when I was full duty...It was a Friday night. I'll never forget this I'm standing in front of quarters. It's the 12 to 3 watch, summer night, beautiful night. A civilian is walking by, stop, he's looking in, the apparatus doors are up. I start talking to him. He turns out to be an architectural engineer. He builds high-rise buildings, skyscrapers.

I said, 'Let me ask you a question. Can I ask you a question?' He said, 'Yeah, sure.' I said, 'The World Trade Center—' He says, 'Yes.' These are my words, Kevin, on my father's grave and my mother's grave. I said, 'Let me ask you a question. If a 747 out of Newark topped off with jet fuel crashes into the 80th story of one of the stories, will it topple the top 30 stories?' 'Oh, no, it's not designed to do that. It's not designed to do that the way we constructed this. We took things like that into consideration in the building of it. That would not happen' At that time when I ask this guy this question, I'm picturing a plane going in, blowing out loads of floors, fully

19. *Waiting for Seven: WTC 7 Collapse Warnings in the FDNY Oral Histories*

loaded, 747 I quoted, topped off with jet fuel, would it topple the 30 stories. He said no...He didn't turn around and say, 'Oh, no, you don't have to worry about the building toppling. However, you have a strong possibility of it pancaking down on itself because it's primarily steel construction' But again, he didn't say that. He just said it's not coming down.”

- (3) Moribito, John, 9110354, p. 11

”I felt the building shake. I saw the lights flicker. At that point, I started to get nervous and wonder whether or not the buildings would come down.

I approached the chiefs. The chiefs were assured by the engineers of the building that there was no way that the buildings would come down. They actually said that the buildings could take--withstand ten airplanes hitting it, and there was no way that the buildings could come down.”

- (4) Prezant, David (Deputy Chief Medical Officer), 9110212, p. 3

”At that time no firefighters had been injured. The building had not collapsed. I remember overhearing several Chiefs saying that a collapse was not possible.”

[Next](#) > [Contents](#) > [Prev](#)

20. The Missing Jolt: A Simple Refutation of the NIST-Bazant Collapse Hypothesis

When I first read the explanation of the destruction of the Twin Towers given by the National Institute of Standards and Technology I discovered that (1) this explanation claimed that the portion of the buildings above the airplane impact area fell with such devastating impact on the remaining portion of the Towers that it initiated their complete destruction, yet (2) NIST did not do the required work to show that this is what actually happened. Instead, the NIST researchers looked only at the early phase of destruction—what they called “collapse initiation”—and, to my surprise, left the total pulverization of these massive buildings to their readers’ imagination. Engineering professor Zdeněk Bažant rushed in to fill the gaps in the NIST explanation.

But in the course of my work on the Towers, I made relevant measurements and discovered that there was no sign of such sudden and massive impact between the two portions of the buildings as is required by this hypothesis. Being unable to handle the mathematics of the argument myself, I was delighted to accept the offer of

help by Tony Szamboti, an engineer who was equally intrigued by NIST's strange hypothesis. We worked together diligently and comradely to complete this piece.

This article was co-authored with engineer Tony Szamboti and published in the *Journal of 911 Studies*, January 2009, Vol 24

This paper was revised in April 2009 to use symmetric differencing to calculate instantaneous velocity. The initial method used the equations of motion to calculate velocity, which are only valid with constant acceleration, causing smoothing of the data and inflation of the pre-impact velocity. Since the energy requirements do not change, the actual lower pre-impact velocity results in a larger percentage of kinetic energy drained at impact with a correspondingly more dramatic change in velocity.

An arithmetic error in the velocity reduction calculation on page 26 was also corrected.

Introduction

In its *Final Report on the Collapse of the World Trade Center Towers*, the National Institute of Standards and Technology summarizes its three year study and outlines its explanation of the total collapse of WTC 1 and WTC 2. ¹

Readers of the report will find that the roughly \$20 million expended on this effort have resulted in an explanation of the total collapse of these buildings that is so vague it barely qualifies as a hypothesis. But it does have one crucial feature of a hypothesis: it

¹NIST NCSTAR 1. Federal Building and Fire Safety Investigation of the World Trade Center Disaster. Final Report on the Collapse of the World Trade Center Towers. National Institute of Standards and Technology, U.S. Department of Commerce, September 2005. <http://wtc.nist.gov/NISTNCSTAR1CollapseofTowers.pdf>

is, in principle, falsifiable. In fact, it is easy to demonstrate that it is false.

In this paper we will, concentrating on the North Tower, offer a refutation that is:

- easy to understand but reasonably precise
- capable of being stated briefly
- verifiable by any reader with average computer skills and a grasp of simple mathematics.

NIST's Hypothesis of Total Collapse

Three essential elements of NIST's hypothesis of total collapse are made explicit in the Final Report and the companion volumes of the study:

1. Because of damage to stories 93 to 98, and especially because of column buckling due to fire, the top 12 stories of the North Tower (99-110) plus the roof were, in effect, separated from the rest of the Tower and began to behave as a unit.²
2. This "rigid block" of 12 stories plus the roof began to move. First it tilted, and then it abruptly fell onto the stories beneath it.³
3. The fall of the rigid block caused such damage to the lower structure that "global collapse began."⁴

²There is some ambiguity in the NIST study on which stories are included in the upper rigid block, but the analysis given in this paper appears to represent NIST's best estimate. See, e.g., NIST NCSTAR 1, p. 150-151.

³NIST NCSTAR 1, p. 151.

⁴NIST NCSTAR 1, p. 151.

The *rigidity* of the upper block of stories is crucial to this explanation. If the upper block were to break, disintegrate or flow on impact it would certainly not threaten the 92 intact floors beneath it.

In addition, the rigid block had to *fall* onto the rest of the building. Although this seems obvious, the NIST authors are often shy about saying it. We hear about the rigid block's "descent."⁵ We hear of tilting and "downward movement."⁶ We have to look carefully to find the NIST authors using the language of falling. Whatever the reasons for their reticence, it is clear that it will not do for the upper block to ease itself onto the building beneath it, with a gradual creaking of buckled columns and sagging floors. If this were to happen, why would the structure beneath collapse?

There was nothing special about the *weight* of the upper block, rigid or otherwise. The lower part of the Tower had held up this weight without difficulty since 1970. The lower block had 283 cold steel columns, with less than 30% of their total load capacity being utilized for gravity loads, because of the factors of safety designed into the structure and the need to withstand high winds—and gravity loads were essentially the only loads the columns would have been subject to on a day such as 9/11 with little wind. The lower block was not weak, nor (excluding stories 93-98) was it damaged by plane impact or fire. The weight of the upper block posed no threat to it. If there were to be a threat, it had to come from the *momentum* of the upper block. But momentum is a product of mass and velocity, and since the upper block could not increase its mass it had to increase, if it were to become a threat, its velocity. Since NIST's theory assumes the only energy at play at this stage of events was gravitational, the upper block had to fall, and the greater its velocity the greater its momentum. The longer and the less impeded its fall, the greater would be its impact on the lower structure. So it is no surprise that the NIST authors, however shy they are about affirming it, eventually

⁵NIST NCSTAR 1, p. xxxviii.

⁶NIST NCSTAR 1, p.151.

come out in favour of the *falling* of the upper block.⁷

Zdenek Bazant and Yong Zhou, with whose September 13, 2001 back-of-the-envelope theory (with subsequent revisions and additions) NIST largely agrees, have never hesitated to say that the upper block fell.⁸ Bazant has likewise been frank about the need for severe impact as the upper and lower structures met: he believes the impact may have been powerful enough to have been recorded by seismometers.⁹ In his view, collapse initiation of the lower structure required “one powerful jolt.”¹⁰ Of course, if there was a powerful jolt to the lower structure there must also have been a

⁷NIST NCSTAR 1, 145 (“the falling building section”); 146 (“the falling building mass,” “the falling mass”). See also the companion volume: NIST NCSTAR 1-6. Federal Building and Fire Safety Investigation of the World Trade Center Disaster. Structural Fire Response and Probable Collapse Sequence of the World Trade Center Towers. National Institute of Standards and Technology, U.S. Department of Commerce, September 2005, p. liv (“the building section began to fall downward”) and p. 156 (“the building section began to fall vertically”). <http://wtc.nist.gov/oct05NCSTAR1-6index.htm>

⁸Bazant, Zdenek and Yong Zhou, “Why Did the World Trade Center Collapse?—Simple Analysis”. *Journal of Engineering Mechanics*, vol. 128, no. 1 (Jan. 2002), p. 2-6 See also the Addendum to this article in the same journal, vol. 128, no. 3 (March 2002), p. 369-370. <http://www.civil.northwestern.edu/people/bazant/PDFs/Papers/405.pdf>

Note: when we refer in the article to Bazant, we include his co-authors. For NIST’s reference to the Bazant paper, see NIST NCSTAR 1-6, p. 323.

⁹Bazant, Zdenek and Jie-Liang Le, Frank Greening, David Benson, “Collapse of the World Trade Center Towers: What Did and Did Not Cause It?” Structural Engineering Report No. 07- 05/C605c. Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Northwestern University. May 27, 2007. Revised December 15, 2007. p. 11. <http://www.civil.northwestern.edu/people/bazant/PDFs/Papers/00%20WTC%20Collapse%20-%20What%20did%20%26%20Did%20Not%20Cause%20It%20-%20Revised%206-22-07.pdf>

Jim Hoffman challenged Bazant’s claim some time ago in his article “Seismic Records of the Twin Towers’ Destruction: Clarifying the Relationship Between Seismic Evidence and Controlled Demolition Theories.” Version 0.9, Oct. 31, 2006.

http://911research.wtc7.net/essays/demolition/seismic.html#evidence_of

¹⁰Addendum, Bazant and Zhou, 2002, p. 369.

powerful jolt to the upper falling structure, in accord with Newton's Third Law.

In order to keep a sense of reality as we discuss NIST's theory it may be useful to label the three interacting parts of the North Tower, as they are pictured by NIST, as RB-12+, DS-6 and RB-92. Where RB stands for rigid block, DS stands for damaged structure, and the numbers following the letters refer to the number of stories in each structure. The upper block comprised the 12 stories of 99-110 as well as the roof structure with antenna and hat truss; the intermediate area was damaged by plane impact and fire and was six stories high (93-98 inclusive); and the lower block was rigid and comprised, in addition to subterranean levels, the first 92 stories of the building.

These designations actually underestimate the contrast between RB-12+ and RB-92, because the latter was not only largely undamaged by fire but was more massive per story. It was also stronger: the Tower's columns tapered as they ascended.¹¹ Yet the fall of RB-12+, we are supposed to believe, put a catastrophic end to DS-6 and RB-92.

What NIST essentially says, agreeing with Bazant, is that the lighter and weaker part initially fell with a powerful jolt onto the heavier and stronger part, which could not withstand its momentum, and that this caused a progressive collapse to initiate smashing the lower block to bits all the way to the ground.

The NIST Final Report does not tell us what happened to RB-12+ after its impact with the two structures beneath it. Did it fall through them all the way to the ground (that is, to the rubble heap on the

¹¹See Gregory Urich, "Analysis of the Mass and Potential Energy of World Trade Center Tower 1." *Journal of 9/11 Studies*, vol. 18 (Dec. 2007). <http://www.journalof911studies.com/>

See also NIST NCSTAR 1-1. *Federal Building and Fire Safety Investigation of the World Trade Center Disaster. Design, Construction, and Maintenance of Structural and Life Safety Systems*. National Institute of Standards and Technology, U.S. Department of Commerce, September 2005.

<http://wtc.nist.gov/oct05NCSTAR1-1index.htm>

ground), maintaining considerable mass and rigidity the whole time—as Bazant argued in 2001 and has continued to argue? ¹²

On this the NIST authors are silent.

NIST also does not tell us how far RB-12+ fell before its impact with intact structure. Did it fall one story (roughly 12 feet), or several stories? We are left in the dark. Once again Bazant comes to the rescue. It fell “at least one story,” he says. ¹³

To his credit, Bazant is willing to state the essential elements of the hypothesis. If this hypothesis is to hold any water at all there must be substantial impact: RB-12+ has a lot of work to do, so it had better fall at least one story.

As we will show, for the purposes of the present refutation it does not matter whether RB-12+ fell one story, six stories, or somewhere in between.

The Necessary Jolt

As Bazant has said, when the top part fell and struck the stories beneath it, there had to be a powerful jolt. While a jolt entails acceleration of the impacted object it requires deceleration of the impacting object. Even a hammer hitting a nail decelerates, and if the hammer is striking a strong, rigid body fixed to the earth its deceleration will be abrupt and dramatic.

Although NIST does not explicitly speak, like Bazant, of a “jolt”, and may therefore be thought to evade this paper’s refutation, it is impossible for NIST to escape the implications of its own assertions. The NIST report speaks of a strong, rigid structure (the upper structure or rigid block) falling freely onto another strong, rigid structure (the intact part of the building below the damaged area): the jolt cannot be avoided. ¹⁴

¹²Bazant and Zhou, 2002; Bazant et al, 2007.

¹³Bazant et al, 2007, p. 1.

¹⁴The following four points commit NIST to impact and jolt:

20. *The Missing Jolt: A Simple Refutation of the NIST-Bazant Collapse Hypothesis*

This was a necessary jolt. Without it the required work could not have been done.

-
- a. NIST speaks of the core of the building as consisting of three sections, which correspond closely to the sections we have spoken of when discussing the building as a whole:

“At this point, the core of WTC 1 could be imagined to be in three sections. There was a bottom section below the impact floors that could be thought of as a strong, rigid box, structurally undamaged and at almost normal temperatures. There was a top section above the impact and fire floors that was also a heavy, rigid box. In the middle was the third section, partially damaged by the aircraft and weakened by heat from the fires.” (NIST NCSTAR 1, p. 79)
 - b. The section of the building above the damage zone NIST calls a “rigid block.” This rigid block first manifests its independent movement when it tilts to the south. (“The section of the building above the impact zone (near the 98th floor), acting as a rigid block, tilted...” NIST NCSTAR 1, p. 201.) NIST also refers to this rigid block with terms such as “upper section,” “building section above the impact zone,” “building mass,” “upper building section” and “structural block.” See NIST NCSTAR 1, pp. 83, 195, 196, 201
 - c. NIST acknowledges that this rigid block then *falls*. NIST says that “the building section began to fall downward,” “the building section began to fall vertically.” Indeed, we are told that this falling rigid block goes through all or part of the damaged area “essentially in free fall.” (“Since the stories 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.”) See NIST NCSTAR 1-6, pp. 416, 238; NIST NCSTAR 1, p. 196.
 - d. After falling through all or part of the damaged area of the tower, the rigid block or falling building mass encounters “intact structure.” (“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.”) See NIST NCSTAR 1, p. 196. This “intact structure,” has, of course, already been referred to as including the core of the building, described as “a strong, rigid box, structurally undamaged and at almost normal temperatures.”

Testing for Deceleration

If a jolt occurred there would have been high short-term deceleration of the upper block. Why not simply check for this deceleration? It is not difficult. We will:

- examine a video clip of the North Tower's collapse
- find a point on the upper block of the North Tower, the progress of which can be observed and measured in the early stages of the collapse
- plot the progress of this point on a graph
- check for evidence of deceleration

We have chosen a well known video clip of the collapse associated with French film maker, Etienne Sauret.¹⁵ The Sauret clip has advantages over many others. It is a single, continuous sequence with no changes in camera angle and no zooming in and out. There is a very slight shift in the camera position relative to distant objects caused by a trembling of the camera several seconds prior to the collapse, but this is irrelevant to us since all our measurements are taken after the shift. The camera is very steady throughout the time we are making our measurements, as we can confirm by measuring the position of the picture frame relative to stationary objects. In addition, the image of the north face of the North Tower is exceptionally clear in these images.

Here is how we proceed:¹⁶

¹⁵A version of the Sauret video clip can be found at: <http://www.youtube.com:80/watch?v=xGAofwkAOlo>

For our purposes we have used the footage from Etienne Sauret's film, "WTC: the first 24 hours."

¹⁶Readers wanting to get a rough approximation of the measurements in this paper without expense may acquire from the internet the software, Vdownloader:

20. *The Missing Jolt: A Simple Refutation of the NIST-Bazant Collapse Hypothesis*

1. We save the Sauret footage to our hard drive.
2. We break the 1 minute, 56.53 second clip into 3497 equal segments or “frames.” Each frame is approximately 0.033 seconds in length (33 thousandths of a second).
3. We find two points associated with the roof of the upper block of the North Tower whose progress we can measure. Two points are necessary since neither one is consistently visible but one of the two is always visible. The point whose fall we shall use in our computations is at the tip of a white device on the roof. (The distance between this point and the upper frame is called Distance A in Figure 1 below.) The other point is located at the interface of the upper white section of the roof and the lower dark section. (The distance between this point and the upper frame is called Distance B in Figure 1.) The difference between Distance B and Distance A is approximately 28 pixels. Where the white device on the upper right-hand corner of the roof is obscured by smoke, measurements of the roof interface have been taken and the position of the device has been obtained by subtracting 28.
4. We choose a set of frames that stretches from Frame 929, before the discernible beginning of the roof’s fall, to the last frame in

<http://www.softpedia.com/progDownload/VDownloader-Download-51327.html>

Once the on-line version of the Sauret video clip (see note 15) is downloaded it can be broken into 0.033 second frames using VirtualDub:

<http://www.virtualdub.org/>

A pixel measurement device (several are available free or for a minimal charge on the Internet) can be used for measurements.

For our paper we found we were able to get more accurate measurements by ripping the Sauret video (from the DVD) using DVD Decrypter. Then the raw video files were converted to mpeg2 using Xilisoft Video Converter 3. The converted files were then imported into Adobe Premiere Pro CS3. The timestamp was added and the entire segment was exported as a still frame sequence in .gif format.

For pixel measurements, we used Screen Calipers: <http://iconico.com/caliper/>

which our point can be recognized before it disappears into the dust cloud, Frame 1024.

5. We measure the number of pixels separating the white device from the fixed upper edge of the video frame, computing the position of the device when necessary by measuring the position of the roof interface. We take one measurement at each five frames in the progress of the Tower's collapse, ending up with 20 points.
6. Our measurement stretches from 30.93 seconds into the clip to 34.1 seconds into the clip, giving us a total interval of 3.17 seconds.
7. We find that during this interval the white device on the roof has fallen a distance represented by 130 pixels.
8. In order to get an approximation of the real distances at issue; we find a known vertical distance on the north face of the North Tower. (The Tower's proportions have been distorted as it has been rendered into frame-by-frame format. See Appendix A for a description of our method of determining the known vertical distance and the ratio of pixels to feet.) We discover that in our frame-by-frame version of the Sauret video 1 pixel = 0.88 feet. We now know that the point on the roof has fallen approximately 114.4 feet. The figure is not precise--there are the effects of foreshortening to consider (the roof and device are higher than the camera and the upper block, as it moves downward, tilts away from us)--but the figures are close enough for our purpose because we are looking for changes in acceleration over time, not exact velocity values.

9. We know that

$$d = \frac{1}{2} \times g \times t^2$$

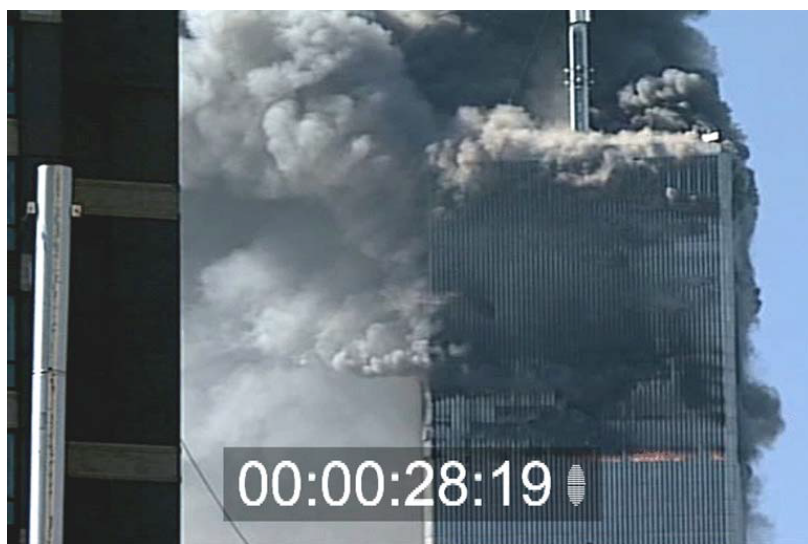


Figure 20.1.: Sauret Video: Representative Frame with Key Points for Measuring the Roof's Fall

where d stands for distance, g stands for acceleration due to gravity, which is 32.174 ft./s^2 at sea level, and t stands for time. Using this formula, we discover that a freely falling object would travel 161.6 feet in the time it took the roof to drop 114.4 feet.

10. We create two graphs. In the first the roof's descent is given in pixels. In the second the roof's fall is given in feet.

● 140
● 140

Knowing the distance the roof fell, in equal time intervals, from our measurements, we can now determine its actual velocity, at each measured point through its fall, using symmetric differencing. The equation is

$$V_n = (D_{n+1} - D_{n-1}) / (T_{n+1} - T_{n-1})$$

where V = velocity

D = distance T = time

n = point in question

Data:

It may be noticed that the last point measured at 3.167 seconds is left off of the data table above and the velocity graph below. The reason for this is that each point the velocity is found for needs to have a point ahead of it as well as behind it, so this method cannot calculate the velocity for the last point measured. As it is known that the measurements were taken every five frames with a 30 frame per second video, the actual time can be resolved fairly precisely. The use of four places for time increments, of 0.1667 seconds between measurements, in the velocity calculation above, is done for accuracy.

Below is a graph of the actual velocity of the roof at each measurement point over the same time frame in which the distance was measured.

Figure 4: The Roof Velocity

● 80

20. *The Missing Jolt: A Simple Refutation of the NIST-Bazant Collapse Hypothesis*

70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
0 0.5 1 1.5 2 2.5 3 3.5

Time (sec)

The velocity of the roof increases in a relatively linear way and is 68.65 ft./s after 3.00 seconds, which is about 71% of the free fall velocity of 96.52 ft./s for this fall time. At the actual measured distances and calculated velocities, the initial fall through one story would have taken place in approximately 1.0 second.

If the upper block, RB-12+, were rigid, as Bazant and NIST claim, the powerful jolt, required by Bazant to generate an impulsive load and explain the collapses of the Twin Towers, would show itself as an abrupt negative deviation in the otherwise positively sloped and virtually linear velocity graph.

For readers unfamiliar with the concept of an impulsive load, the impulse-momentum change equation is shown below and essentially shows that the change in momentum with respect to time provides the force involved in a collision.

$$Force = \frac{m_i v_i - m_f v_f}{\Delta t}$$

$$\Delta t$$

$$= m \Delta v = ma$$

$$\Delta t$$

As stated earlier, it is only the velocity that changes with respect to the duration of the impulse, as the mass of an object is constant at all times everywhere in the universe. A change in velocity with respect to time is defined as either an acceleration or deceleration, depending on whether it is positive or negative. This acceleration

or deceleration is then multiplied by the mass of the impacting object and provides the force involved in the collision, so the impulse equation ultimately reduces to the well known relation $F = ma$.

It is useful to refer to accelerations and decelerations in terms of the acceleration due to gravity, which is defined as 1g. The static weight of any item on earth is measured as the force due to the mass of the item multiplied by the acceleration of earth's gravitational pull or 1g. An acceleration or deceleration of 1g is equal to 32.174 ft./s^2 , so if the deceleration of an impacting object during a collision is greater than this then the weight or force applied by the impacting object is amplified. To find the number of g's involved one merely needs to divide the actual deceleration by 32.174 ft./s^2 .

Bazant claims that a minimum force amplification of 31g, or 31 times the static weight of the upper stories, could have occurred in a collision between the upper and lower blocks of the Twin Towers after a fall of one story.¹⁷ With the 98th story columns completely collapsing, a distance between floor slabs of approximately 11.44 feet, and the actual measured velocity of

22.81 ft./s of the upper block at this point, the first collision would have occurred approximately one second into the fall. Regardless of the actual amplification, any impulse at the impact zone between the 98th and 99th story floor slabs capable of causing collapse continuation would have had to cause the columns on at least the first stories on either side of the impact to deform elastically, and plastically, and then to buckle. The deformations and buckling of the columns of the impacting stories, on both the lower and upper blocks, would cause a kinetic energy drain, which would reduce the velocity of the rigidly attached falling mass above them. Using energy methods we have calculated what effect these energy drains would have on the velocity of the upper block. Since the upper block would pick up the mass of the 98th floor in the impact there would also be a conservation of momentum component to the velocity reduction. From Appendices

¹⁷Bazant and Zhou, 2002, p. 3.

20. *The Missing Jolt: A Simple Refutation of the NIST-Bazant Collapse Hypothesis*

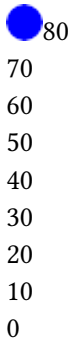
D and E we find the reduced velocity (V_{reduced}) of the upper block, after impact, considering the three energy drains and conservation of momentum, and it is

$$\begin{aligned} V_{\text{reduced}} &= 22.81 \text{ ft./s} - (15.63 \text{ ft./s} + 1.75 \text{ ft./s}) \\ &= 22.81 \text{ ft./s} - 17.38 \text{ ft./s} \\ &= 5.43 \text{ ft./s} \end{aligned}$$

Since the roof was part of the rigid upper block it would have displayed this momentary abrupt change in its velocity, from 22.81 ft./s to 5.43 ft./s, if the collapse were a natural occurrence. It should also be noted that the energy losses and conservation of momentum we have calculated and used here, to determine the velocity loss, are a minimum. We do not consider energy losses due to vibration of the building, heat, and sound, during the initiating impulse, all of which would have required energy from the impulse to produce and thus have an additional effect on velocity loss. The intent here is only to show that, even with a quantifiable minimum energy loss and conservation of momentum, the velocity loss would be quite dramatic, and should have been readily observed if an impulse capable of causing collapse had indeed occurred.

The graph below shows what the upper block velocity change would look like if a 31g impulse had occurred one story into the fall, with its velocity at least momentarily reduced in a significant way after impact.

Figure 5: Roof Velocity Curve with a hypothetical 31g deceleration



0 0.5 1 1.5 2 2.5 3 3.5

Time (sec)

The fact that a 31g impulse requires a deceleration of 997.4 ft./s² is unassailable, and it does not matter whether the collision is elastic or inelastic. With a velocity reduction of 17.38 ft./s and a

997.4 ft./s² deceleration, the duration of this impulse would have been 17 milliseconds. This rapid deceleration associated with the 31g impulse would necessarily show itself as an abrupt negative slope change in the velocity curve.

We have shown the curve starting upward again after the impact, on the generous assumption that the impacting object (the upper block) is now free to accelerate. We have also only charted what the effect on the velocity would have been for an initiating impulse between the first two floors to collide.

The measurements of the roof's actual fall do not show any abrupt negative change in velocity, so it appears that there was no impulse and thus no amplified load. It seems that Dr. Bazant was simply theorizing that there had to be one to make sense of the collapse in a natural way. It is also important to note here that Dr. Bazant was off by a factor of ten in his calculation of the stiffness of the columns, with his 71 GN/m estimate.¹⁸ The actual stiffness, calculated here using the actual column cross sections, is approximately 7.1 GN/m. (see Appendices B and C)^{19,20} This error caused Dr. Bazant to significantly overestimate the potential amplifying effect of the impulse

¹⁸Frank Legge, "9/11-Evidence for Controlled Demolition: a Short List of Observations." *Journal of 9/11 Studies*, vol.1 (June 2006). http://www.journalof911studies.com/articles/Journal_2_Evidence_for_demolition_20.pdf

¹⁹The cross sectional areas of the central core columns on each story were released by NIST in 2007 and are publicly available. This information can be found at <http://wtcmodel.wikidot.com/nist-core-column-data>

²⁰The exterior column cross sectional area for each story was determined using the WTC1 mass analysis cited in reference [^n2021], which gives the total mass of the columns on each story. Knowing the length of the columns and the density of steel, the area could be determined.

or jolt, which he claims occurred after a one story fall of the upper block.

In an effort to refute the argument put forth in this paper, some may claim that plastic deformation of the lower stories of the upper block could have created a crush wave below the upper block and kept the roof from experiencing a discernable impulse. If that were true then the impulse durations would have increased dramatically, absorbing the energy over a longer period of time and eliminating any significant amplification of the upper block's weight. But without the amplification of the upper block's weight why would the lower block have collapsed?

There are those who might argue that the tilt of the upper block to the south could have kept an

impulse from being discernable—that there may have been impulses on the south face or further inside the Tower, in the central core, that were not visible on the north face. Impulses at these locations could not have caused the collapse of the north face of the Tower and its corner columns in the observed vertical manner. The corner columns of the east and west faces, in conjunction with the columns of the north face, formed a structural channel (a stiff structural element with support in two orthogonal directions) and, barring planned demolition, would have collapsed as observed only if they were struck impulsively, in a vertical manner by the upper block.

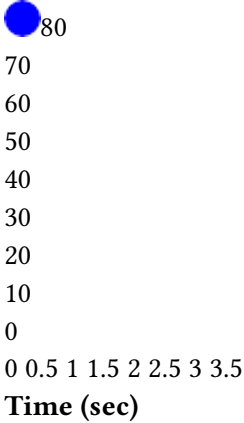
In reality, the upper block could not have tolerated the potential 31g impulse theorized by

Dr. Bazant. To get this overload he claims was possible, all of the mass of the upper block would have had to participate, and if it did so it would have come apart completely.

Perhaps the impulse was of a lower value but still high enough to cause an overload of the lower structure and bring about global collapse? Consider a velocity graph with a 6g deceleration, very likely the minimum load amplification necessary to overcome the reserve

capacity of the perimeter columns, which had a minimum factor of safety of 5.00 to 1.

Figure 6: Roof Velocity Curve with a hypothetical 6g deceleration



A 6g impulse requires a deceleration of 193 ft./s². With a velocity reduction of 17.38 ft./s and a 193 ft./s² deceleration, the duration of this impulse would have been 90 milliseconds. As the graph shows, there would still be a quite obvious abrupt negative slope change, which is not seen in the velocity curve determined from the measured data.

The measurements were taken every five frames, or 167 milliseconds apart. The recovery to the pre-impact velocity is shown to occur in the dashed graphs in the approximate times of 700 milliseconds for the 31g case and 800 milliseconds for the 6g case. In both cases there are four data points taken well within this recovery window, so it is apparent that a negative change in the velocity of the roof would have been captured if an impulse had indeed occurred.

Findings

As the figures and graphs above clearly show, any impulsive load would have required a high deceleration, which would have shown

itself very prominently in the velocity curve derived from the measured data. The fact that no such negative change exists in the roof's actual velocity curve reveals that no major interruption or significant abrupt deceleration, and therefore no amplified load, could have occurred during the fall of the upper block. How can this be? If RB-12+ fell with a jolt on the rest of the building after a 12 foot drop (one story), the deceleration, as shown above, would have revealed itself clearly, and if RB-12+ fell more than one story, the deceleration would have been even more dramatic. If RB-12+ fell 72 feet—all the way through the six damaged stories—we would see powerful evidence of a jolt during the measured 114.4 foot fall of the roof. It would be dramatic precisely because the velocity and therefore the momentum would be high, and any change more discernable. But there is no evidence of major impact and deceleration either early or late.

In the main, these findings confirm the earlier research of Dr. Frank Legge.²¹ In 2006 Legge, using a different video clip and measurement technique, carried out detailed measurements of the fall of the roof of the North Tower and calculated its acceleration rate. Although his purposes were different from ours, he discovered similarly smooth curves. There is no more trace of deceleration in his graphs than in ours.

What happened to RB-12+ during its fall? It would appear, based on the Sauret video and other video recordings of the event, that a substantial portion of the bottom of RB-12+, along with DS- 6, was violently destroyed amidst clouds of ejected matter at the same time the top portion of

RB-12+, containing the rooftop, was falling. Since the clouds of matter in the videos obscure many details of the event, it is easy to see why someone might try to make the case that the fall of the upper portion of the rigid block was accompanied by a fall of its lower portion. But we do not see a fall of its lower portion: we simply see

²¹Weinberger, "Hollywood's Secret Meet."

violent destruction in the vicinity of the lower portion and fall of the upper portion.

To repeat: if RB-12+ had fallen as a rigid block, there would be impact, and the impact would have caused abrupt interference with the fall of its upper part, including the roof. No such interruption has occurred, and therefore no such impact has taken place. Evidently, the violent destruction that occurred--presumably through planted explosives or other means of demolition-- effectively destroyed the structural integrity of the lower part of the upper block as well as DS-6, permitting the upper block to fall at speed while meeting minimal resistance and experiencing neither major impact nor abrupt deceleration.

Conclusions

We have tracked the fall of the roof of the North Tower through 114.4 feet, (approximately 9 stories) and we have found that it did not suffer severe and sudden impact or abrupt deceleration. There was no jolt. Thus there could not have been any amplified load. In the absence of an amplified load there is no mechanism to explain the collapse of the lower portion of the building, which was undamaged by fire. The collapse hypothesis of Bazant and the authors of the NIST report has not withstood scrutiny.

Thanks are offered to members of the discussion forum of Scholars for 9/11 Truth & Justice, especially to Alfons, who initiated the discussion and provided a number of interesting ideas. Thanks are also due to Zoran Bilanovic for a critical reading of the paper and to Paul Bouvet for early software advice. Crucial software assistance was obtained from Joe Terrien, who gave freely of his time and expertise. We are enormously grateful to Civil Engineering Professor Robert Korol for help with the calculations in the appendices. All measurements, calculations, and conclusions are the sole responsibility of the authors.

AUTHORS

Graeme MacQueen received his Ph.D. in Asian religion and literature from Harvard University. Now retired, he taught at McMaster University in Canada for almost thirty years. He was founding Director of McMaster's Centre for Peace Studies and directed peace-building projects in several war zones, including Sri Lanka and Afghanistan. He is a member of Scholars for 9/11 Truth & Justice.

Tony Szamboti received his Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from Villanova University. Prior to that he worked as a machinist and tool engineer in industry, and as an aircraft mechanic in the U.S. Navy. Since 1990 he has worked as a design engineer in industry, performing structural and thermal design, analysis, and testing to ensure survivability of antennas and equipment for use on ships, aircraft, spacecraft, and communication towers. He is a member of Scholars for 9/11 Truth & Justice and Architects & Engineers for 9/11 Truth.

APPENDIX A

DETERMINING THE PIXEL-FOOT RATIO FOR THE SAURET VIDEO

1. In order to correct any possible vertical distortion of the image of the North Tower that might affect our measurements (such distortions are common), we decided to find a vertical distance on the north face of the Tower that can be measured accurately in pixels. We took a measurement from a horizontal line of damage caused by the plane to a line on the roof of the NT, where the upper white part of the roof meets a darker, lower part of the building.
2. We then chose five excellent still photos of the North Tower. The perspective from which they were taken

seemed unlikely to create severe foreshortening effects. These photographs are from the NIST report (NIST NC-STAR 1.5A, Chapter 8), and are grouped conveniently on the forensic website “WTC Demolition Analysis” found at: http://www.sharpprintinginc.com/911/index.php?module=photoalbum&PHPWS_&PHPWS_Photo_op=view&PHPWS_Photo_id=909

The photographs were taken at different times and by several different photographers, and they are reproduced below with added red arrows showing the two distances measured.

Our aim was to measure, in pixels, the horizontal distance x and then the vertical distance y so that we could work out the ratio of x to y . If consistency could be found, we could be confident that we had the correct ratio. Then, knowing the value of x (the width of the tower) in feet, we could determine the value, in feet, of y .

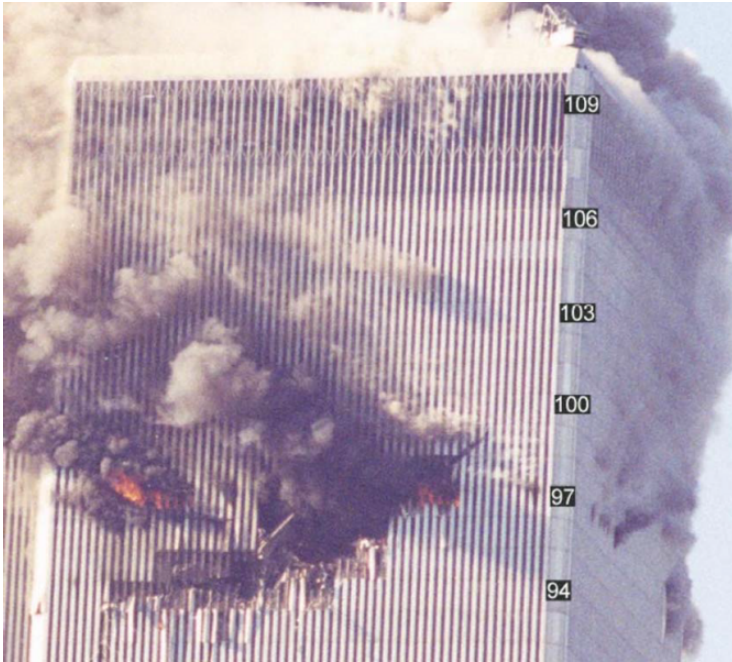
3. Here are the measurements made for the original five photos, marked A, B, C, D, and E. (Note that the measurements will be different on the photos as reproduced below, but the proportions will remain constant.)
4. There is little variation in the figures found for the ratio of x : y . The average is 1:92, which corresponds to the ratio in what is arguably the photograph with the least apparent distortion from foreshortening, photo D,
5. Various figures, from 207 to 210 feet, have been suggested for the external width of the Towers. We chose 210 feet as our best estimate. The figure is from NIST NCSTAR 1, p. 5. See also Gregory Ulrich, “Analysis of the Mass and Potential Energy of World Trade Center Tower 1” (*Journal of 9/11 Studies*), p. 8. Bear in mind that the perimeter columns were covered in insulation and aluminum cladding, which added to their external dimensions.

20. *The Missing Jolt: A Simple Refutation of the NIST-Bazant Collapse Hypothesis*

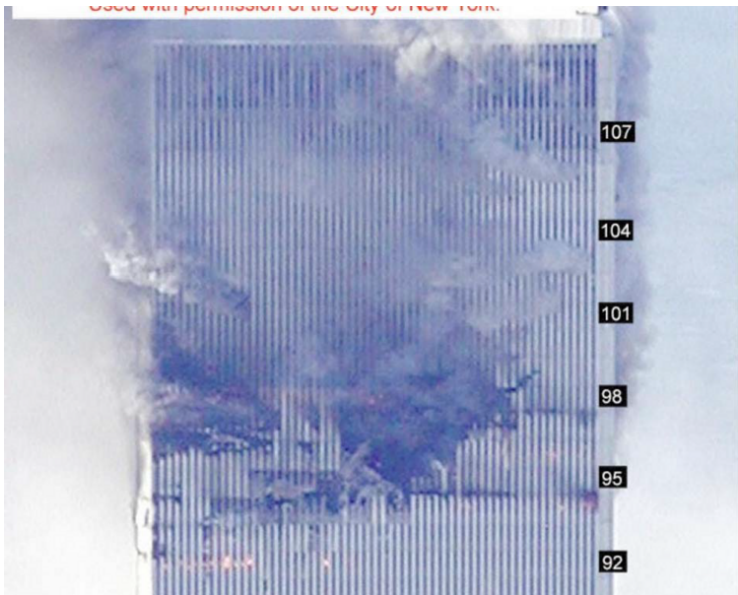
6. This means that the value of the vertical distance measured (y) is $210 \times .92 = 193.2$ feet.

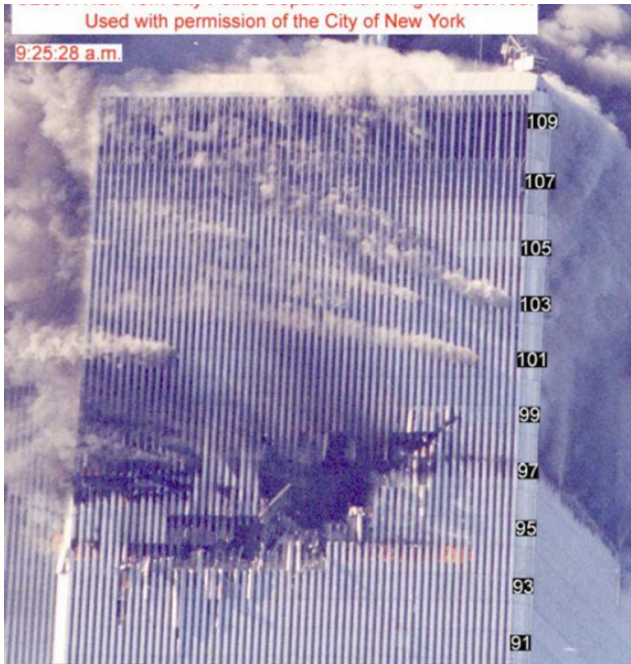
7. Measuring y in our frame-by-frame version of the Sauret video we found it to be 220 pixels. The ratio of pixels to feet for vertical measurements in this version of the Sauret video is: 1 pixel = 0.88 feet.





20. *The Missing Jolt: A Simple Refutation of the NIST-Bazant Collapse Hypothesis*





APPENDIX B

CORE AND PERIMETER COLUMN CROSS SECTIONS ON THE 97TH STORY CORE COLUMNS

The perimeter columns were uniform in cross section on a given floor. While their exact cross sections have not been made publicly available they are discernable due to their height, number, material density, and total weight per floor being known. The NIST NCSTAR 1-3D report states that “As the elevation in the building increased, the thickness of the plates in the columns decreased, but the plates were always at least 0.25 thick”.

The height of a floor of perimeter columns in WTC 1 can be calculated by dividing the building height of 1,368 feet by 110 stories to

get a height of 12.44 feet or 149.24 inches per story.

The weight of the 236 perimeter columns at the 97th story was approximately 78.71 tons or 157,420 lbs.

Dividing the weight by the 0.283 lbs./in.³ density of steel and the number of columns gives a volume for each column of 2,357 in.³.

Dividing this volume by the 149.24 inch height of each floor gives a cross sectional area for each column of 15.79 in.².

With 236 columns this gives a total cross sectional area for the perimeter columns at the 97th story of 3,726 in.³.

As the perimeter columns can be approximated as 14 inch square columns, the wall thickness can be estimated. For the 97th story it would be approximately 0.289 inches. This comports well with the NIST statement that the plate thickness was never less than 0.25 inches thick, and since the 97th story was 13 floors down from the top of the building it appears reasonable.

APPENDIX C

CALCULATION OF THE AXIAL STIFFNESS OF THE COLUMNS FROM THE 97TH STORY DOWN TO GROUND LEVEL IN THE TOWERS

The axial stiffness of a structural column can be determined knowing the modulus of elasticity of its material, the cross sectional area, and the length of the column, with the equation $K = AE/L$.

The problem for determining this for the tower columns below the 97th story is that the cross sectional areas change with elevation. One way to estimate the cross section is to use a median, which we will do here using the cross sectional area of the columns at the 55th story since it is the midpoint in the tower above ground level.

The core column cross sectional area at the 55th story was 8,777 in.² and the perimeter column cross sectional area 10,784 in.² giving a total column cross sectional area of 19,561 in.² at the 55th floor.

Steel was used for all of the columns and the modulus of elasticity of steel is 30×10^6 psi.

The length of the columns from the 97th story down to ground level was 149.24 inches per story multiplied by 97 stories, giving a length of 14,476 inches.

Using $K = AE/L = (19,561 \text{ in.}^2)(30 \times 10^6 \text{ psi})/14,476 \text{ inches}$, the stiffness is found to be 40,538,132 lb./in. or 7.1 GN/m.

While one could make the case that the stiffness used should have been that from the 97th story down to the foundation, and considering the six sub-levels, the stiffness in that case would be nearly the same. The median floor in that case would be the 52nd story and the columns on that floor were only slightly larger in cross section than those on the 55th, which would be offset in the calculation by the additional length of the six sub-level floors.

APPENDIX D

CALCULATION OF VELOCITY CHANGES DUE TO ENERGY DRAINS DURING THE COLLISION OF THE UPPER AND LOWER BLOCKS

It is assumed that there are 3 parts to the energy dissipation from the collision for a given story. These are:

1. Uniform elastic spring action compression in the core and perimeter columns.
 2. Compressive plastic yielding of core and perimeter columns in columns of the 97th and 99th stories.
 3. Plastic hinging action (buckling) of all columns, in the two stories.
1. Calculations show that an average spring constant for the tower columns is 40,500 kips/in or

20. *The Missing Jolt: A Simple Refutation of the NIST-Bazant Collapse Hypothesis*

1. GN/m, i.e. if the columns were of uniform cross section over the 110 stories of the building, and using values found at mid-height for the 55th story. If the cross sections were uniform the tops of the columns of the 97th story would axially compress elastically 19.84 in. However, the column sections are not uniform, since the cross sections get smaller with increasing height, as one would expect with decreasing load. Thus the 97 stories of columns can only be shown to compress elastically the amount consistent with the least cross sectional area, i.e. those of the 97th story. To calculate the maximum resistance offered by the core and perimeter columns in the 97th story we need to take into account the fact that some columns are very stocky while some have thin elements that will buckle locally before they yield. All 47 core columns plus 236 perimeter columns are categorized into classes 1, 2, 3 and 4 (with 4 being the thinnest-walled and 1 being the sturdiest), where class 4 columns do not reach yield before local buckling occurs.²² Approximately half of the core columns were 36 ksi yield strength with the remaining half at 42 ksi or above, resulting in an average yield strength of approximately 40 ksi. 14 of the core columns are class 4 and we conservatively use 50% yield resistance before buckling for these columns. With the remaining 33 columns being given 40 ksi credit, we get a total core column load resistance of 94,900 kips. The 236 perimeter columns at the 97th story are considered class 4, but all have a yield strength of 65 ksi. Using the 1/2 factor and multiplying by the total area of perimeter columns

²²See Section 2.6 on pages 5 through 7 of the below link for an explanation of column cross section classifications for resistance to local buckling. <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/civeng/H23S07/Design%20of%20SHS.pdf>

we get 121,600 kips. The total sustainable load, before plastic deformation occurs, for the 97th story columns = 216,500 kips. As expected, the columns of the 55th story have a significantly larger overall cross section and their sustainable load, before plastic deformation occurs, is 821,600 kips. The elastic displacement of the tops of the 97th story columns can then be found using the ratio of (216.5/821.6) times 19.84 inches = 5.22 inches. Using the equation $E = \frac{1}{2}Kx^2$, the elastic energy absorbed by axial deformation of the columns can be calculated using the figures above as $\frac{1}{2} (40,500 \text{ kips/in.})(5.22 \text{ in.})^2 = 552,000 \text{ in-k}$. (Note: in-k is an accepted abbreviation for in-kip).

2. The 216,500 kip elastic strain limit value, that was used to calculate the elastic axial strain energy above, is also used to calculate the plastic axial strain energy. When the columns as a group reach their elastic limit, many will be able to sustain the value of $A \times F_y$, i.e. cross sectional area times the yield stress. The thinner walled columns will not. A 3% axial strain limit is commonly assumed for class 1 sections, and lesser proportional amounts for classes 2, 3 and 4. Taking an average between 3 and zero (zero for class 4 since they will buckle locally before reaching yield), we get 1.5% strain. The shortening of a column in a given story will thus be the height of the column of 149 inches times 0.015 = 2.24 inches. It follows that the axial plastic energy is 216,500 kips x 2.24 inches = 485,000 in-k.
3. After the 2.24 inch plastic strain occurs, rather than continuing to squash like a pancake, the columns will deform by forming plastic hinges at the top, bottom and at mid-height within the story and then buckle. The energy dissipation here is calculated in the same manner used in the Bazant model, in which the total rotations summed at the three locations = 2 pi. There will be fully plastic moments for the stockier sections that can

20. *The Missing Jolt: A Simple Refutation of the NIST-Bazant Collapse Hypothesis*

maintain M_p for several degrees of rotation before the bending capacity diminishes. For the less stocky columns (classes 2 and 3) M_p is initially reached and then degradation sets in. For the class 4 thin-walled columns, M_p is never reached, but a value of $0.5 M_p$ is likely. Finally, a scissors shape will occur in all columns of the 97th story with the 98th floor squashing the space between it and the 97th floor slab with a corresponding energy drain of 2,103,000 in-k.

Adding these up, a total energy drain of $552,000 + 485,000 + 2,103,000 = 3,140,000$ in-k is realized. However, this is only a part of the energy drain that needs to be considered. Since the lower columns of the upper block would be subject to equal but opposite forces, these columns would also be expected to suffer axial elastic and plastic deformation and buckling. The forces applied to the upper block will, in fact, be exerted on the columns of the 99th story, at the bottom of the upper block. With the forces being equal and opposite, the total damage to the structure of the upper block, if calculated, would show an equivalent total energy drain to that occurring in the structure of the lower block. However, here we are only quantifying the energy required to deform and buckle the columns on the 99th story, as we did for only the columns on the 97th story of the lower block. Since the 99th story columns had 93% of the size of the columns on the 97th story, they result in 93% of the energy drain found for the columns on the 97th story, with the difference being accounted for by stress wave propagation to points further up in the upper block structure.

The total amount of energy dissipation for the columns on both the 97th and 99th stories is thus 1.93 times that for the 97th story and it calculates as $1.93 \times 3,140,000$ in-k = 6,060,000 in-k.

As shown earlier, the weight of the upper 12 stories plus the roof had a value of 69,303 kips and the velocity determined by

the regression analysis, at 1 second into the collapse and just prior to impact, is $V_1 = 22.81$ ft./s. The kinetic energy of the upper 12 stories plus the roof, dropping a height of 11.44 feet to the 98th floor slab below, can be found using the equation $\frac{1}{2}MV_1^2$, while also dividing the weight by the acceleration due to gravity to get mass. A value of 6,725,860 in-k is found for the kinetic energy of the upper block, at the time of impact of the 99th and 98th story floor slabs. The after impact velocity V_2 can be found by subtracting the dissipated energy from the kinetic energy just prior to impact and solving the equation below for velocity.

$$6,725,860 \text{ in-k} - 6,060,000 \text{ in-k} = \frac{1}{2}MV_2^2$$

The value of V_2 is 7.18 ft./s, reflecting a velocity reduction of 15.63 ft./s due to the three calculated energy drains of axial elastic deformation, axial plastic deformation, and plastic hinge buckling of the columns on the 97th and 99th stories.

APPENDIX E

CALCULATION OF VELOCITY REDUCTION DUE TO CONSERVATION OF MOMENTUM

The upper block consists of the 99th through 110th stories plus the roof with an approximate weight of 69,303 kips, the mass of which we will designate as M ($= 2,152$ k-slugs). The measured velocity of the upper block, when it contacts the floor slab of the 98th story, was 22.81 ft./s (based on a height between floor slabs of $h = 11.44$ feet), which we will designate here as V_1 .

If the masses of the 98th story columns and floor slab are added to the original mass of the falling upper block, the new mass becomes $13/12M$.

A velocity drop will occur due to conservation of momentum and can be found using the equation

20. *The Missing Jolt: A Simple Refutation of the NIST-Bazant Collapse Hypothesis*

$$M \times V_1 = 13/12M \times V_1'$$

As mass drops out of the equation we are left with

$$12/13V_1 = V_1'$$

Knowing V_1 from the actual measurements and solving we find the new velocity $V_1' = 21.06$ ft./s reflecting a reduction in velocity due to conservation of momentum of 1.75 ft./s.

21. Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?

In this article, I concentrated on the demise of the South Tower. I had read what was said about this collapse in the work of the National Institute of Standards and Technology—the only serious attempt by a government agency to explain the collapses of WTC 1, 2 and 7—and I was unsatisfied. I was convinced that NIST’s claim that the recorded seismic signals were caused by debris striking the earth—was wrong, and because it was wrong it hid the possibility that explosions contributed to the collapses.

This is a long and ambitious article, but in my view the main conclusions are solid. Indeed, I probably conceded too much to the official hypothesis: it is quite possible that the debris impact had nothing at all to do with the recorded seismic signals.

Abstract

In the debate over the collapses of the Twin Towers on 9/11, the shaking of the earth that accompanied these collapses has played an important role. This shaking registered clearly on seismographs. Less

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

clear, however, are its causes and the times it began. The National Institute of Standards and Technology emphasizes the role of the debris from the collapsing buildings in producing the seismic signals. In assessing NIST's hypothesis I focus on the collapse of the South Tower and attempt to determine the time the collapse began, the time the debris from the Tower struck the ground, and the temporal relation of these events to the shaking of the earth that accompanied the collapse. I consider both the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory's seismic evidence and the evidence provided by a less studied form of seismic instrument, the video camera. I also draw on witness testimony. I conclude that key statements by NIST are false. Major shaking of the earth, and corresponding seismic signals, started well before the debris hit the ground. In fact, it seems certain that the shaking of the earth started before visible signs of building collapse. This evidence is incompatible with the official NIST hypothesis of the cause of the collapse of the Towers.

Introduction

In debates over the collapses of the Twin Towers on 9/11, the shaking of the earth that accompanied these collapses has played a significant role. The collapse of the North Tower is associated with a seismic disturbance with a local magnitude of 2.3 and the collapse of the South Tower, which will be the main focus of this paper, registered 2.1.¹ But the questions remain: when did this shaking begin, and what caused it? While it may seem intuitively plausible that the rapid disintegration of such enormous buildings would produce seismic signals, it is likely that understanding the nature and times

¹Local magnitudes were reported by Won-Young Kim, et al, "Seismic Waves Generated by Aircraft Impacts and Building Collapses at World Trade Center, New York City." Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, Columbia University, Palisades, New York. Date uncertain.

http://www.ldeo.columbia.edu/~mwest/papers/WTC_LDEO_KIM.pdf

of the signals will give us more insight into the destruction of these buildings.

In 2006 the National Institute of Standards and Technology, which had produced a lengthy report in 2005 on the demise of the Twin Towers, attempted to answer a number of questions about the collapses. Here are two of the questions and answers as found in NIST's 2006 publication:

5. Why were two distinct spikes—one for each tower—seen in seismic records before the towers collapsed? Isn't this indicative of an explosion occurring in each tower?

The seismic spikes for the collapse of the WTC Towers are the result of debris from the collapsing towers impacting the ground. The spikes began approximately 10 seconds after the times for the start of each building's collapse and continued for approximately 15 seconds. There were no seismic signals that occurred prior to the initiation of the collapse of either tower. The seismic record contains no evidence that would indicate explosions occurring prior to the collapse of the towers.

6. How could the WTC towers collapse in only 11 seconds (WTC 1) and 9 seconds (WTC 2)—speeds that approximate that of a ball dropped from similar height in a vacuum (with no air resistance)?

NIST estimated the elapsed times for the first exterior panels to strike the ground after the collapse initiated in each of the towers to be approximately 11 seconds for WTC 1 and approximately 9 seconds for WTC 2. These elapsed times were based on: (1) precise timing of the initiation of collapse from video evidence, and (2) ground motion (seismic) signals recorded at Palisades, N.Y., that

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

also were precisely time-calibrated for wave transmission times from lower Manhattan (see NCSTAR 1-5A)...

²

Question 5 posits seismic “spikes” that precede the collapses of the Towers. ³ NIST replies that there are no such spikes preceding collapse initiation and therefore there is no evidence of pre-collapse explosions in the seismic record. The seismic spikes, says NIST, indicate activity that occurred well after the beginning of the collapses and were caused by debris striking the ground.

NIST’s statement is not free of ambiguity. NIST does not actually say there were no relevant seismic signals at all produced as the buildings came down, but it appears to be using the term “seismic spikes” to refer quite generally to the major seismic signal produced in association with the collapses of the Towers. In saying that the spikes were caused by debris hitting the ground, it apparently wishes to imply that there were no significant seismic signals produced prior to

²National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), *Federal Building and Fire Safety Investigation of the World Trade Center Disaster: Answers to Frequently Asked Questions* (August 30, 2006)

http://wtc.nist.gov/pubs/factsheets/faqs_8_2006.htm

³NIST’s Question 5 may be based on a 2002 article by Christopher Bollyn, “Seismic Evidence Points to Underground Explosions Causing WTC Collapse.” (*American Free Press*).

<http://www.serendipity.li/wot/bollyn2.htm>

Bollyn did not, to be sure, claim that the main seismic spikes occurred *before* collapse initiation but that they occurred “at the beginning of each collapse.” In any case, Bollyn’s article has been sharply criticized by Jim Hoffman. See, for example, “Seismic Records of the Twin Towers’ Destruction: Clarifying the Relationship Between Seismic Evidence and Controlled Demolition Theories.” (Version 0.9, Oct. 31, 2006.)

<http://911research.wtc7.net/essays/demolition/seismic.html>

My research supports several of Hoffman’s points. On the other hand, although I have been greatly influenced by Hoffman’s method, my findings on the South Tower’s collapse signal are quite different in some respects from his findings on the collapse signal of the North Tower. Perhaps these differences can be reconciled, but at the moment mine are less compatible with NIST’s claims.

debris strike.

As for Question 6, NIST again deals in ambiguity. It does not say what it means by “collapse,” but merely affirms that the first impacts of major debris from the Towers occurred at the estimated times (9 and 11 seconds).

In this paper, I will explain what I mean by “collapse initiation” in the case of the South Tower and will try to reach clarity on the time of this event. Then I will establish the time of debris strike. Next, after establishing the context of our investigation into seismic evidence, I will make a plea for a broad understanding of the seismic record, setting forth the case for the use of video cameras as crude seismographs. Then I will examine the video record of a camera by broadcaster NY1 that recorded the collapse of the South Tower, and following this I will set forth a hypothesis that I believe can explain the anomalies and difficulties that surround the issue of the shaking of the earth. In support of my hypothesis I will present corroborating testimony from witnesses. Finally, I will summarize the conclusions of the research.

I shall argue that key claims by NIST as given above are false. And although the issue of explosions will not be central to this article, I will suggest that the evidence presented in this paper is incompatible with NIST’s collapse hypothesis.

Timeline

The main time estimates associated with the collapse of the South Tower as given in official reports are listed in the following table (times in all cases are Eastern Daylight Time):⁴

TIMES ASSOCIATED WITH COLLAPSE OF SOUTH TOWER

⁴These time estimates can be found in the NIST reports detailed in the table and found at:

<http://wtc.nist.gov/>

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

The 9/11 Commission report also gives a time of 9:58:59 a.m. for collapse initiation but this is not an independent estimate, having been taken from NIST (“Adjusted Time from Television Broadcasts” as given in NIST’s 2004 Progress Report.)⁵

In its early reports NIST gives a time of 9:58:54 a.m. based on visual records (“Relative Time from Visual Analysis”), but it later rejects this as inaccurate and as superseded by the 9:58:59 a.m. time (“Adjusted Time from Television Broadcasts”), which is its final and best visually determined estimate.⁶ We need not get into the issue of what led to the five seconds being added to the earlier estimate.

So the final visually determined estimate of collapse initiation—in other words, the time when the video records indicate collapse begins—9:58:59 a.m..

The two further times in the table above (9:59:04 a.m. and 9:59:07 a.m.) are both based on seismic evidence as distinct from video-based visual evidence. NIST asserts that seismic times are later than the visually determined times because they refer to the moment when debris strikes the ground. The first of the seismic estimates (9:59:04 a.m.) is the time originally given by Columbia University’s Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory (LDEO) in Palisades, New York and thereafter included in the 2002 report of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).⁷ This time estimate and the rationale behind it have been available since 2001 and have been corroborated, appar-

⁵*The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004), p. 305; 550, n. 156.

⁶Williams Pitts, et al, *Federal Building and Fire Safety Investigation of the World Trade Center Disaster: Visual Evidence, Damage Estimates, and Timeline Analysis*. (NIST NCSTAR 1-5A), p. 23.

<http://wtc.nist.gov/NCSTAR1/PDF/NCSTAR%201-5A%20Ch%201-8.pdf>

⁷“Seismic Waves Generated by Aircraft Impacts and Building Collapses at World Trade Center.” And see *World Trade Center Building Performance Study: Data Collection, Preliminary Observations, and Recommendations*. Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2002,

ently, by other seismic stations.⁸ But the final NIST report accepts a revised seismic time of 9:59:07 a.m. (“Time Based on LDEO Recent Analysis”) and takes this as superseding the time of 9:59:04 a.m..⁹ How could LDEO have been off by three seconds in the earlier estimate? What is the rationale for the three second revision? NIST does not tell us, and the LDEO report that NIST refers to when justifying this change has apparently not been made public.¹⁰

There is reason to be cautious about the revised seismic time. Notice the difficulty NIST found itself in prior to the discovery by LDEO that it had been off by three seconds. NIST was committed to a collapse initiation time of 9:58:59 a.m. There was not much room to maneuver with this figure since television broadcasts with appropriate time-stamps were publicly available—two of them will be used in this paper. But LDEO had reported that the seismic signal began at 9:59:04 a.m. Since NIST wished to claim that the seismic signal was caused by debris hitting the earth it found itself in trouble. If the seismic signal that began at 9:59:04 was caused by debris striking the ground this left only five seconds for the debris to make it to the ground—utterly impossible without a violation of the laws of physics.

⁸See “Seismic Waves Generated by Aircraft Impacts and Building Collapses at World Trade Center.” The report notes that five stations “within the greater Metropolitan New York region” in addition to the Palisades station “recorded the two tower collapses,” and it gives the impression that the records of all these stations support the times estimates given in the report.

⁹NIST NCSTAR 1-5A, p. 22, 23.

¹⁰NIST NCSTAR 1-5A, p. 23, 24. The paper in question is referred to (p. 24) as:

Kim, W. X., “Analysis of Seismogram Data Recorded on September 11, 2001 during the World Trade Center, New York City Disaster, Final Technical Report to the Building and Fire Research Laboratory,” Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory of Columbia University, Palisades, New York, January 31, 2005.

I assumed the author of the report was LDEO’s Won-Young Kim so I wrote to Dr. Kim, asking him if I could have a copy of the report. He replied that he did not have a copy but suggested I ask NIST for one. NIST has not responded to my query.

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

So NIST apparently sent LDEO back to the drawing board and LDEO returned with an extra three seconds. As can be seen in NIST's 2006 Question 6 and response as given above, NIST settled on nine seconds as the time in which sufficient debris hit the ground to cause a seismic spike. NIST got eight seconds as the difference between the two times (9:58:59 a.m. as collapse initiation time and the revised LDEO seismic time of 9:59:07 a.m.) and had no difficulty coming up with an extra second by referring to margin of uncertainty in measurement (one second for network time-stamps and one second for the

seismic times referring to the South Tower's collapse).¹¹ NIST has tried to find a way to create sufficient time between collapse initiation and debris strike to make it plausible that the LDEO-recorded seismic signal began when debris struck the ground.

What did LDEO do to come up with three extra seconds?

First, recall that although the times recorded for the arrival of seismic waves are extremely accurate these recorded arrival times are not at the centre of the controversy. At the centre of the controversy are "origin times," the times when the seismologists estimate the seismic waves were produced. These origin times are not directly recorded but computed. In order to compute them it is necessary to know the type of seismic wave being dealt with and, from this, the expected speed of the waves; the distance of the point of origin from the seismometer where the waves' arrival is recorded; and the medium (type of rock, and so on) through which the waves have traveled to get from their point of origin to the seismometer, since this medium will affect the speed.

In the present case the LDEO seismologists determined that the waves in question were predominantly short-period Rayleigh waves. Rayleigh waves are a form of "surface wave." They travel near the

¹¹NIST NCSTAR 1-5A, p. 23.

Toward Reliable Times for Collapse Initiation and Debris Strike

surface of the earth, as distinct from seismic “body waves” that travel more deeply in the earth. The seismologists estimated that these short-period Rayleigh waves would be traveling an average of 2 kilometers per second from the World Trade Center to the seismic station in Palisades, New York. Since the distance between the two points is 34 kilometers, they gave 17 seconds as the time it would take the seismic waves to make their journey. It was on this basis that the time of 9:59:04 a.m. EDT was initially established as the *origin time* for the South Tower’s seismic signal. The arrival time of the seismic waves was, therefore, 9:59:21 a.m. EDT.¹²

It seems unlikely that the time of 9:59:21 a.m. was changed by LDEO. I assume that what was changed was the estimate of the speed of the Rayleigh waves. If the waves were assumed to be traveling 2.4 km/s instead of 2 km/s NIST would have its extra three seconds. But did LDEO have good scientific reasons to make this change or was the change made because NIST requested a few extra seconds? Until NIST and LDEO tell us how they got the three seconds and what their justification of the procedure is, I do not see how we can accept the revised figures.

What do we do in the meantime? Unwilling to take LDEO-NIST’s new figures on faith, we are stuck in NIST’s earlier dilemma: we have only five seconds between collapse initiation and seismic signal, and no matter how we twist and turn and juggle the figures this gap is too narrow.

Toward Reliable Times for Collapse Initiation and Debris Strike

(i) Collapse Initiation:

What should we accept as indicators of the beginning of the col-

¹²“Seismic Waves Generated by Aircraft Impacts and Building Collapses at World Trade Center.” Cf. Hoffman, “Seismic Records of the Twin Towers’ Destruction.”

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

lapse of the South Tower? How shall we get a precise time for this event? How shall we corroborate our time?

While I do not favour the term “collapse” as descriptive of what happened to the Towers—I prefer “destruction”—I will accept the use of the term in this paper without debate. But this concession does not solve the problem of what we should mean by “collapse initiation.” To what event does this refer in the case of the South Tower? We could use the expression to refer to the first downward movement of the building but there is another obvious possibility. The top of the South Tower underwent a number of quite rapid changes. The earliest and most visible change that we could reasonably associate with collapse is the deformation of the top of the building—often referred to as a “leaning” or “tilt” of the top portion. This “tilt” toward the east and south can be seen quite distinctly in surviving videos, and with the help of selected video evidence we can make a fairly good estimate as to when it began. *In this paper, I shall take the beginning of this tilt as collapse initiation.*

Although a judgment is called for when determining the beginning of the tilt (the distortion of the building is gradual; the event is not clean or sharp), I estimate that frame 61 in a video clip from NBC is the first frame in which the tilt can confidently be ascertained.¹³ Frame 61 is located at 2.035 seconds into this video clip.

Unfortunately, the NBC video, despite its clarity, has no time-stamp, so we must find a way to coordinate events in it with events in videos that do have time-stamps. (For a discussion of time-stamps and related method, see Appendix A.)

It is possible to discover what I shall call “distinctive transient

¹³As of the time of writing of this article, this NBC video clip may be found at: http://ishare.rediff.com/filevideo-south_tower_collapse-id-34537.php

Currently, the clip is also available at the Television Archive as part of the NBC 9/11 full day coverage--it is found at about 12 minutes and 16 seconds into the 9:54 a.m. – 10:36

a.m. segment, as a play-back dealing with the earlier collapse of the South Tower. http://www.archive.org/details/sept_11_tv_archive



Figure 21.1.: Collapse Initiation: NBC video, frame 61

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

events” (DTE) in the video footage we possess, which allow us to match frames quite accurately between two or more videos. Two such DTEs suffice to allow us to place the NBC video, with its clear view of collapse initiation, on a time-line.

A frame showing three ejections from the northeast corner of the South Tower gives us our first DTE. We can find this event in the NBC video and on a time-stamped ABC video.¹⁴ Although the perspectives differ (the NBC video has been shot from the northeast, whereas the ABC perspective is from the north) the match is quite precise, because this configuration of ejections lasts for only about one tenth of a second.¹⁵ The matching frames recording this DTE are:

NBC 196 (6.540) = ABC 108389 (1:00:16.580).

The real time of this DTE, as determined through the use of the correct ABC time-stamp (see note 14) is: 9:59:04.092 a.m. EDT.

Carrying out the required calculations, we arrive at a collapse initiation time of $(6.540 - 2.035 = 4.505)$, and $9:59:04.092 - 4.505 =$

¹⁴Various versions of the ABC video clip are available on the internet, some with time-stamps and some without. As of the writing of this article, the ABC full day coverage has, unfortunately, been removed from the Television Archive site and is no longer accessible.

I have chosen a version of the clip that was downloaded from the internet in 2005 as part of complete, full day ABC coverage. This version actually has two time-stamps, which give significantly different times.

As can be seen in the exemplifying frame below, there is one time-stamp at the top of the picture and another at the bottom. Although it cannot be discerned in the single frame below, detailed study of the footage shows that the top time-stamp is 12.729 seconds ahead of the bottom one (discounting the different time zones). Comparing several events in this video with the same events in other videos, we conclude that the lower time-stamp is the correct one. It is the lower time-stamp, therefore, that has been used in my calculations.

¹⁵The twin ejections used here as part of this DTE have been studied, and their velocities measured, by David Chandler.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_UeLXff37s



Figure 21.2.: NBC: three ejections at 6.540 in video clip

9:58:59.587 a.m. EDT.

To seek correction or corroboration we need to find another DTE that will allow us to use a separate and independent broadcaster time-stamp to determine the time of collapse initiation. We discover that a line of “puffs” or ejections on the east face of the South Tower are visible on both the NBC video and a video of the South Tower’s collapse by broadcaster NY1.¹⁶

To compare the two video clips, which capture the South Tower from different directions (NBC from the northeast and NY1 from the south), it is necessary to look at a series of frames. Appendix B gives 6 frames from each video clip. We then choose, with some confidence, the first frame in each series (frame 75 in the NBC clip and frame 1470 in the NY1 clip) as matching or near-matching frames.

Frame 1470 in the NY1 video clip represents a time of 49.049 seconds into the clip. Since the NY1 time-stamp flips to 9:59 at 48.315 sec-

¹⁶The NY1 video clip will be the focus of our attention later in the paper and an internet link to it is provided there.

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*



Figure 21.3.: ABC: three ejections at 1:00:16.580 in video clip

Toward Reliable Times for Collapse Initiation and Debris Strike



Figure 21.4.: NBC frame 75 (2.503 sec. into clip)



Figure 21.5.: NY1 fr. 1470 (49.049 sec. into clip)

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

onds into the clip (frame 1448), we can determine that the real time represented by frame 1470 is $(49.049 - 48.315 = 0.734$, and $9:59:00.000 + 0.734 =$) $9:59:00.734$ a.m. We now bring in the NBC times and calculate that collapse initiation must be at $(2.503 - 2.035 = 0.468$, and $9:59:00.734 - 0.468 =$)

9:59:00.266 a.m. EDT.

Using ABC-NBC matching frames we derived a collapse initiation time of $9:58:59.587$. The two collapse initiation figures differ by only 0.679 seconds, so, assuming we have been correct in our choice of the first frame in which collapse initiation is represented, we can be quite confident in our estimate of collapse initiation time.

NIST's figure of $9:58:59$ a.m. EDT for collapse initiation is surprisingly close to the range of times I have calculated, especially since NIST has not been as forthcoming as it should have been about its method of reaching its figure. Although my times are slightly later than NIST's I will not quibble over the differences but will, for the purposes of this paper, take NIST's estimate of collapse initiation as accurate. The differences at issue are too small to affect the conclusions reached in this paper.

What have we gained from this procedure? We have a transparent, replicable method for determining the time of collapse initiation, with details NIST has not given. We can now

have confidence in NIST's collapse initiation time for the South Tower (similar research shows NIST to be equally accurate for the collapse initiation time of the North Tower),

¹⁷ *and we have a method that we can extend to other events and video clips.*

¹⁷If we take collapse initiation in the case of the North Tower to refer to the first certain downward movement of the roof antenna, and if we check the frame in question against the (lower) time-stamp on the ABC video, we arrive at a collapse initiation time of $10:28:22.176$ a.m. EDT. NIST's most recent estimate for the collapse initiation time of the NT is $10:28:22$ a.m. EDT.

Toward Reliable Times for Collapse Initiation and Debris Strike

(ii) Debris Strike:

We can now ask if NIST has been as careful in determining the time of debris strike as it has been in estimating the time of collapse initiation.

There are several ways to pursue this investigation, but let us begin by taking NIST's own figures and estimates and asking how well they stand up when we bring new video evidence to bear.

There is a well known video clip, the provenance of which is unknown to me, in which the South Tower's collapse is recorded from a position on the ground quite close to the Tower.¹⁸ Firefighters are seen in the foreground at the beginning of this clip, and I shall therefore refer to this as the "Firefighter video." There is a very interesting soundtrack accompanying the recording, which confirms that the video is playing in real time.¹⁹ This video will help us with our next DTE.

But first let us look at a frame from a CBS helicopter video clip that NIST offers us in its report.²⁰ The frame shows two focused ejections on the south face of the South Tower, and NIST has attached

¹⁸As of the writing of this article the Firefighter video can be found on the Studyof911.com website:

<http://www.studyof911.com/video/>

There are two main versions of this video available, both found on this website. One has a clearer picture, and it is this one I have used for establishing DTE and taking images and measurements. (But see also the next note.)

This video is said to have been "filmed from West Street between 1 World Financial Center and the Banker's Trust Building." I have tentatively adopted this estimate, although I do not know the date and author of the article in which this estimate is made ("Explosion Sounds and the World Trade Center - Twin Tower Collapses").

Currently, the article can be found at: <http://www.mediumrecords.com/wtc/audio01.html>

¹⁹The version of the Firefighter video with the poorer quality image has a superior soundtrack. By this I mean that this soundtrack fits much better than the other one with witness reports of the sounds of the collapse. I accept this soundtrack as the more authentic of the two.

²⁰NIST NCSTAR 1-5A, p. 233.

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

to this frame a time of 9:59:06 a.m. (Black arrows with accompanying black text have been added by me.)



Figure 21.6.: NIST CBS frame: 9:59:06 a.m.

The two ejections are ahead of the collapse front but one is much lower than the other. We can also see a “streamer” moving down the south face. These, as well as relative positions and distances and the configuration of the collapse front, give us our DTE.

The Firefighter video has a frame that closely matches this, recording the same DTE. It is frame 195 (6.507 seconds into the clip). The streamer appears in the CBS frame to be lower than the top ejection and appears in the Firefighter video to be higher than the top ejection, but I believe from other elements in the frames that this is a result of radical difference in perspective.

Now that we have coordinated these clips, we can make a time estimate for debris strike. One of the great advantages of the Firefighter



Figure 21.7.: Firefighter video: frame 195 (6.507 sec.)

video is that it shows the debris wave very clearly as it plunges to the ground, and it also records the sound of the debris wave striking the earth.

Frame 345 (11.512 seconds into the clip) shows the debris front descending on the Marriott Hotel, also known as WTC 3, and poised to strike the ground.

I believe that the first main debris strike took place less than a second after this frame. I say this on the basis of measurements of the debris front and of its speed as it passes the 242 foot tall Marriott Hotel.²¹

Let us suppose that the debris front struck the ground 0.5 seconds after this frame. In this case, debris strike occurred at $11.512 + 0.5$

²¹A good discussion of the Marriott and its dimensions is found in the FEMA report, *World Trade Center Building Performance Study*, chapter 3. We can determine from the Firefighter video that the debris front falls past the full height of the Marriott in a bit more than one second and is accelerating as it falls.

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*



Figure 21.8.: Firefighter video: the debris front

Toward Reliable Times for Collapse Initiation and Debris Strike

= 12.012 seconds in the clip. But we have determined, using NIST's time estimate and our matching frames, that 6.507 in the clip = 9:59:06 a.m. Therefore, the debris strike must have occurred at $(12.012 - 6.507 = 5.505, \text{ and } 9:59:06 + 5.505 =)$

9:59:11.505 a.m. EDT.

But if collapse initiation occurred at 9:58:59 a.m. as NIST says, the time it took for the debris to strike the ground after collapse initiation was $(9:59:11.505 - 9:58:59 =)$ 12.505 seconds.

We recall that NIST has said:

“NIST estimated the elapsed times for the first exterior panels to strike the ground after the collapse initiated in each of the towers to be approximately 11 seconds for WTC 1 and

approximately 9 seconds for WTC 2. These elapsed times were based on: (1) precise timing of the initiation of collapse from video evidence, and (2) ground motion (seismic) signals recorded at Palisades, N.Y., that also were precisely time-calibrated for wave transmission times from lower Manhattan (see NCSTAR 1-5A)...” (my emphasis)

NIST is wrong by more than three seconds, a surprisingly large figure under the circumstances and given the importance of these matters.

But is it not possible that “the first exterior panels” preceded the debris wave seen in our video clip? We have no reason to be interested in this or that particular panel. NIST has made its estimate on the basis of seismic signals, so the debris of interest to us must be sufficiently massive to create seismic waves. We have every reason to believe the first significant wave of debris has been captured in the relevant frames of the Firefighter video.

Now we must consider the seismic evidence. NIST says that while it estimated collapse initiation from visual evidence, as we have also done in this essay, it estimated debris strike from seismic evidence obtained from the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory in Palisades, N.Y., 34 km from the WTC. Why NIST would choose to use this seis-

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

mic evidence instead of visual evidence obtained close to the WTC (as in the Firefighter video) is not clear. But let us now turn to NIST's seismic evidence to see how convincing it is.

Seismic Evidence

NIST, FEMA and LDEO Establish the Context:

In its 2005 report, NIST glosses over a serious difficulty. It says:

Times listed in Table 3-1 for the collapses of the two towers based on the television records and the revised LDEO analysis appear to differ significantly. These differences are likely due to different definitions used for the collapse times. The times based on visual analysis refer to the time when the collapse of a tower first became evident, while the times based on seismic records likely indicate the time when the falling debris first struck the ground. ²²

Notice the repeated use of the term "likely." As seen in the Questions and Answers quoted earlier, by 2006 NIST was speaking with confidence about the cause of seismic signals, yet scarcely a year earlier it had been using the word "likely." What was NIST trying to say here? Was it saying it had to guess the intentions of LDEO experts or the authors of the FEMA report? No guesswork should have been necessary: NIST is given by U.S. law the power to subpoena witnesses. ²³ Or was it saying the seismic signal might have been caused by something other than debris strike? If so, this would be an

²²NIST NCSTAR 1-5A, p. 23.

²³*May 2003 Progress Report on the Federal Building and Fire Safety Investigation of the World Trade Center Disaster* (NIST Special Publications 1000-3). National Institute of Standards and Technology, U.S. Dept. of Commerce, May 2003, p. 7.


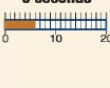


important admission, quite at odds with the confident assertions of 2006.

If we consult the 2002 FEMA report and study its collapse times we will find that FEMA, basing itself on the LDEO seismic study, does not say that the debris hit the ground at 9:59:04 a.m. but that the South Tower *began to collapse* at 9:59:04 a.m.²⁴ According to FEMA, the start of the South Tower’s collapse and the start of the seismic signal were simultaneous.

To put it differently, FEMA thought that the seismic signal started at the beginning of the collapse of the South Tower and lasted until debris strike, while NIST appears to have decided that the seismic signal started at the beginning of debris strike and lasted during the time it took for all of the debris to rain down. Why has NIST obscured this very important difference of interpretation of the seismic signal?

As for the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, I see nothing in its report to indicate how its seismologists interpreted the figure of 9:59:04.²⁵ It is their estimate of the time of origin of the seismic signal from the collapse—but whether the signal started at the beginning or the middle or the end of the collapse they do not say. And

²⁴In the FEMA report, 1-10 we find:

<p>9:02:54 EDT (13:02 UTC)</p> 	<p>6 seconds</p> 	<p>0.7</p>	<p>WTC 2 (the south tower) was hit by United Airlines Flight 175, also a hijacked 767-200ER jet.</p>
<p>9:59:04 EDT (13:59 UTC)</p> 	<p>10 seconds</p> 	<p>2.1</p>	<p>WTC 2 began collapsing after 56 minutes, 10 seconds. Large debris from the collapse fell on WTC 3 and WTC 4, 130 Cedar Street, 90 West Street, and Bankers Trust. WTC 3 suffered a partial collapse. Fire was initiated in WTC 4 and 90 West Street.</p>

<http://www.fema.gov/rebuild/mat/wtcstudy.shtm>

The meaning is clear: the South Tower was hit at 9:02:54 and *began* collapsing 56 minutes, 10 seconds later, at 9:59:04. FEMA says this collapse time has been determined from the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory seismic record.

²⁵http://www.ldeo.columbia.edu/~mwest/papers/WTC_LDEO_KIM.pdf

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

why should they? They have no particular expertise in what was happening at the World Trade Center and there is no reason to look to them for a detailed interpretation of the figures they came up with. That has been the duty of FEMA and of NIST. But the FEMA report and the NIST report disagree fundamentally.

If this uncertainty hangs over the figure of 9:59:04 a.m., then it also hangs over the revised figure of 9:59:07 a.m. NIST apparently wants us to accept that the figure refers to debris striking the ground. But it has given us no reason to believe that this is LDEO's interpretation and, more importantly, no convincing reason to believe it is the truth.

Accidental Seismometers:

The LDEO report, "Seismic Waves Generated by Aircraft Impacts and Building Collapses at World Trade Center, New York City" says: "Unfortunately, no seismic recordings of ground motion are currently known to exist at or very close to the WTC."²⁶

If by seismic recordings we refer to products of official seismic stations, the statement is correct. But we should bear in mind that seismic waves may be recorded in unofficial, informal or accidental ways. There may have been no formal recordings of seismic waves "at or very close to the WTC" by instruments designed for that purpose, and for this reason it may be possible to speak of the Palisades, New York seismic station 34 km from the WTC as the closest station. But there were instruments much closer to the WTC that recorded earth vibrations produced by the various events of 9/11. I refer to video cameras on tripods.

There has been some attention in the 9/11 truth movement to the trembling of video cameras and its significance, but many researchers have steered clear of the discussion. Whatever the reason for this timidity, there is no justification for ignoring this

²⁶P. 4.

fascinating and important form of evidence.²⁷

In this article I am interested in the overall pattern of perturbations associated with the collapse of the South Tower, and I will concentrate on a very important record left by a camera belonging to network station New York 1 (NY1).

But first a few words are in order about this general source and form of evidence.

The most obvious weakness and dangers of relying on the movements of video cameras are the following:

- There will be cases where the camera trembles but where we have no simple way of knowing what caused the trembling and whether it has anything to do with the Towers. It might be caused by a minor, irrelevant event such as the rumbling of a subway train or a simple jostling of the camera.
- Video cameras will, in many cases, record no reliable time, unlike a seismic station, which will have very accurate times.
- There may be little uniformity in the record produced by the trembling of multiple video cameras. Different cameras and

²⁷Most of the discussion of pre-collapse shaking has focused on the North Tower and a well known video clip by Etienne Sauret (from his “WTC: the first 24 hours”, available as a DVD). Clips from the Sauret film are gradually being removed from the internet, but as of the time of writing of this article the trembling of the Sauret camera both before and after collapse can be seen here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2E-tieJFVGy>

It is important to realize that the version of the clip on this site does not include the original Sauret audio—the audio here is taken from Rick Siegel’s film, “911 Eyewitness.” This transposing of sound tracks is legitimate as long as it is made explicit.

The What Really Happened website furnishes an example of an attempt to show, through a study of changing patterns of smoke and debris near the top of the North Tower, that the pre-collapse Sauret camera shake represents a real event in the North Tower.

<http://whatreallyhappened.com/WRHARTICLES/shake.html>

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

different tripods may produce different records. The structure of camera and tripod, the terrain, the distance from the source of the signal—all these may be impossible to determine with accuracy. There may also be no easy way to match the records of one camera with those of another camera or to match any given camera with official seismic records.

Despite these difficulties, there are three obvious advantages of these sources of evidence:

- The instruments (the video cameras) may be much closer to the source of the seismic waves than any available seismic stations.
- The records, which in some cases include quite precise times via time-stamps, may be open to public scrutiny and interpretation.
- The perturbations recorded may be accompanied by simultaneous recording, by the same instrument, of visual and auditory events, which may provide various sorts of correction or corroboration.

Let me expand on the third advantage. The official seismic records tell us of vibrations in the earth that are obviously related in some way to the collapses of the Towers—but in what precise way they are related neither the records themselves nor the seismologists studying them can tell us. We have video records of the initiation and progress of the collapse, and we have separate seismic evidence: the challenge is to connect the two. It is an enormous advantage to have a recording device that records perturbations at the same time as it records visual and auditory material directly relating to the Towers.

But do we have reason to believe that trembling video cameras on 9/11 *ever* produced evidence directly connected to objective events in the Towers, as opposed to various irrelevant local events? Certainly, we do. There are, for example, five main camera perturbations recorded by Etienne Sauret's camera or cameras on 9/11, and

there are good reasons to believe that most if not all were caused by objective events in the Towers.

These perturbations are discussed in Appendix C.

The perturbations in Sauret's footage that are most directly relevant to this essay are those associated with the South Tower's collapse.

If we examine this sequence, the first clear evidence of camera trembling appears to come at frame 2605 (clip time 1:26.920). The perturbation has tapered off by about frame 2860 (clip time 1:35.429). This means the perturbation lasts for about 8.509 seconds.

But when does collapse initiation occur in this clip?

The South Tower is obscured by clouds of smoke, and only sporadically can we get a clear view of the perimeter columns with their aluminum cladding. The first frame in which I can definitely say that these vertical columns are beginning to lean is frame 2252, which represents a time of 1:15.142 in the Sauret film. The sequence is shot from the north and we observe the building lean toward the east.

But a closer time for collapse initiation can be gained by finding a DTE that ties the Sauret video to one of the other videos for which we have a secure timeline. As it happens, we can observe the vertical fall of the roof of the South Tower. We can watch as the slanted white section of roof falls past the airplane damage on the north face of the North Tower. We discover that this event is also clearly visible in the NBC video clip.

There are uncertainties in the matching of the two clips (Sauret and NBC) due to the quite different angles and distances from which the shots have been taken, but we are able to make a reasonably confident match.

The point at which the lower portion of the slanting white roof of the South Tower falls past the lower portion of the plane damage on the north face of the North Tower (not discernable, unfortunately, in the copy of the frame below, but discernable in the video) can be taken as corresponding to frame 2345 in the Sauret clip, which occurs

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

at 1:18.245 in the film.

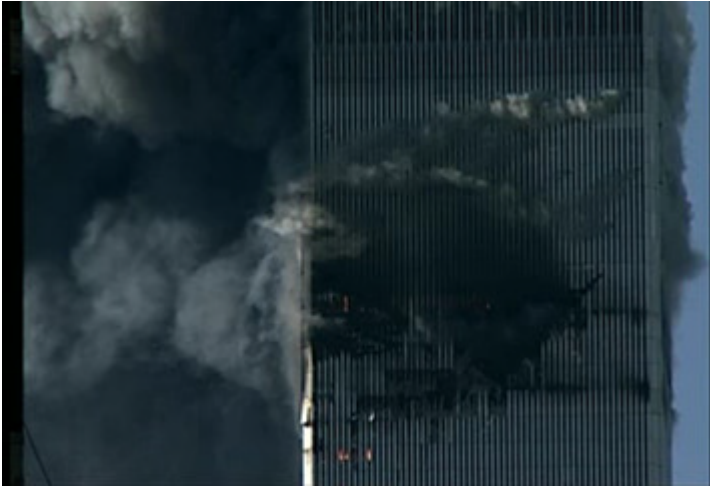


Figure 21.9.: Sauret Matching Frame (2345)

I estimate that 196 is the frame in the NBC clip that most closely matches the above frame. It occurs 6.540 seconds into the clip.

So our matching frames are:

Sauret Frame 2345 (1:18.245) = NBC Frame 196 (6.540)

Collapse initiation occurs at NBC frame 61 (2.035), which is therefore $(6.540 - 2.035 = 4.505, \text{ and } 1:18.245 - 4.505 =)$ frame 2210 (1:13.740) in the Sauret clip. This suggests that the shaking of the earth begins in the Sauret clip $(1:26.920 - 1:13.740 =)$ 13.180 seconds after collapse initiation. But we need to subtract the time it takes for the seismic waves to reach the camera, which we shall take to be 0.8 seconds. ²⁸ This means that the seismic event at its source begins

²⁸I am depending on the work of a researcher already referred to (“Explosion Sounds and the World Trade Center”):

“Also, a view of the South Tower collapse from the same angle is available. In this clip, the South Tower can be seen shrouded in smoke and standing behind the North Tower. It was filmed from somewhere off of Varick Street at a distance



Figure 21.10.: NBC Matching Frame (196)

(13.180 - 0.8 =) 12.380 seconds after collapse initiation.

We arrived at a figure of 12.505 seconds for debris strike based on a DTE in the Firefighter video and a NIST-dated CBS frame. The figures are very close and allow us to feel quite confident that the perturbations evident in the Sauret video clip are caused by debris strike and that the interval between collapse initiation and debris strike is approximately 12.5 seconds.

These results seem both to affirm and disconfirm NIST's conclusions. On the one hand, the Sauret camera's behaviour seems to support NIST's assertion that significant shaking of the earth began with debris strike, not before. On the other hand, the Sauret camera's behaviour suggests that NIST is in error by at least three seconds when it estimates the time of debris strike.

I shall suggest shortly a means of resolving this conundrum, at least as far as the South Tower is concerned.

of approximately 1600 meters

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

In the meantime, I believe it is clear from the data presented in this section and in Appendix C that the shaking of video cameras recording the events of 9/11 cannot be dismissed as irrelevant but must be taken seriously as a source of evidence.

The Case of the NY1 Video Camera*

We now turn to the instance of camera shake that is at the heart of this paper and of my analysis. The sequence of interest is the second in this video clip from broadcaster New York 1 (NY1). It is shot from a video camera apparently set up on a tripod on the ground to the south of the Twin Towers. The camera is pointed up at the Towers at a fairly steep angle and visibility is generally good, although copious black smoke obscures the top of the South Tower and does not permit a clear view of collapse initiation.

As of the time of writing of this article, the clip can be found here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=srBvZE-i-vQ&feature=channel_page and here: <http://ca.video.yahoo.com/watch/5477202/14412896>

During this sequence we hear an exchange between anchor Pat Kiernan and Kristen Shaughnessy, a reporter on the scene. Shaughnessy is not with the camera nor can she see the image being broadcast. She is at a different location using a pay phone during this exchange.²⁹ But she has a clear view of the South Tower and is close enough that she will soon have to run for her life.

Shaughnessy asks, "Do you have...any shots right now of it?" Kiernan replies, "You know...we've got a shot looking up from the ground at the Tower there."

A few moments later Shaughnessy interrupts Kiernan:

"Oh! It's just coming down, Pat! It is just coming down!
It's exploding! It is billowing! Pat, the debris is flying--
I'm gonna run."

²⁹http://www.ny1.com/content/about_ny1/staff_profiles/39999/kristen-shaughnessy/Default.aspx

That is the last we hear of Shaughnessy on the tape. Kiernan, obviously stunned, continues as best he can.

When watching this sequence, note:

- There are early ejections of matter from the east side of the South Tower. These turn into great clouds descending evenly and at speed down the south (near) side of the building.
- As the Tower comes down, it gives off a roar, which changes in tone and increases its volume as the first wave of debris hits the ground.
- The camera shakes.

There is nothing subtle about the shaking of this camera. It has been commented upon by several viewers of the sequence on YouTube.³⁰ In fact, viewers have noted two separate phenomena. First, there is a very brief jiggle of the camera a few seconds before

³⁰YouTube comments tend to be ephemeral, and this is especially true in the study of 9/11 since many of the most important video clips are being removed from the internet. But here are typical comments posted some time ago in relation to the NY1 clip:

Gyphia (2 months ago) Show Hide

I noticed that, also heard a small bang in the distance.

the camera was fixed, doesnt wobble at all, except just before the collapse.

Also:

StarryKid06 (3 months ago) Show Hide

Right at 0:46, the camera shakes very briefly prior to the collapse

...

melb223 (4 months ago) Show Hide

Reply | Spam See how at 00:45 seconds there is some severe shaking, at 00:48 the clock ticks over to 9.59 am, then a second later at 00:49 the south tower starts to collapse, very interesting. I think it was very well planned.

21. Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?

any sign of collapse. Second, there is a more dramatic trembling of the camera that is in progress by the time Shaughnessy finishes her sentence, “It is just coming down” and that continues without interruption through the rest of the sequence.

By simply pressing the pause button we can discern the main points in this sequence. The initial, sharp jiggle of the camera appears to happen at 45-46 seconds into the NY1 clip. Shaughnessy’s “Oh!” and the first ejections of matter from the east side of the building appear to occur at 49-50 seconds. The first major and continuing shake of the camera seems to take place at 52-53 seconds. The increased sound of the collapse that appears to signal the debris striking the ground is heard at 1:02 – 1:03 into the clip.

To achieve more accuracy we will want to examine individual frames and make appropriate measurements. Then we can convert the times on the video clip to real times via the time-stamp. But the challenge this clip presents to NIST is already clear. The

shaking of the earth may increase in severity as the debris hits the ground, but it starts well before this.

Has the camera, so much closer to the action than the Palisades seismometer, caught a shaking that the official seismometer has missed? Or has NIST misinterpreted the seismic signal from Palisades?

To answer these questions, our first task is to plot the shaking of the NY1 video camera. Having downloaded the clip to our hard drive, and having used VirtualDub to break it into frames of approximately 33 milliseconds each, we choose a point on a building visible in the frame and plot the movement of that point relative to the bottom edge of the picture frame during the sequence. We are not, of course, plotting the movement of the building but of the camera. In order to make sure we do not miss crucial information, we take one measurement of the point, using Screen Calipers, for each frame in the sequence. We nominate frame 310, during the fade-in, as the starting point of the sequence and frame 2063 as the end point. This gives us

1753 frames with as many separate measurements.



Figure 21.11.: NY1: Distance Measured

When we enter the data on Excel, the following graph is produced:



Let us now add four key times, concentrating on the portion of the sequence in which perturbation is greatest.³¹ Bear in mind that this NY1 video clip has a time-stamp and that we have corroborated it through cross-referencing to the ABC time-stamp.

We can now make a few observations.

³¹The four times as listed on the graph are approximate. My measurements give the following as the times corresponding to the peaks marked:

- 9:58:56.396
- 9:58:59.333
- 9:59:04.004
- 9:59:10.777

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

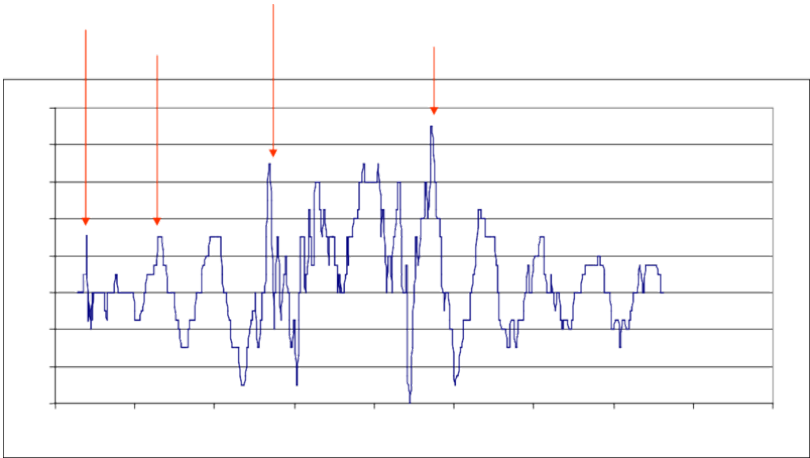
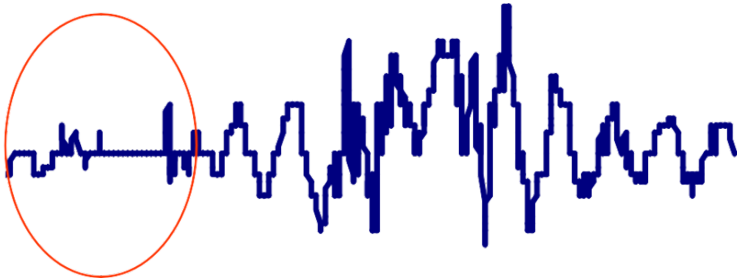


Figure 21.12.: NY1 video camera perturbation: close-up

1. The camera movement at 9:58:56 a.m. EDT, which shows up as a jiggle of the camera, is extremely sudden and brief, and it occurs about three seconds before collapse initiation. On close inspection, it appears likely that the movement at 9:58:56 is part of a series of less dramatic disruptions beginning several seconds earlier still:



2. The prolonged bout of camera-shaking begins after the brief event just discussed and directly before collapse initiation as visually determined.

Preliminary Conclusions:

3. The original LDEO estimate of the beginning of the seismic signal, accepted by FEMA, does not correspond either to the first brief camera shake or the beginning of the sustained sequence, but it does appear to correspond closely to a major spike (9:59:04).
4. The largest spike in the series (9:59:11) appears to correspond to debris strike.

Since the Sauret camera began shaking 12.380 seconds after collapse initiation, we may hypothesize that the trembling of this particular camera was not triggered until the largest seismic spike (9:59:11), caused by debris strike and occurring approximately 12 seconds after collapse initiation. The times are not perfect because, not knowing the distance of the NY1 camera from the South Tower, I have not taken account of the time required for the travel of seismic waves. But, bearing in mind the differences in camera site, apparatus, and so on, and keeping in mind that the Tower did not hit the ground as a discrete and rigid body, our results are probably within a reasonable margin of error.

The real times given in the above NY1 chart will require adjustment if and when it is possible to determine the location of the camera and, from this, the distance of the camera from the South Tower.

Preliminary Conclusions:

I began this paper by noting NIST's claims that "there were no seismic signals that occurred prior to the initiation of the collapse of either tower," that the seismic spikes recorded by the Palisades seismic station occurred about 9 seconds after the beginning of the South Tower collapse, and that these spikes were the result of debris impacting the ground. We can now evaluate these statements. Although LDEO presumably recorded no relevant seismic signal prior to collapse initiation, we have certainly found one on the

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

NY1 video clip. And although debris impacting the ground did cause a seismic spike, it now seems that the seismic spikes recorded by the Palisades seismic station began well before debris struck the ground (probably between six and eight seconds before debris strike) and considerably less than nine seconds after the beginning of collapse.

Direct Corroboration

I have argued that the earth shook well before the South Tower hit the ground and, indeed, before visible collapse initiation. But the next question must be: Is there corroborating evidence? It may seem, after all, that I am allowing a great deal to depend on a single source, the NY1 video clip.

One of the richest forms of information about the WTC on 9/11 is witness testimony, so let us turn to this. Witness testimony tends to be qualitatively thick but quantitatively thin. We may get accurate and vivid descriptions of key events but we will seldom be able to measure quantities and will in most cases be unable, on this basis alone, to construct a detailed time-line. But let us see what we can learn.

I shall restrict myself to two sources of witness testimony, the oral histories collected by the Fire Department of New York (FDNY) and the written accounts of the Port Authority Police Department (PAPD).³² Although I will concentrate on accounts of the South Tower's collapse, I will begin with four accounts of the North Tower coming down.

(1)

³²FDNY:

http://graphics8.nytimes.com/packages/html/nyregion/20050812_WTC_GRAPHIC/met_WTC_histories_full_01.html

PAPD:

<http://www.thememoryhole.org/911/pa-transcripts/>

"As we approached Chambers Street, kept walking, still no one had told us about the total collapse [of the South Tower]. We get down to about Barclay and Vesey Street, which is a block away from the overpass, the bridge overpass that goes across the West Side Highway.

All you hear is a rumbling in the street. It sounded like an earthquake. When I was a younger kid, I was in an earthquake and it felt like the same exact feeling. I looked, and I could see the antenna on the top of the roof coming straight down.

We all turned and just threw our rollups down and started running as fast as we could."

John Amato (9110421), FDNY, p. 3-4.

Notice in this account the close connection between feeling and sound. Connecting the experience to an earthquake, he says, "It *felt* like the same exact feeling," but he also says, "It *sounded* like an earthquake" (my emphasis). It seems that the "rumbling" he experienced ("rumbling" is an extremely common term in the oral histories to describe the Towers coming down) refers simultaneously to sound and feeling.

The other thing that is helpful about the above account of the North Tower's collapse is the reference to an event with a known time. Amato hears and feels the rumbling, then looks up and sees the antenna coming down. From videos of the North Tower's collapse, we know that the antenna became lost to sight well before debris struck the ground.³³ So we know that the shaking he is describing could not possibly have been caused by debris striking the ground. This is an example of how witness testimony, although not

³³I have examined five different video clips and have found that the antenna of the North Tower is visible until 4.5 – 7.8 seconds after collapse initiation, depending on the location and perspective.

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

as precise as we might wish, may be precise enough to establish a very important point.

Three PAPD accounts, also referring to the North Tower, will be useful to look at next since each corroborates the above account.

(2)

"Someone said, 'Duck!' Captain Anthony Whitaker grabbed me and threw me behind the truck. We huddled behind the truck as the building came down. The sound was deafening. The street was bouncing like a trampoline."

Michael Shuhala, Part 2, p. 60

It is impossible to determine precise times from the Shuhala account, but we note again *the close connection of sound and shaking*. They are simultaneous. It is possible that the shaking did not begin until debris struck the ground, but there is nothing in this account to suggest it.

(3)

"We regrouped and started back to help the injured [sic] as we went back towards Building #1. After walking two blocks the ground shook and I saw the top of Building #1 start to collapse--everyone started to leave the area for safety."

Gary Gersitz, Part 3, p. 40

This witness suggests that the shaking of the earth began at least as early as collapse initiation.

(4)

"I was standing there about 15-20 seconds when Inspector Fields ran up to me and said the building was going to come down. The ground started to shake, I looked up and saw the top of 1 WTC start to collapse. I started to run..."

B. Pikaard Part 2, p. 17

This account suggests the shaking of the earth preceded collapse initiation.

Since we are concentrating on the South Tower in this investigation, let us now turn to FDNY and PAPD accounts of the South Tower's collapse.

(5)

"I lost track of time. You start to hear this rumble. You hear this rumble. Everything is shaking. Now I'm like, what the hell could that be. I'm thinking we're going to get bombed. This is an air raid.

You hear this thunder, this rumbling. Then you see the building start to come down. Everybody's like, 'Run for your lives! The building is coming down!'"

Jody Bell (9110335), FDNY, p. 9-11

Again we have "rumbling," and again it is associated not only with hearing but with feeling ("shaking"). Bell guesses that planes are in the sky ("This is an air raid.") This disturbance precedes visual signs of collapse ("Then you see the building start to come down").

(6)

"-- at that time, I heard a rumble, you know, and then it was, you know, really like, almost like an earthquake.

Then what happened was I heard people screaming and running and then it seemed like they were going to -- it was

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

like going to be a trampling. It was just like bedlam...Then I started to run for safety too, because I looked up and I saw that the building was going to come down. We were right across the street from it...suddenly, I was near that garage area, the sky as it blacks out, and then all of a sudden, it just came down.”

Alexander Loutsky (9110151), FDNY, p. 10, 11

Again we have a reference to a rumble, and by now we suspect both feeling and hearing are involved when he makes the comparison to an earthquake. Once again, this disturbance begins very early: “I looked up and I saw that the building was going to come down.” He does not say how he knew it was going to come down, but perhaps he saw the tilting of the top portion of the building.

(7)

”We went approximately one or two blocks when all of a sudden heard this big roar. It sounded like another plane coming in or it sounded like an earthquake, but it just didn’t sound right. So we all started running, my partner and I, and we had the commissioner with us also. The next thing I know we were engulfed in this black cloud of smoke...”

Richard McCurry (9110371), FDNY, p. 5

Fire Marshal McCurry’s account does not allow a precise time estimate. We cannot rule out the possibility that debris was striking the ground as this disturbance began. But I want to draw attention to the word “roar,” which is probably second in frequency only to “rumble” in the FDNY collapse descriptions. Note that we also have another comparison to the sound of a plane, a comparison which, as Appendix D at the end of this article makes clear, is extremely common.

(8)

"I was in back of the vehicle and I heard, it sounded like I thought another plane had struck the building. This loud bang and then it sounded like a locomotive, or like when I used to live in Howard Beach, when the planes used to come in at night, flying right over the house. Everything started shaking and I heard like a thunderstorm. Somebody screamed it's coming down. I don't remember if it was on the radio, because the side door of the bus was open. The back door of the truck--I could see out of. I looked, and I bent all the way down to look up as far as I could, and I could see the cloud coming. I thought the building was actually falling over. I didn't know it was pancaking."

Eric Rodriguez (9110094), FDNY, p. 7

Although we cannot make a precise time estimate from this account, the time of the disturbance seems early. There are the familiar references to planes, thunder and shaking, and only after this do we have someone scream "it's coming down." When he speaks of the cloud coming we do not know if he is referring to the flow of pulverized material that spread through the streets after collapse or if he is referring to the vertical descent of the pulverization wave. His final comments suggest the latter. The account certainly suggests that the earth shook before debris hit the ground.

(9)

"At that time we were looking at the top of the towers and all the rubble and people coming off, and all of a sudden you heard -- it sounded like another airplane, or a missile. It was like a slow shake. The whole ground just vibrated and shook. We just told everybody to run, run into a building, let's go, run, run, run..."

John Rothmund (9110112), FDNY, p. 5-6

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

Rothmund is describing a shaking of the earth that occurred very early, probably prior to any visible sign of building collapse. He sees rubble and people coming off the buildings—this took place over quite a lengthy period and does not suggest building collapse—and then he experiences the hearing and feeling with which we are by now familiar.

(10)

"The next thing you know, you hear a loud thundering noise. It sounded like a jet, a big rumble. I start looking around and I'm like, what is that? The next thing I know, I see the cop just take off. I'm like, where's he going?"

Then I see the things on the floor, like Liberty -- you know, just like the movies, bouncing up and jumping and shaking. I mean, not like an earthquake, like a 6 point something or something like that. But you see stuff on the floor shaking from side to side. I'm like, oh, my God. I look up and I was saying, oh, no, the building's going to fall down.

...

Q. "So you had a feeling the building was coming down right away?"

A. "Yeah."

Q. "Is that what you first thought?"

A. "Yeah. The sound, it's just loud. At first it's (sound) and then you feel everything around you -- not around you but the floor. You feel the floor trembling and shaking. You look at the floor, the dirt, the sand and everything on the floor shifting from side to side. I'm like, oh, man..."

Robert Ruiz (9110333), FDNY, p. 10 ff.

Ruiz hears the rumble and thunder, thinks of the jet plane, and clearly experiences the shaking of the ground (FDNY members often talk of the “floor” when many of us would refer to the “ground”) before the building has even begun to descend. “I look up and I was saying, oh, no, the building's going to fall down.” It is not clear how he knows the South Tower is going to collapse.

(11)

”Shortly before the first tower came down I remember feeling the ground shaking. I heard a terrible noise, and then debris just started flying everywhere. People started running toward the staging area.”

”By the time the debris settled from the first collapse, we started to walk back east towards West Street, and a few minutes later -- I really don't remember the time frames because we were so busy in trying to account for who was in the staging area and who wasn't -- we basically had the same thing: The ground shook again, and we heard another terrible noise and the next think [sic] we knew the second tower was coming down.”

Bradley Mann (9110194), FDNY, p. 5, 6, 7

Mann is confident about the sequence of events, which he says was the same for both buildings. The shaking came early—either before, or at the same time as, the loud sound. Only then did the wave of debris come down. *The earth began shaking before visible signs of collapse.*

(12)

”...at that exact moment I can feel -- or hear the noise first. I hear a noise. Right after that noise, you could feel the building start to shudder, tremble, under your feet.

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

Somebody said to me, 'What's going on?' I said, 'What's going on? The fucking building -- the goddamn building is coming down'...I knew what was coming down. The building I was in was coming down...

I remember taking a few steps and trying to run, and you're either thrown or blown off your feet....

It was a terrible noise. Besides the building shuddering, the sound was horrendous. To me it sounded like steel cutting through steel."

Brian O'Flaherty (9110431), FDNY, p. 13-15

Precise times cannot be determined from O'Flaherty's account, but the shuddering and the sound are closely connected and certainly seem to precede debris strike.

(13)

"...we started ahead like halfway across West Street with our stuff, and the ground started shaking like a train was coming... You looked up, and it looked like a ticker tape parade off the back of the building, because all this stuff started coming down...We came halfway across the street, and the building was coming down."

Joseph Fortis (9110200), FDNY, p. 7-8

The earth shake either accompanied, or preceded, collapse initiation.

(14)

"After that, I helped one lady out of the front of the Marriott entrance, I recall. I was on my way back...Then on my way back to the entrance, I felt the ground shake, I turned around and ran for my life.

I made it as far as the Financial Center, like right before it, behind the last Hatzolah ambulance facing the Trade Center, when the collapse happened...

...

I assisted that lady to the Hatzolah ambulance and was on my way back when we felt the rumble. My partner actually came sort of like running up to me but not all the way. What should I do. I just said go get a long board from the ambulance and that was the last I saw of him. We felt the ground shake. You could see the towers sway [tower sway?] and then it just came down..."

Lonnie Penn (9110203), FDNY, p. 2-3, 5

The earth shake seems to have preceded collapse initiation.

(15)

"Just at this time, another firefighter began to yell to us from across the street. He was looking up at the Towers and yelled for us to hurry up since he thought the second Tower was about to fall. The two firefighters and myself again picked up the injured man and managed to walk three or four steps when we felt extreme vibration and an incredible noise 'like a thousand freight trains.' I knew instantly that the Tower was falling down."

Timothy Norris, PAPD, Part 1, p. 34

Vibration and noise are closely connected in this account. The earth shake either accompanied or preceded collapse initiation.

(16)

"As I walked to the window I heard this incredible noise. It's difficult to describe what it had sounded or felt like. It

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

was like being in an earthquake and under a thousand "L" trains all at once. The vibration ran thru me with violent ground vibrations. I heard Lt. Kassamatis yelling for me to get out of there [describes running, thinking] I thought it was another plane

crashing into the Plaza. I remember thinking that this was it, I was not going to make it. I heard a loud wind and glass shattering around me. An incredible force of wind and debris crashed thru the mezzanine and knocked me down...

...

We were walking north on West St. and just as we got there I heard that noise again. I remember looking up at the North Tower and saw the corners of the building collapsing straight down."

Anthony Croce, PAPD, Part 1, p. 64-67

I have left in the second part of this account, dealing with the North Tower, because it is essential to the interpretation of the account as a whole. When discussing the South Tower he links the noise closely to the "violent ground vibrations," but we do not have enough information to estimate where in the collapse these sounds and vibrations began. When dealing with the North Tower, however, he says he saw the "corners of the building collapsing straight down" after the noise has already begun. This indicates that the noise started early, well before debris strike.

(17)

"We then continued walking down the ramp and towards the parking areas, looking for people who may be trying to exit. We felt what I can only describe [as] a shudder in the building and then ran towards the exit. We ran up the

Indirect Corroboration: the Sounds of Collapse

Barclay St. ramp and made a right onto Vesey St. I turned to look up at the buildings as Tower #2 began collapsing.”

Robert Greff, PAPD, Part 1, p. 94

It is not clear what building he is referring to as shuddering. It is possible he is referring to the South Tower itself. In any case, several seconds before collapse initiation he felt a building in the vicinity of the South Tower shudder.

What have we learned from these accounts?

- The ground trembled--objects on the ground visibly shifted and shook--well before the debris from the collapsing Tower hit the ground.
- A considerable degree of shaking began not only before debris struck the ground but before the South Tower began to descend.
- The earth shaking was directly associated with an extremely loud noise.

Although it is difficult to determine precise times from the witness testimony, these accounts certainly corroborate in a general way the NY1 video record.

And our third conclusion, having to do with the close association of sound and shaking, allows us to extend our enquiry to include indirect corroboration.

Indirect Corroboration: the Sounds of Collapse

The Twin Towers were huge buildings, and it is not surprising that their rapid destruction generated a great deal of noise. But this observation does not take us very far. We want to know what specific

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

sounds accompanied the collapses and whether these sounds corroborate our findings about the shaking of the earth.

Witness testimony and surviving audio records allow us to distinguish three broad and overlapping sorts of sounds accompanying the collapses (see Appendix D for these and other accounts):

- (1) Discrete impulsive sounds typically described as booms, bangs, crashes and explosions.

”I had heard right before the lights went out, I had heard a distant boom boom boom, sounded like three explosions. I don’t know what it was. At the time, I would have said they sounded like bombs, but it was boom boom boom and then the lights all go out...” (Keith Murphy)

I have catalogued reports of explosions elsewhere.³⁴ I have only two comments on the subject to make in this article. First, since some people seem to think we are faced with a choice between explosions and the well known “rumble” and “roar,” it is important to make it clear that these are not competitors. All three sorts of sounds were heard.

Second, I want to mention that “booms” occurring during the South Tower’s collapse are audible on at least two video recordings, one of which is the Firefighter video and one of which is the Sauret video. In the latter, there are eight booms audible, and at least six of them precede debris strike.³⁵

- (2) A “rumble” that includes both sound and feeling and is characterized both by a deep, continuous noise and a felt vibration.

³⁴“118 Witnesses: The Firefighters’ Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers.” http://www.journalof911studies.com/articles/Article_5_118Witnesses_WorldTradeCenter.pdf

³⁵Although eight sounds can distinctly be heard on the DVD (“WTC: the first 24 hours”), the first two are especially prominent, as the following sonogram kindly prepared for me by Joe Terrien shows:

Indirect Corroboration: the Sounds of Collapse

See the accounts in the previous section, Direct Corroboration, and in Appendix D.

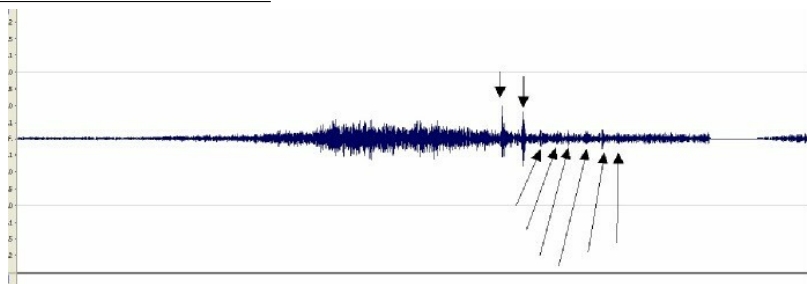
- (3) A “roar,” described most commonly as like the roar of a jet plane, and including both a deep sound and a higher sound--a whine or whistle.

”...all of a sudden I heard this sound. It sounded like a jet, a high, whistling sound. There was like a rumble behind it. It was like a jet with a locomotive behind it.” (Mark Mazur)

The rumble and roar were extremely loud (“It was the loudest noise I’ve ever heard in my life,” Robert Larocco). They increased in volume in the early stages of collapse (“you heard a roar, some sort of a vibration, like a vrr vrr vrr, getting louder and louder,” Kevin McCabe).

Most importantly, as the two following testimonies show, these sounds began before the descent of the South Tower. (The witnesses hear the sounds, have a series of thoughts, and then look up to see the building beginning to tilt).

- a. ”But immediately once I put the oxygen down, I hear the rumble, and I heard a rumble that we



Discussion of these sounds can be found in “Explosion Sounds and the World Trade Center - Twin Tower Collapses:”

<http://www.mediumrecords.com/wtc/audio01.html>

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

thought was another plane. That's what immediately everyone said, there's a plane coming, there's another plane coming.

So we all looked up and what we saw was tower, I guess, 2, the south tower, begin to do this. The top kind of did this and there was a horrendous rumble.”

Q. “Now, your hand is showing that it's kind of tilted in one direction. What direction did it tilt?”

A. “It was tilting towards us, so it had been to be tilting eastward At that

point we hear the rumble and, you know, this is it. I figure I'm dead. I thought this tower was going to topple. So I start to run.” (Manuel Delgado)

b. “Then I just remember that, distinct noise like an airplane being on a runway and it's ready to take off. I heard the loud roaring of like the engines, and I thought another plane was hitting the building.

Someone yelled run. I looked up, and the top of the tower I saw was starting to move over. It was bending like it was going to come down. Everybody started running.” (Bruce Medjuck)

The case appears to have been the same with the North Tower: the rumble preceded downward movement:

”We were probably about a block away when we heard a giant rumbling sound. It sounded like jets were going overhead and then we looked up and we saw the tower start to fall and we just ran.” (Michael Morabito)

Appendix D lists further descriptions, in the FDNY oral histories, of sounds accompanying the collapses of the Towers--excluding explosions, which I have dealt with elsewhere, and focusing especially

on the curious comparisons to the sounds of jet planes. It is obvious from these accounts that the sounds, and by implication the closely connected vibrations, occur well before debris strike. I therefore regard this witness testimony as indirectly corroborating the main conclusions reached through the NY1 graph and the previously discussed directly corroborating evidence.

Conclusions

If we simply checked time-stamps and exercised appropriate scepticism toward NIST's revised seismic estimates we would find good reason to reject NIST's position that a significant seismic signal began only when debris hit the earth. Innovation in the use of video cameras would not be necessary. But we have gone further and used video evidence, especially that embodied in the NY1 video, and we have been able put together an intriguing profile of the shaking of the earth and to suggest that:

- The shaking of the earth seems to have reached an early peak at approximately 9:59:04 a.m. This helps us make sense of LDEO's original findings.
- A second and higher peak came much later. Representing the moment when debris hit the ground, it has been mistakenly represented by NIST as corresponding to the start of the LDEO seismic signal.
- The seismic event actually began before both of these points in time and, indeed, before any visible sign of collapse.

Seeking to corroborate the NY1 video evidence, we have looked at witness testimony from the FDNY oral histories and PAPD accounts, and we have found two kinds of corroborating evidence, direct and indirect. The direct evidence has confirmed that a quite intense shaking of the earth began well before debris impact and that some degree

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

of earth shaking took place before collapse initiation. The indirect (auditory) evidence suggests that the distinct sounds associated with shaking of the earth began well before debris impact. Some of these accounts confirm that the sounds, and by implication the vibrations, began before visible collapse of the South Tower.

I do not pretend to have resolved all the anomalies relating to the shaking of the earth at the time of the South Tower's destruction. I do not expect to see these anomalies resolved until seismologists study the WTC events closely. But I believe it is clear that several of NIST's key claims are untenable.

I am especially intrigued by the evidence we now possess that the earth shook before the initiation of each of the three dramatic building collapses of 9/11. This article has touched on some of the evidence relating to the South Tower. In the case of the North Tower we have both witness evidence and video camera perturbation.³⁶ As for World Trade Center 7, NIST acknowledges the existence of a seismic signal preceding the collapse by ten seconds: "A seismic signal approximately 10 s prior to the onset of collapse was likely due to the falling of debris from the collapse (NIST NCSTAR 1-9 Appendix B)."³⁷

The official explanation of the collapses given by NIST is not com-

³⁶Examples of witness accounts are given on pages 26-28 of the article. The shaking of the Sauret video camera (note 27) is the best known instance of camera shake in relation to the North Tower but it may not be the only one. As of the time of writing of this article, see also:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mHPgLLJfq7s>

³⁷*Final Report on the Collapse of World Trade Center Building 7. NIST NCSTAR 1A: Federal Building and Fire Safety Investigation of the World Trade Center Disaster.* November, 2008. Pp. 42-43. The apparent absurdity of the NIST statement derives from the use of the word "collapse" to refer to two different events. In the first instance "collapse" refers to the visible descent of the building; in the second case it refers to the invisible and hypothetical falling of debris inside the building prior to visible descent.

<http://wtc.nist.gov/NCSTAR1/PDF/NCSTAR%201A.pdf>

patible with these pre-collapse perturbations. For example, although the NIST hypothesis of a gravity-driven “progressive collapse” of the Towers does necessitate major impact between the upper and lower portions of the buildings (such as might, in theory, cause a seismic signal), this impact would have to occur after, not before, collapse initiation. And, in any case, when we take the trouble to study the acceleration of the upper block we find no evidence whatsoever of the major impact NIST’s hypothesis requires.³⁸

The possibility that explosions caused some or all of the earliest perturbations needs to be investigated. We already possess convincing evidence of critical explosions in these buildings,³⁹ and we cannot help but notice that video cameras do, in fact, sometimes shake before the visible beginning of collapses in controlled demolitions.⁴⁰

I hope other researchers will take advantage of the methods and materials used in this article to further refine our knowledge of the destruction of the buildings of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001.

³⁸See MacQueen and Szamboti, “The Missing Jolt: A Simple Refutation of the NIST-Bazant Collapse Hypothesis,” *Journal of 9/11 Studies*, vol. 24, Jan. 2009.

<http://www.journalof911studies.com/volume/2008/TheMissingJolt7.pdf>

³⁹There are numerous websites that have assembled evidence of explosions in the WTC. Three of the best known are:

<http://www.journalof911studies.com/>

(See not only the articles in the *Journal of 9/11 Studies* itself but other peer-reviewed articles mentioned on this site.)

<http://911research.wtc7.net/>

<http://www.ae911truth.org/>

⁴⁰See, as of the time of writing of this article:

- the demolition of the Intel Building in Austin, Texas:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4nm4wVoe6Z8>
- the demolition of three power station chimneys:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HsWTtw--66M>
- and the demolition of the Tencza apartments in Virginia:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d-WvQbFMIWU>

APPENDIX A

Method: Time-stamps and Graphs

1. NIST uses network time-stamps to establish its timeline for major events at the WTC. It estimates that these time-stamps are generally very accurate and that the margin of error is about one second. (See note 11.) My own use of these time-stamps suggests NIST's estimate is accurate.
2. To the extent that I am able to discern NIST's method, I find that it relies, like my method, on distinctive transient events (although the term is my own). Any rejection of my method as applied in this paper would, therefore, have serious implications for NIST and its own method and time-line.
3. In this paper I shall, as a general rule, give times exactly as they are delivered by the software I am using (VirtualDub), which divides video footage into 33 millisecond frames. We cannot, of course, claim to determine the real times of the events in question to the millisecond, so suitable rounding off can be carried out when we convert VirtualDub times to real times. The claims I make in this paper do not depend on millisecond-level accuracy.
4. Most of the time-stamps found on the network videos give simply hours and minutes. So, for example, a time-stamp might read "9:59". But it is possible to determine very precisely when the number flips from 9:59 to 10:00, and with this information we can determine seconds and fractions of seconds using our software.
5. Creating graphs from camera perturbations is not especially difficult, although it requires patience. A stable point in the picture (typically part of a building) is chosen and its apparent vertical movement recorded by measuring, in each chosen

frame, the distance between the point and the fixed border of the picture. I have used the software called Screen Calipers for my measurements.

APPENDIX B

6 NBC Frames and 6 NY1 Frames Showing South Tower East Face Ejections



Figure 21.13.: NBC frame 75 (2.503 sec. into clip)

APPENDIX C

The DVD of Etienne Sauret’s “WTC: the first 24 hours” contains a short and a long version of his film. In the longer version there are three separate video sequences (each one shot with a stable camera from a single angle) strung together at the beginning of the film. Within these three sequences are the five perturbations.

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*



Figure 21.14.: NBC frame 85 (2.836 sec.)



Figure 21.15.: NBC frame 95 (3.170 sec.)



Figure 21.16.: NBC frame 105 (3.504 sec.)



Figure 21.17.: NBC frame 115 (3.837 sec.)

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*



Figure 21.18.: NBC frame 125 (4.171 sec.)



Figure 21.19.: NY1 fr. 1470 (49.049 sec. into clip)



Figure 21.20.: NY1 fr. 1480 (49.383 sec.)



Figure 21.21.: NY1 fr. 1490 (49.716 sec.)

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*



Figure 21.22.: NY1 fr. 1500 (50.050 sec.)



Figure 21.23.: NY1 fr. 1510 (50.384 sec.)



Figure 21.24.: NY1 fr. 1520 (50.717 sec.)

- (1) The first perturbation begins at approximately frame 429 (14.314 seconds into the clip) of the first sequence and lasts about 2.5 seconds. This puts its initiation at about 18.5 seconds before the beginning of the perturbation associated with the impact of the plane on the South Tower. Furlong and Ross have made a case for an explosion, presumably in the basement, in the South Tower somewhere between 17 and 20 seconds prior to plane impact. It is possible that this first perturbation was caused by that explosion, although this hypothesis would not be without its own challenges. (In this case the seismic signal interpreted by LDEO as the result of the plane strike is actually the result of the explosion. But we then have to explain why the plane strike did not show up on the LDEO record given that it appears to show up clearly in the record of the video camera.)

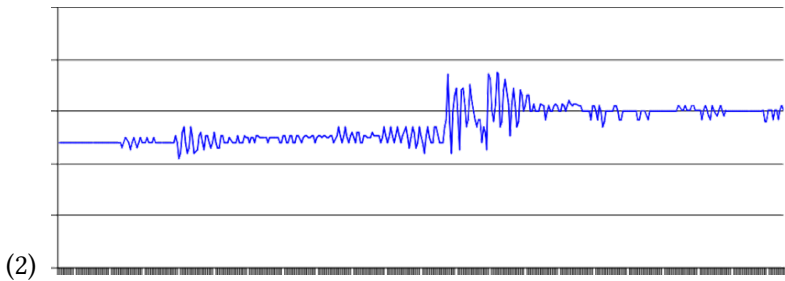
Craig Furlong and Gordon Ross, "Seismic Proof – 9/11 Was An

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

Inside Job” (Updated Version II). *Journal of 9/11 Studies*, vol. 3, Sept.

2006.

<http://www.journalof911studies.com/volume/200609/ExplosionInTowerBurlongAndRoss.pdf>



The next perturbation is associated with the impact of the plane on the South Tower and is represented below in graphic form (see Appendix A for the method used to obtain this graph).

There are two phases of disturbance in this perturbation, which can be indicated roughly as follows:

I assume the first phase of disturbance (A) was caused by seismic waves generated at or around the time of airplane impact and that the second phase (B) was caused by the pressure wave created by the deflagration of the vapour cloud that formed subsequent to the crash. Video cameras may move in response to events in both earth and atmosphere, which is to say that they will at times be both crude seismographs and crude barographs. The accompanying visual and auditory data captured by the camera seem to me to support this interpretation. The same general phenomena—camera perturbations from seismic waves followed by perturbations caused by disturbances in the

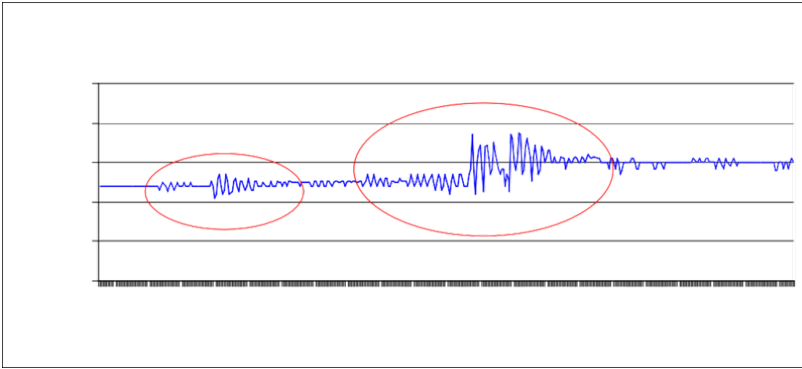


Figure 21.25.: Two phases of disturbance

atmosphere—can be seen in the NY1 video clip discussed in the article.

Note that in the selected frames below the blurring of the image in frame 220 represents one of the moments of extreme camera perturbation that I interpret as caused by the pressure wave from the vapour cloud.

These and other camera perturbations on the Sauret video merit separate and detailed study.

- (3) The third perturbation is the one related to the collapse of the South Tower discussed in the body of the article.
- (4) In the third video sequence, we find the well known pre-collapse perturbation associated with the North Tower (see Note 27). The tremble lasts about 2.5 seconds. The North Tower begins to descend about 9 seconds after the end of this perturbation.
- (5) The next perturbation in the third sequence, also associated with the North Tower, is so delicate that it can easily be missed.

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*



Figure 21.26.: Frame 75



Figure 21.27.: Frame 190



Figure 21.28.: Frame 220



Figure 21.29.: Frame 240

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*



Figure 21.30.: Frame 265

But it is undeniably present, as the website referenced in note 27 makes clear:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2E-tieJFVGy>

Measuring and interpreting this perturbation are tasks for a separate study. In my view, the largest spikes after collapse initiation are likely caused by debris strike, but there are smaller perturbations preceding these that must have different causes.

APPENDIX D

FDNY ORAL HISTORIES: THE SOUND OF THE TOWERS' COLLAPSES, WITH A SPECIAL FOCUS ON THE COMPARISON TO JET PLANES

- (1) "Next thing you know, you hear another--they had said there were jets out there that day. They were out there. I started to

hear another jet, right, it sound like the flush of a jet. What it was was actually the building coming down. I didn't actually see the building coming down but you heard it. Why I didn't see it, I don't know. We were just so busy concentrating on what we are doing. You just heard this thrushing, thrushing noise like a rocket. I thought the building was under attack again.

You just start seeing this smoke coming down. We just took off.”

South Tower

Faisal Abed (9110071), p. 6-7

- (2) ”As we approached Chambers Street, kept walking, still no one had told us about the total collapse. We get down to about Barclay and Vesey Street, which is a block away from the overpass, the bridge overpass that goes across the West Side Highway.

All you hear is a rumbling in the street. It sounded like an earthquake. When I was a younger kid, I was in an earthquake and it felt like the same exact feeling. I looked, and I could see the antenna on the top of the roof coming straight down.

We all turned and just threw our rollups down and started running as fast as we could. I took about five steps, I turned back to look behind me, and the debris was on my heels. Guys were just scrambling through the streets. Finally the debris overcame us, and you couldn't see anymore. It was like pitch-black, total darkness.”

North Tower

John Amato (9110421), p. 3-4

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

- (3) "...I heard what I thought was a jet engine plane. In retrospect, it turns out that it was the first tower coming down.

...

and the next thing I noticed, that jet engine sound and then a loud crash and then pitch black."

South Tower

Glenn Asaeda (9110062), p. 17-18

- (4) "Approximately 9:50, we heard this loud noise. I looked up and it sounded like another airplane was coming in. That's what it sounded. It sounded like a large engine, like you're

sitting on the seat on the wing of the plane. That's the best way I can describe what it sounded like.

We look up and we saw tower two coming down. We just all ran."

South Tower

Kevin Barrett (9110464), p. 4-5

- (5) "We were operating in the lobby, and all of a sudden we heard the roar of a jet engine, is what it sounded like. We thought that there was another plane coming into the building. We went from the lobby area into an elevator bank area--escalators that led into the concourse area...

Not two seconds later debris and dust started to come in, and essentially we were just shut down."

South Tower

James Basile (9110105), p. 5-6

- (6) "...we heard this noise. It sounded like a train. I thought it was another jet coming overhead. I thought it was a fighter jet now patrolling or another plane coming. Pretty much everybody started scattering..."

South Tower

Paul Beck (9110326), p. 4

- (7) "I lost track of time. You start to hear this rumble. You hear this rumble. Everything is shaking. Now I'm like, what the hell could that be. I'm thinking we're going to get bombed. This is an air raid.

You hear this thunder, this rumbling. Then you see the building start to come down. Everybody's like, 'Run for your lives! The building is coming down!'" [He then describes himself doing several tasks, then says: "Then shortly after that--the building came down."]

[later, p. 16-17:]

"Oh, wait, another major thing. When that second building came down, as we were running, you hear this thunder in the air. This was a scary part. We hear thunder. That's when I'm like, oh, no, now they're going to bomb us. You hear this thunder. You know it's in the air, but you don't see anything. You just hear this loud sound. It's just getting bigger and bigger."

South Tower; North Tower

Jody Bell (9110335), p. 9-11; 16-17

- (8) "...I guess a little bit after I got past that point, there was a loud roar I figured another

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

plane was coming.”

South Tower

Thomas Bendick (9110083), p. 3-4

- (9) ”I looked back because I heard what I thought was another jet, and it was the building on its way down already.”

North Tower

Paul Bessler (9110503), p. 6

- (10) ”I didn't turn around to look. I just heard the noise coming down, and it was like a jet engine, just getting louder and louder.”

South Tower

Pedro Carrasquillo (9110089), p. 5-6

- (11) ”that's when tower one came down, so I was on West Street. I looked up. There was a jet plane. It sounded--I mean it sounded like another plane coming over and I said holy god, I hope it's one of ours. I looked up. It wasn't ours. There was a building coming down.”

North Tower

Salvatore Cassano (9110011), p. 11

- (12) ”As we were doing that, somebody said, there's another plane. That's it, another plane is coming, another plane is gonna crash. We heard this rumble, that's when the building came down. We all thought it was a plane...We actually thought it was another plane. That's right. That's when the other building came down. Because we heard the rumble (BOOM). Just crashing down, I thought it was another plane.”

North Tower

Allen Cruz (9110047), p. 10

(13) Q. "You knew the building was coming down?"

A. "No. We were reacting. There was no logical thought. You were reacting to the noise. The noise was getting louder and louder. It was like a jet engine or a train coming at you. So we just ran and ducked."

South Tower

John Culley (9110107), p. 11

(14) "Whatever time it was when that first building started to come down, all we heard was just like a loud thunder that didn't stop. When you looked up you saw the debris starting to fall from the top, and a cloud of smoke on top and it was hard to judge where the debris was going to fall.."

South Tower

Frank D'Amato (9110043), p. 6

(15) "But immediately once I put the oxygen down, I hear the rumble, and I heard a rumble that we thought was another plane. That's what immediately everyone said, there's a plane coming, there's another plane coming.

So we all looked up and what we saw was tower, I guess, 2, the south tower, begin to do this. The top kind of did this and there was a horrendous rumble."

Q. "Now, your hand is showing that it's kind of tilted in one direction. What direction did it tilt?"

A. "It was tilting towards us, so it had been to be tilting eastward At that point we hear

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

the rumble and, you know, this is it. I figure I'm dead. I thought this tower was going to topple. So I start to run."

South Tower

Manuel Delgado (9110004), p. 14-15

- (16) "Right after that, in my mind, I heard a rumbling, and it was almost as if it was the roller coaster at Coney Island. It seemed like a metal clanging on metal sound. Then we saw a black cloud come out, and I told everybody to run."

North Tower

George DeSimone (9110129), p. 6-7

- (17) [He hears a "rumble" when the South Tower comes down. Then he says:]

"So when that collapsed, I felt a tremor and I ran towards North End, but we had a cloud following us " [South Tower]

" but when the second tower fell [North Tower], I never forget that sound. It sounded like

a freight train passing by. I never forget that sound, never forget that sound. Like a freight train."

South Tower; North Tower John Felidi (9110201), p. 8, 9

- (18) "I heard a tremendous roar like I've never heard before and it sounded like a jet engine was like right over my head, like I was on a runway with a jet engine just taking off over my head.

At that point I kind of looked up in the air because that's where--and I was looking for a plane. I couldn't see anything, but I saw people running. So I said, well, this may

be a good time to start running....I started running, and then there was a complete--a blanket over me ”

North Tower

Thomas Gaby (9110140), p. 11-12

- (19) ”At that point--again, not even--I would say about 40 seconds, we get to the middle of the street with this individual, and you heard like a loud 'rrrrr.' Everything started shaking. We thought it was another plane.

What we did, we all separated. Me and two other guys, Walker and Murphy, we went back to the building.”

North Tower

Joseph Galasso (9110322), p. 9

- (20) ”It wasn't that long at all, and we heard this sound that kind of sounded like an airplane. We thought it was another airplane hitting the towers. That's exactly what it sounded like, you know, and it gradually got louder.”

South Tower

Peter Giammarino (9110436), p. 4

- (21) ”...we started to hear this rumbling sound, and this was probably five, ten minutes after we got into the loading dock. We heard this rumbling sound and, you know, the rumors were there of additional planes missing, and actually, my initial thought was this was actually another plane...and the noise stopped, and we opened up the door, and everything was pitch black.”

South Tower

Michael Guttenberg (911005), p. 10-11

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

- (22) "...we were sitting there talking and we heard a sound that sounded like a plane -- like you were in the middle of a plane engine.

Everybody looked up and you said oh, no, a third one. That's how loud it was. Then we turned our eyes toward the Trade Center and we saw the top building [sic] come down...I ran. I dove under that ambulance and it started to get buried with rubble."

South Tower

Mark Harris (9110057), p. 5

- (23) "9:55 we heard this loud rumbling noise, looked up and saw the building coming down. Everyone started yelling, run, run, run, so we started running up Vesey..." [p. 3]

"That's about the point when the building came down and my back was to it. I heard the noise. I turned around and it looked like I was looking at a movie. It was like surrealistic.

I can still vividly see the debris coming down and starting running. The noise is -- I thought it was another plane actually, because the noise was so deafening loud, from everything coming down." [p. 7]

South Tower

Stephen Hess (9110060), p. 3, 7

- (24) "While she was telling her sister that she was safe, what I perceived to be the building started rumbling, the one we were in, and it was my impression that a third plane hit the building we were in. I had no idea that the first tower was collapsing...so it was my impression at that point that the whole building [the one they were in] was going down, that a third plane

hit the building, and that we were probably going to be dead at that point...The rumbling, the building was rumbling, and we thought the whole building was coming down, people were screaming in the hall, the smoke engulfed us, we couldn't see, and there was just a loud rumble, a jet rumbling..."

South Tower

Randall Hirth (9110152), p. 4-5

- (25) [Note: This refers to an occasion some days *after* 9/11 and illustrates the traumatizing effect of the collapse sounds.]

"There was thunder, I will never forget. I was home I guess the week after that, and thunder, there was this horrible storm that came through and I'm at home and I'm finally in my bed and I'm like okay, I can't sleep, everybody is knocked out and all of a sudden this big ka-boom. I was in my bedroom and I have a ranch, a long ranch. My room is here, my daughter's is here and my son's is here and my son was sleeping with my daughter that night.

I got out of the bed, that boom, ran and scooped the two kids up and jumped on top of them. They are like, ah, what's the matter? I'm like what was that? My husband is like holy shit, you need to see somebody about that...

And I still do that, you know. They are demolishing buildings over by where I live to build a new mall. I'm like, what was that, you know, like commando on the floor. Come on baby, let's go. You know, it's wild."

Veronica Jacobs (110173), p. 12-13

- (26) "We heard like a lot of trembling and everything. So we better get out of here. This doesn't look good. There is no more people coming.

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

So we started walking the same way the Chief went, and he was at the other end. He said the same thing. He said we better get our asses out of here. This doesn't look good at all. As we were walking, we heard -- we thought it was another plane coming. It was like a big shhhhh. A thousand times louder than that. It sounded like a missile coming and we just started booking. We took off like bats out of hell.

We made it around the corner and that's when the shit hit the fan right then and there. We heard that loud and then ba boom. I just -- it was like an earthquake or whatever. A giant, giant explosion." [Debris starts hitting him shortly after this.]

North Tower

George Kozlowski (9110308), p. 8

- (27) "Before I could finish that sentence, we heard just a loud noise and looked up and tower two was starting to collapse. With that everybody just started running...

...

Tower one now comes down. Same thing but this time some of us take off straight down West street, because we realized later on, subconsciously we wanted to be near buildings. We all thought it was secondary explosives or more planes or whatever."

South Tower

Art Lakiotes (9110216), p. 4-5

- (28) "Anyway, just to describe to you the collapse of the south tower coming down, I really wasn't aware there was a full collapse. I thought it might have been just a localized collapse. It was

the loudest noise I've ever heard in my life. It was in both ears. Kind of like those rockets that they launch the space shuttles with, it was like I had one going off in each ear. When I thought it was the loudest noise I ever heard, every second it was just increasing getting louder and louder and louder.

I was running as fast as I could. With this noise getting louder and louder, also what's happening simultaneously was light -- what ever light we had was becoming darkness..."

South Tower

Robert Larocco (9110081), p. 21

- (29) "We heard a noise like the plane was still coming in -- like another plane was coming in. We turned around to look, and that's when our building was going down."

Kirk Long (9110509), p. 6

- (30) "Then all of a sudden there was like a loud -- almost like a rushing sound, a roar, and we looked up and we could see it looked like an implosion and the building kind of went in and out and kind of like shook and I remember like 20 or 30 guys, whatever it was, all there at the command post. A lot of them in front of me pulled towards West Street. We were looking up and then this thing started coming down and nobody ran. I could remember that. Even myself, I remember being hypnotized by this thing and just looking up at it and then finally, thank God, somebody yelled, 'Run.' And we took off..."

South Tower

David Loper (9110349), p. 10

- (31) 10:

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

-- at that time, I heard a rumble, you know, and then it was, you know, really like, almost like an earthquake.

Then what happened was I heard people screaming and running and then it seemed like they were going to -- it was like going to be a trampling. It was just like bedlam...

Then I started to run for safety too, because I looked up and I saw that the building was going to come down. We were right across the street from it...

...suddenly, I was near that garage area, the sky as it blacks out, and then all of a sudden, it just came down."

South Tower

Alexander Loutsky (9110151), p. 10, 11

- (32) "...we started to hear a rumble that was about a thousand times more intense than the sound of the subway that runs underneath the ground, but something similar to that. Like I said, a thousand times more intense. With that, somebody came running around the corner and I always make the comment that I don't think his feet were touching the ground...and he was saying run run run, the building is coming down. There were some other people behind him. The dust cloud was right behind them."

North Tower

Daniel Lynch (9110185), p.7

- (33) "I said it sounds just like this, this is exactly what it sounds like, here's another one, thinking it was a third plane. Meanwhile the sound to me was four distinct events. They all sounded the same. The two plane crashes and the two collapses, except the collapse lasted longer..."

...

That was the fourth event in the sound department. The sound was the same thing again. Sounded like a plane to me. Sounded like another plane, but it was the collapse of tower one..."

South Tower; North Tower

Paul Mallery (9110312), p. 8, 11

- (34) "Shortly before the first tower came down I remember feeling the ground shaking. I heard a terrible noise, and then debris just started [7] flying everywhere. People started running toward the staging area."

"By the time the debris settled from the first collapse, we started to walk back east towards West Street, and a few minutes later -- I really don't remember the time frames because we were so busy in trying to account for who was in the staging area and who wasn't -- we basically had the same thing: The ground shook again, and we heard another terrible noise and the next [7] think [sic] we knew the second tower was coming down."

South Tower; North Tower Bradley Mann (9110194), p. 5, 6, 7

- (35) "I was talking to him when I heard a loud, like a roaring noise, like a loud loud roaring noise. At the time I didn't know what it was I just looked up. All I could see because of the fog that was there, you couldn't see above. Your distance was limited. Once I heard that, I heard like a big explosion, a tremendous explosion, let me put it that way and a rumbling sound...."

I also felt myself airborne. I was airborne. I didn't get that far. I was airborne. I felt a force behind me and it

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

slammed me down on the ground. I got slapped down on the ground.

Everything started hitting me, whatever was falling. At the time I didn't know what it was. I thought maybe that the building that was on fire exploded. I didn't know. I found out later on that the second plane had hit another building, the second tower." [GM: He's wrong: it's the first collapse]

South Tower

Edward Martinez (9110494), p. 5

- (36) "As we got like a half a block away, you could hear a gigantic rumble. It sounded like a jet flying overhead. Everybody immediately looked up, and you could see just a big cloud of dust coming down to the ground. I didn't see the actual top of the building coming down, but you knew what it was."

North Tower

Vincent Massa (9110222), p. 7

- (37) "...all of a sudden I heard this sound. It sounded like a jet, a high, whistling sound. There was like a rumble behind it. It was like a jet with a locomotive behind it.

I heard people screaming. All of a sudden, the firemen that were behind me were throwing their hose packs down. When I came out of the back of the truck, I looked up and I saw the second tower coming down. The second tower was coming down."

South Tower

Mark Mazur (9110118), p. 6

- (38) "Shortly after they came out and got their gear on, we were ready to go straight ahead, you heard a roar, some sort of a vibration, like a vrr vrr vrr, getting louder and louder.

My first thought to myself, I live down in Rockaway so I have heard planes coming overhead for years. It sounded like a plane getting closer and louder and louder and next thing you know, you felt the building shook...I think I might have heard somebody say it's coming down or something." [He hides behind a wall and hears the Tower come crashing down.]

South Tower

Kevin McCabe (9110344), p. 13

- (39) "I heard that roar again. Sounded like a big jet plane..."

North Tower

Richard McCahey (9110191), p. 26

- (40) "Then we heard this loud noise like another plane. That's what we thought it was, another plane. It was a real loud rumbling. I can hear a lot of people screaming...we could see this big, black cloud of smoke coming up."

North Tower ?

Dulce McCorvey (9110007), p. 6

- (41) "We went approximately one or two blocks when all of a sudden heard this big roar. It sounded like another plane coming in or it sounded like an earthquake, but it just didn't sound right. So we all started running, my partner and I, and we had the commissioner with us also. The next thing I know we were engulfed in this black cloud of smoke..."

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

South Tower

Richard McCurry (9110371), p. 5

- (42) "The second collapse was really bad because the whole building really shook and the noise--it was--it sounded like it was another plane. I was waiting for the fuselage to come in. It was so loud."

North Tower

Jason McGimpsey (9110477), p. 7

- (43) "Then within a minute or two, it sounded like a missile was about to come through the windows, I guess maybe on every floor, but it sounded like it was going to come right through the 23rd floor. Everyone automatically just hit the deck, like you do in a war movie.

We heard a crash and the ground shaking..."

South Tower

Edward Mecner (9110391), p. 5-6

- (44) "Then I just remember that, distinct noise like an airplane being on a runway and it's ready to take off. I heard the loud roaring of like the engines, and I thought another plane was hitting the building.

Someone yelled run. I looked up, and the top of the tower I saw was starting to move over. It was bending like it was going to come down. Everybody started running...

...I really didn't know what was happening, I thought a plane had actually hit the building, a third plane."

South Tower

Bruce Medjuck (9110086), p. 10-11

- (45) "Then all of a sudden you heard something, and it sounded like a harrier jet was landing right over top of us. Sure enough that second tower was just coming straight down.

It was sick. I didn't think I was going to survive. It was really a sick sight and a really sick sound."

South Tower

Craig Monahan (9110016), p. 7

- (46) "we heard a high pitched whine and wind and heard thundering crashes."

North Tower

Roger Moore (9110214), p. 6

- (47) "We were probably about a block away when we heard a giant rumbling sound. It sounded like jets were going overhead and then we looked up and we saw the tower start to fall and we just ran."

North Tower

Michael Morabito (9110461), p. 4

- (48) "suddenly somebody to the front of us -- I don't know if it was a civilian or firefighter or cop or what -- said, 'She's coming down.' We were within a half a block of the north tower..

...

But that shout went up, and the crowd in front of us suddenly surged towards us. Everybody turned and started coming back north. I looked up, and it appeared as if the north tower -- it almost appeared to be liquefied. The

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

very top of it began to cascade out and down, almost in a rolling motion.

As I watched it, the street started to fill with this tremendous sound of just noise. It reminded me of a jet aircraft engine when a jet takes off. It was that loud. The debris started coming out onto West and down.”

North Tower

David Moriarty (9110228), p. 7

- (49) ”I walked about two, three minutes, and all of a sudden I heard a plane. Now, I’m like the only one walking on this block. I said oh, my God, we’re being attacked again. Someone said it could have been a B15, a U.S. plane up in the air. Actually, what I think it was, was simultaneously the plane and the north tower coming down. So that’s what the sounds were. I heard that rumble.”

North Tower

Murray Murad (9110009), p. 11

- (50) ”I had heard right before the lights went out, I had heard a distant boom boom boom, sounded like three explosions. I don’t know what it was. At the time, I would have said they sounded like bombs, but it was boom boom boom and then the lights all go out...I would say about 3, 4 seconds, all of a sudden this tremendous roar. It sounded like being in a tunnel with the train coming at you. It sounded like nothing I had ever heard in my life, but it didn’t sound good. All of a sudden I could feel the floor started to shake and sway. We were being thrown like literally off our feet, side to side, getting banged around and then a tremendous wind started to happen. It probably lasted maybe 15 second, 10 to 15 seconds. It seemed like a hurricane force wind. It would blow you off your feet and smoke and debris and more things started falling.”

South Tower

Keith Murphy (9110238), p. 19-20

- (51) "...then you heard this noise and a few guys said it's another plane. But for whatever reason, I knew exactly what it was. It sounded like a freight train going right over your head. It was an unbelievable experience. Then, when the second one went, obviously, you heard the same noise, so you knew what that was."

*North Tower; South Tower Christopher Murray (9110327),
p. 17*

- (52) "...about that time that you hear that same rumble, oh, fuck, it's happening again...Now you hear that big jet airplane going again. Fuck. Everybody starts running..."

North Tower

John Murray (9110407), p. 11-12

- (53) "All of a sudden I heard this noise that was just horrible. I would say it sounded like a gate rattling or something like that...So I got out, and I started running, because everyone started running. That was when the second tower collapsed. It was right at the beginning of the second towers collapse."

South Tower

Naomi Nacional (9110483), p. 4-5

- (54) "I remember being over there, and did I hear yet another -- what I thought was a propulsion of a plane, and then an explosion, and then we all dove to the floor."

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

North Tower

Robert Norris (9110071), p. 17-18

- (55) "...the first thing I hear is this roar and people screaming. I have a chance to look over my left shoulder.

As I'm looking over my left shoulder, I see a shadow coming towards me. I thought it was another plane. I didn't think the building was coming down. I thought it was another plane. I couldn't believe it."

North Tower

Brian O'Flaherty (9110431), p. 32-33

- (56) "Then we heard jets overhead and we were concerned that there was another plane coming in to attack us. We just about finished packaging him when we heard that same roaring rumble that preceded the first collapse...and we just crossed our fingers and waited for the other collapse."

North Tower

Sean O'Malley (9110259), p. 16

- (57) "I started to make my way to the command post when I heard that horrible sound again, you know that whining screeching jet engine.

I looked up and at that point I knew the north tower was coming down..."

North Tower

John Peruggia (9110160), p. 31

- (58) "Just as I started walking back, just before that catwalk on the corner, some maybe 20 feet, I guess, 50 feet, I heard this sound..."

That's when we heard that sound, again, and I swear it sounded like another plane coming in, just that rumbling noise, that steadily -- that continuous rumbling that was getting louder and louder, and I think the last words I had were, oh, God not another one."

South Tower

Joel Pierce (9110485), p. 5-6

- (59) [Note: He is reflecting here on his current life.]

"A plane passes over, you hear...The airport closes at 12 midnight it's 2:00 in the morning, and I hear this roar of a plane go by. It's the same rumble. I was dreaming about this building falling down, with the smoke and all."

Steven Pilla (9110104), p. 17

- (60) "It was at that point when I personally heard a loud rumbling noise. I thought it was another plane hitting the tower, and that's when the entire street filled with smoke, debris, became totally black, and we ran into the American Express Building."

South Tower

Jace Pinkus (9110042), p. 9

- (61) "We got in front of the Marriott when what sounded like another plane coming in...and that's when the middle of the Marriott blew out at us."

South Tower

Richard Ratazzi (9110451), p. 3

- (62) "I was in back of the vehicle and I heard, it sounded like I thought another plane had struck the building. This loud bang

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

and then it sounded like a locomotive, or like when I used to live in Howard Beach, when the planes used to come in at night, flying right over the house. Everything started shaking and I heard like a thunderstorm. Somebody screamed it's coming down. I don't remember if it was on the radio, because the side door of the bus was open. The back door of the truck--I could see out of. I looked, and I bent all the way down to look up as far as I could, and I could see the cloud coming. I thought the building was actually falling over. I didn't know it was pan-caking."

South Tower

Eric Rodriguez (9110094), p. 7

- (63) "At that time we were looking at the top of the towers and all the rubble and people coming off, and all of a sudden you heard -- it sounded like another airplane, or a missile. It was like a slow shake. The whole ground just vibrated and shook. We just told everybody to run, run into a building, let's go, run, run, run..."

After that the debris was just coming down and coming down." [later:]

"All of a sudden it happened again, the same exact sound, the same thing."

Q. "The noise and the vibrations?"

A. "The noise and the vibrations."

At that point everything -- it just came down. All you saw was the cloud of smoke coming at you, so we ran."

South Tower; North Tower

John Rothmund (9110112), p. 5-6; 13

- (64) "The next thing you know, you hear a loud thundering noise. It sounded like a jet, a big rumble. I start looking around and I'm like, what is that? The next thing I know, I see the cop just take off. I'm like, where's he going?"

Then I see the things on the floor, like Liberty -- you know, just like the movies, bouncing up and jumping and shaking. I mean, not like an earthquake, like a 6 point something or something like that. but you see stuff on the floor shaking from side to side. I'm like, on, my God. I look up and I was saying, oh, no, the building's going to fall down.

Let me tell you, you talk about being scared, never in my life -- I don't think ever again I'll ever be so scared. So I turn around. Right where I'm standing I turn around. I'm in the center of the building. I turn around, and I try to go inside the building... By now the sound is just getting louder and louder and louder. I said, oh, man, this building is going to fall on me right now. What do I do? I got up, and I just -- this is like a split second...What I wanted to do is I didn't want to run straight up; I wanted to go diagonally to get out of the -- because I figured this building was falling, it was tumbling over. I didn't think it was falling down on top of itself."

Q. "So you had a feeling the building was coming down right away?"

A. "Yeah."

Q. "Is that what you first thought?"

A. "Yeah. The sound, it's just loud. At first it's (sound) and then you feel everything around you -- not around you but the floor. You feel the floor trembling and shaking.

21. *Did the Earth Shake before the South Tower Hit the Ground?*

You look at the floor, the dirt, the sand and everything on the floor shifting from side to side. I'm like, oh, man."

South Tower

Robert Ruiz (9110333), p. 10-15

- (65) "We heard a rumbling. We thought it was another plane. We looked up, and you actually saw the towers just starting to roll down at you. You saw the building portions coming down. I stood there and couldn't move. I just couldn't move. I couldn't believe what I was looking at.

A couple seconds later I turned around and started to go."

South Tower

Howard Sickles (9110189), p. 7

- (66) "I was just stepping into the street off the center median when I heard what is going to be instilled in my memory forever; a sound that combines a railroad car, an airplane, a fighter jet and thunder. I looked up and I saw the World Trade Center falling down."

South Tower

Mark Stone (9110076), p. 9

- (67) "...to me it sounded like the 8:45 from Jamaica station going to Atlantic -- to Flatbush Avenue, the Long Island Railroad, just some big train just right over your head, like a whole bunch of locomotives just running right over your head.

I looked up, and the building just tilted and started coming down. All I could say was run."

South Tower

David Timothy (9110156), p. 7

- (68) "I remember he pulled me out and I actually thought a plane was coming because of the roaring sound. That's when he told me the tower collapsed."

William Truocollo (9110456), p. 3

- (69) "The way the noise was going to me or to a lot of us, we thought it was another plane coming. It was two; why not three or four. It sounded to us like it was a plane coming through the window."

South Tower

John Weber (9110377), p. 6

- (70) "we heard a -- we felt a loud -- a very strong vibration, shaking, and a loud noise like a subway train coming through a station at speed, like a jet engine at full throttle. It was a roaring sound..."

South Tower

Charles Wells (9110163), p. 6

22. How 36 Reporters Brought Us the Twin Towers' Explosive Demolition on 9/11

Ted Walter and I wanted to know what percentage of TV reporters in the US who were present at the scene of the Twin Tower's destruction spoke of explosions at the time of collapse. After much toil we concluded that the great majority of reporters on the scene who have left us sufficient information on which to base a judgment spoke of explosions.

In short, on US television on the morning of 9/11, the hypothesis that explosions accompanied the Twin Towers' destruction was not merely in play but dominant.

22. *How 36 Reporters Brought Us the Twin Towers' Explosive Demolition on 9/11*



Editor's Note: At the end of this article is an appendix that contains video clips of the 36 reporters who brought us the Twin Towers' explosive demolition on 9/11. Readers can go directly to each video clip by clicking on the reporter's name in the list that follows here. The reporters are, by network, ABC's [George Stephanopoulos](#) and [Cynthia McFadden](#); CBS's [Harold Dow](#), [Tom Flynn](#), [Mika Brzezinski](#), and [Carol Marin](#) (appearing on WCBS); NBC's [Pat Dawson](#) and [Anne Thompson](#); CNN's [Aaron Brown](#), [Rose Arce](#), [Patty Sabga](#), and [Alan Dodds Frank](#); Fox News' [David Lee Miller](#) and [Rick Leventhal](#); MSNBC's [Ashleigh Banfield](#) and [Rick Sanchez](#); CNBC's [John Bussey](#), [Ron Insana](#), and [Bob Pisani](#); WABC's [N.J. Burkett](#), [Michelle Charlesworth](#), [Nina Pineda](#), [Cheryl Fiandaca](#), and [Joe Torres](#); WCBS's [John Slattery](#), [Marcella Palmer](#), [Vince DeMentri](#), and [Marcia Kramer](#); WNBC's [Walter Perez](#); New York 1's [Kristen Shaughnessy](#), [Andrew Siff](#), [John Schiumo](#), and [Andrew Kirtzman](#); USA Today's [Jack Kelley](#); and two unidentified reporters (1 and 2) who attended a press conference with Mayor Giuliani and Governor Pataki.

The widely held belief that the Twin Towers collapsed as a result of the airplane impacts and the resulting fires is, unbeknownst to most people, a revisionist theory. Among individuals who witnessed the event firsthand, the more prevalent hypothesis was that the Twin Towers had been brought down by massive explosions.

This observation was first made 14 years ago in the article, "[118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers](#)." A review of interviews conducted with 503 members of the New York Fire Department (FDNY) in the weeks and months after 9/11 revealed that 118 of them described witnessing what they interpreted that day to be explosions. Only 10 FDNY members were found describing the destruction in ways supportive of the fire-induced collapse hypothesis.

The interviews of fire marshal [John Coyle](#) and firefighter [Christopher Fenyo](#) explicitly support this finding. Coyle remarked in his interview, "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." Similarly, Fenyo recalled in his interview, "At that point, a debate began to rage [about whether to continue rescue operations in the other, still-standing tower] because the perception was that the building looked like it had been taken out with charges."

News reporters constitute another group of individuals who witnessed the event firsthand and whose accounts were publicly documented. While many people have seen a smattering of news clips on the internet in which reporters describe explosions, there has never been, as far as we know, a systematic attempt to collect these news clips and analyze them.

We decided to take on this task for two reasons. First, we wanted to know just how prevalent the explosion hypothesis was among reporters. Second, anticipating that this would be the more prevalent hypothesis, we wanted to determine exactly how it was supplanted

by the hypothesis of fire-induced collapse.

In this article, we present our findings related to the first question. In a subsequent article, we will examine how the hypothesis of fire-induced collapse so quickly supplanted the originally dominant explosion hypothesis.

Television Coverage Compiled

To determine how prevalent the explosion hypothesis was among reporters, we set out to review as much continuous news coverage as we could find from the major television networks, cable news channels, and local network affiliates covering the events in New York.

Through internet searches, we found continuous news coverage from 11 different television networks, cable news channels, and local network affiliates. These included the networks ABC, CBS, and NBC; cable news channels CNN, Fox News, MSNBC, and CNBC; and local network affiliates WABC, WCBS, and WNBC. We also incorporated coverage from New York One (NY1), a New York-based cable news channel owned by Time Warner (now Spectrum), which we grouped with the local network affiliates into a local channel category.

Unfortunately, we were not able to find coverage spanning most of the day for every channel. Thus, while the collection of news coverage we compiled is extensive, it is not comprehensive. To fill in the gaps where possible, we included excerpts of coverage that aired later in the day if we found that coverage to be relevant. We also included one excerpt from USA Today's coverage that we found to be relevant and three excerpts from an afternoon press conference with Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and Governor George Pataki that aired on almost every channel. In general, the times at which these excerpts aired are unknown, though in some cases we were able to identify an approximate time.

The news coverage we compiled and reviewed totaled approximately 70 hours.

Table 1: Television Coverage Compiled

Networks

- ABC: 8:50 AM to 6:07 PM
- CBS: 8:52 AM to 12:00 PM + one excerpt at ~12:15 PM
- NBC: 8:51 AM to 6:30 PM

Cable News Channels

- CNN: 8:32 AM to 12:00 AM (midnight)
- Fox News : 8:51 AM to 5:00 PM
- MSNBC: 8:52 AM to 1:42 PM
- CNBC: 8:50 AM to ~4:16 PM

Local Channels

- WABC: 8:50 AM to 10:50 AM + nine excerpts from various times
- WCBS: 8:50 AM to 11:33 PM, 11:40 AM to 12:04 PM + six excerpts from various times
- WNBC: 8:50 AM to 10:30 AM (switches permanently to NBC network at 10:30 AM)
- NY1: 8:50 AM to 11:20 AM

Note: We invite anyone who has portions of the television coverage we were not able to find to send them to us at info@AE911Truth.org. We will incorporate anything we receive and update this article accordingly. For anyone who wishes to replicate our work, the entire collection of footage can be downloaded [here](#).

Criteria for Defining 'Explosion' Versus 'Non-Explosion' Reporters

We sought to answer one main question in our review of the news coverage: How many reporters described the occurrence of explosions — both the raw number of reporters and as a percentage of all reporters who covered the Twin Towers' destruction — and what was the nature of their reporting? To answer this question, we needed to establish clear criteria for identifying what we will call “explosion reporters” and “non-explosion reporters.”

We should make clear that this article addresses the statements of reporters only and does not address the statements of anchors, except in the case of one anchor (CNN's Aaron Brown) who had a direct view of the Twin Towers. In our next article, we will address statements made by anchors, who were also interpreting the Twin Towers' destruction but without having witnessed it firsthand.

Because the airplane impacts were often referred to as explosions, we were careful to exclude any instances where it was not absolutely clear that the reporter was referring only to the destruction of the Twin Towers.

As we studied the news coverage and began to recognize patterns in how the Twin Towers' destruction was reported, we developed three separate categories of reporting that would classify someone as an “explosion reporter”: (1) eyewitness reporting, (2) narrative reporting, and (3) source-based reporting. Below we provide definitions of each.

Eyewitness Reporting

“Eyewitness reporting” is when a reporter is an eyewitness with a direct view of or in close proximity to the destruction of one or both of the Twin Towers and perceives an explosion or explosions in conjunction with the destruction — or perceives one or both of the tow-

Criteria for Defining ‘Explosion’ Versus ‘Non-Explosion’ Reporters

ers as exploding, blowing up, blowing, or erupting. Although we usually excluded the word “boom,” which could apply either to an explosion or to a collapse, we included it in one case because the totality of what the reporter (Nina Pineda) described indicated that she viewed the event as being explosion-based.

We did not include reporters who described only a “shaking” or “trembling” of the ground. The perception of the ground shaking was widespread and constitutes important eyewitness evidence, but it does not necessarily reveal much about how the reporter interpreted what she or he was witnessing. Among reporters who mentioned demolition, we excluded the ones who merely compared the destruction to a demolition whenever it was clear that the reporter believed it to be a collapse caused by structural failure. We also excluded reporters who used the word “implode” or “implosion” whenever it was clear that the reporter used it to describe the building collapsing in on itself, as opposed to a demolition.

Here is an example of eyewitness reporting:

David Lee Miller, Fox News, 10:01 AM: *“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.”*

Narrative Reporting

“Narrative reporting” is when a reporter refers to the Twin Towers’ destruction as an explosion-based event when speaking of it in the course of his or her reporting. This could be a reporter who was an eyewitness to the destruction or a reporter who otherwise understood the destruction to be an explosion-based event.

22. *How 36 Reporters Brought Us the Twin Towers' Explosive Demolition on 9/11*

The main distinction between eyewitness reporting and narrative reporting is that eyewitness reporting involves an eyewitness describing his or her direct perceptions, often uttering them spontaneously, while narrative reporting involves interpretation and/or outside influence, either of which inform the reporter's developing narrative of what took place. (In several cases, reporters go from engaging in eyewitness reporting around the time of the destruction to engaging in narrative reporting later on, with their direct perceptions informing their developing narrative).

This distinction is not meant to imply that one type of reporting is more valuable or reliable than another. In this analysis, eyewitness reporting tells us about what reporters perceived and immediately interpreted during, or shortly after, the event. It thus gives us more information about the actual event. Narrative reporting, by contrast, tells us how reporters interpreted the event after having more time to process their perceptions and to synthesize additional information from other sources. Narrative reporting thus tells us about the collective narrative that was developing among reporters covering the event.

Here is an example of narrative reporting:

George Stephanopoulos, ABC, 12:27 PM: *"Well, Peter, I'm going to give you kind of a pool report from several of our correspondents down here of basically what happened down here in downtown New York between 9:45 and 10:45 when the two explosions and the collapse of the World Trade Center happened. At the time, I was actually in the subway heading towards the World Trade Center right around Franklin Street. And after the first explosion the subway station started to fill with smoke. The subway cars started to fill with smoke, and the subways actually stopped. They then diverted us around the World Trade Center to Park Place, which is one stop beyond the World Trade Center. We got to that train station at around 10:35,*

Criteria for Defining ‘Explosion’ Versus ‘Non-Explosion’ Reporters

Peter, and it was a scene unlike I’ve ever seen before in my entire life.”

Source-based Reporting

“Source-based reporting” is when a reporter reports on the possible use of explosives based on information from government officials who said they suspected that explosives were used to bring down the Twin Towers.

Source-based reporting is similar to narrative reporting in that it involves outside influence. The main distinction is that source-based reporting is based on information from government sources. Information from government sources inherently indicates how government agencies were interpreting the event and is sometimes given extra weight by reporters and viewers.

Here is an example of source-based reporting:

Pat Dawson, NBC, 11:55 AM: *“Just moments ago I spoke to the Chief of Safety for the New York City Fire Department . . . [He] told me that shortly after 9 o’clock he had roughly 10 alarms, roughly 200 men in the building trying to effect rescues of some of those civilians who were in there, and that basically he received word of a possibility of a secondary device — that is, another bomb going off. He tried to get his men out as quickly as he could, but he said that there was another explosion which took place. And then an hour after the first hit here, the first crash that took place, he said there was another explosion that took place in one of the towers here. So obviously, according to his theory, he thinks that there were actually devices that were planted in the building. . . . But the bottom line is that, according to the Chief of Safety of the New York City Fire Department, he says that he probably lost a great many men in those secondary explosions. And he said that there were*

22. *How 36 Reporters Brought Us the Twin Towers' Explosive Demolition on 9/11*

literally hundreds if not thousands of people in those two towers when the explosions took place.”

Non-Explosion Reporters

The main criterion we developed for classifying someone as a “non-explosion reporter” was that she or he reported on the destruction of one or both of the Twin Towers and did not engage in any of the types of explosion reporting defined above. To qualify as a non-explosion reporter, it was not necessary for the reporter to explicitly articulate the fire-induced collapse hypothesis. The mere absence of explosion reporting was enough to classify someone as a non-explosion reporter.

The challenge here lay not in identifying the absence of explosion reporting but in defining what constituted “reporting on the destruction.” In the end, we decided this should mean that the reporter had to *describe the event of the destruction* and not simply mention it in passing.

We should note that a reporter’s use of the word “collapse” did not necessarily qualify that person as a non-explosion reporter. Many explosion reporters described the occurrence of an explosion followed by collapse and they used the word “collapse” in their reporting (David Lee Miller, quoted above, is a prime example). Thus, use of the word “collapse” is not incompatible with being an explosion reporter and did not qualify someone as a non-explosion reporter.

Also, if a reporter made a statement that qualified him or her as an explosion reporter and then subsequently made a statement explicitly supporting the fire-induced collapse hypothesis (which is the case for WABC’s Joe Torres), we classified this reporter as an explosion reporter because he or she engaged in some explosion reporting at some point during the day. In this analysis, being classified as an “explosion reporter” does not imply a permanent stance. Rather, it just means that *at some point in the day* he or she reported the oc-

currence of explosions or the possible use of explosives in relation to the Twin Towers’ destruction.

Before we move on to the next section, it is important to note that because non-explosion reporters had to *describe the event of the destruction* and not simply mention it in passing, the only way to make a valid numerical comparison between explosion reporters and non-explosion reporters is to include only those who engaged in eyewitness reporting. According to the criteria we developed, explosion reporters who engaged in narrative reporting were not describing the event of the destruction but rather were referring to it as an explosion-based event in the course of their reporting, i.e., in passing. A comparable classification does not exist for non-explosion reporters, because we excluded those who only mentioned the event in passing (most commonly using the word “collapse”).

Numerical Analysis of ‘Explosion’ and ‘Non-Explosion’ Reporters

In total, we identified 36 explosion reporters and four non-explosion reporters in the approximately 70 hours of news coverage we reviewed. The 36 explosion reporters and their statements are listed in [Appendix A](#). The four non-explosion reporters and their statements are listed in [Appendix B](#). In addition, there were three borderline cases that we determined could not be clearly classified as either explosion or non-explosion reporters. Those cases are listed in [Appendix C](#).

Of the 36 explosion reporters, 21 of them engaged in eyewitness reporting, 22 of them engaged in narrative reporting, and three of them engaged in source-based reporting. Recalling our definitions from above, this means the following:

- 21 reporters witnessed what they perceived as an explosion or explosions during the destruction of the Twin Towers or they

22. *How 36 Reporters Brought Us the Twin Towers' Explosive Demolition on 9/11*

perceived the Twin Towers as exploding, blowing up, blowing, or erupting.

- 22 reporters (eight of whom also fall into the eyewitness reporting category) referred to the Twin Towers' destruction as an explosion or an explosion-based event when speaking of it in the course of their reporting.
- Three reporters (two of whom also fall into the narrative reporting category) reported on the possible use of explosives based on information from government officials who said they suspected that explosives were used to bring down the Twin Towers.
- Four reporters reported on the destruction of the Twin Towers and *did not* report explosions in any way (either having witnessed explosions, having interpreted the destruction as being an explosion-based event, or having been informed by government officials about the possible use of explosives).

In terms of the percentage of explosion and non-explosion reporters, 21 of the 25 reporters who directly witnessed the destruction of the Twin Towers, or 84%, either perceived an explosion or explosions or they perceived the Twin Towers as exploding, blowing up, blowing, or erupting. In comparison, four of the 25 reporters who directly witnessed the destruction of the Twin Towers, or 16%, did not report explosions in any way.

The tables below list each reporter and each instance of reporting according to the time at which each report was made.

Table 2A: Eyewitness Reporting by Explosion Reporters

Reporter	Channel	Times of Reports
Ashleigh Banfield	MSNBC	9:59 AM
Aaron Brown	CNN	9:59 AM, 10:02 AM

Numerical Analysis of ‘Explosion’ and ‘Non-Explosion’ Reporters

Reporter	Channel	Times of Reports
N.J. Burkett	WABC	9:59 AM
Walter Perez	WNBC	9:59 AM, 10:00 AM, 10:27 AM
Kristen Shaughnessy	NY1	9:59 AM
David Lee Miller	Fox News	10:01 AM, 10:32 AM
Harold Dow	CBS	10:05 AM
Rick Leventhal	Fox News	10:05 AM, 10:06 AM, 10:12 AM
Michelle Charlesworth	WABC	10:10 AM
Andrew Siff	NY1	10:12 AM
Nina Pineda	WABC	10:17 AM
Rose Arce	CNN	10:29 AM, 10:43 PM
Cheryl Fiandaca	WABC	10:38 AM, unknown time shortly after 10:38 AM
Patty Sabga	CNN	10:57 AM
Tom Flynn	CBS	11:03 AM
Mika Brzezinski	CBS	11:15 AM
John Bussey	CNBC	11:52 AM
Ron Insana	CNBC	12:41 PM, 1:08 PM
Anne Thompson	NBC	12:43 PM
Joe Torres	WABC	Unknown time
Marcella Palmer	WCBS	Unknown time

Table 2B: Narrative Reporting by Explosion Reporters

22. *How 36 Reporters Brought Us the Twin Towers' Explosive Demolition on 9/11*

Reporter	Channel Times of Reports	
Michelle Charlesworth*	WABC	10:10 AM
Nina Pineda*	WABC	10:18 AM, 10:19 AM, unknown times
John Schiumo	NY1	10:18 AM
Cheryl Fiandaca*	WABC	Unknown time shortly after 10:38 AM
Kristen Shaughnessy*	NY1	10:42 AM, 10:43 AM, 10:45 AM
Rose Arce*	CNN	10:50 AM, 12:26 PM
Rick Sanchez	MSNBC	10:52 AM, 11:26 AM, 12:09 PM
Ashleigh Banfield*	MSNBC	10:54 AM, 10:55 AM, 1:35 PM, 1:36 PM, 1:37 PM
Carol Marin (CBS reporter)	WCBS	10:59 AM
Patty Sabga*	CNN	10:59 AM
Alan Dodds	CNN	11:07 AM
Frank Andrew	NY1	11:11 AM, 11:12 AM
Kirtzman		
John Slattery	WCBS	11:44 AM
John Bussey*	CNBC	11:55 AM
George Stephanopoulos	ABC	12:27 PM
Bob Pisani	CNBC	2:42 PM
1st Unidentified Reporter	All channels	2:43 PM (Giuliani and Pataki press conference)
Marcia Kramer	All channels	2:44 PM (Giuliani and Pataki press conference)

Numerical Analysis of 'Explosion' and 'Non-Explosion' Reporters

Reporter	Channel Times of Reports	
2nd Unidentified Reporter	All channels	2:54 PM (Giuliani and Pataki press conference)
Pat Dawson	NBC	3:02 PM
Vince DeMentri	WCBS	Unknown time around 5:00 PM
Cynthia McFadden	ABC	5:56 PM

*These reporters also engaged in eyewitness reporting.

Table 2C: Source-based Reporting by Explosion Reporters

Reporter	Network	Times of Reports
Pat Dawson*	NBC	11:55 AM
Rick Sanchez*	MSNBC	12:07 PM
Jack Kelley	USA Today	Around 5:30 PM

*These reporters also engaged in narrative reporting.

Table 2D: Non-Explosion Reporters

Reporter	Network	Times of Reports
Don Dahler	ABC	10:00 AM
Bob Bazell	NBC	10:08 AM
John Zito	MSNBC	10:36 AM
Drew Millhon	ABC	11:09 AM

How Reporters Reported the Twin Towers' Destruction

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. We learn from the source-based reporting that the same hypothesis was also held by officials in the FDNY, the New York Police Department (NYPD), and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) — three of the most important agencies involved in the response to the attacks. In particular, with regard to the FBI, we are told the explosion hypothesis was the agency's "working theory" as of late in the afternoon on 9/11.

Unlike members of the FDNY, most of whom provided their accounts during interviews conducted weeks or months after the event, it was the job of reporters to spontaneously communicate their perception and interpretation of events. Thus, when their reporting is compiled into one record, we are left with a rich and largely unfiltered collective account of what took place. Considered alongside the FDNY oral histories, these reporters' statements, in our view, constitute strong corroborating evidence that explosives were used to destroy the Twin Towers.

Regarding the four non-explosion reporters, in addition to the fact that there are so few of them, we find that their individual accounts add little support to the fire-induced collapse hypothesis.

Two of the reporters were quite far away from the Twin Towers at the time of their destruction relative to most of the explosion reporters: Drew Millhon was "about 10 to 12 blocks north of the World Trade Center," at the intersection of Varick Street and Canal Street, while Bob Bazell was at St. Vincent's hospital on West

12th Street, approximately two miles from the World Trade Center. Meanwhile, Don Dahler, the only reporter who explicitly articulated the fire-induced collapse hypothesis, nonetheless likened the South Tower's destruction to a controlled demolition, saying: "The entire building has just collapsed as if a demolition team set off — when you see the old demolitions of these old buildings." The fourth non-explosion reporter, John Zito, was quite close to the South Tower when it came down. He did not describe an explosion, but he also did not attribute the destruction to a fire-induced collapse. It is worth noting that Ron Insana, whom Zito was with, vividly described seeing the building "exploding" and "blowing" and hearing a "noise associated with an implosion."

Conclusion

Returning to the first question posed at the top of this article, we conclude that the hypothesis of explosions bringing down the Twin Towers was not only prevalent among reporters but was, in fact, the dominant hypothesis.

Furthermore, the 21 instances of eyewitness reporting, all of which contain spontaneous descriptions of the phenomena the reporters witnessed, strongly corroborate the overwhelming [scientific evidence](#) that explosives were used to destroy the Twin Towers.

In a subsequent article, we will examine how the hypothesis of fire-induced collapse so quickly supplanted the originally dominant explosion hypothesis.

Appendix A: Statements by 36 Explosion Reporters

These statements are organized by channel in the same order as presented in Table 1. Within each channel, they are organized chrono-

22. *How 36 Reporters Brought Us the Twin Towers' Explosive Demolition on 9/11*

logically based on the time of the first noted statement by each reporter. A video containing all statements by all 36 explosion reporters is available [here](#).

1. George Stephanopoulos, ABC

12:27 PM, Narrative Reporting

“Well, Peter, I’m going to give you kind of a pool report from several of our correspondents down here of basically what happened down here in downtown New York between 9:45 and 10:45 when the two explosions and the collapse of the World Trade Center happened. At the time, I was actually in the subway heading towards the World Trade Center, right around Franklin Street. And after the first explosion the subway station started to fill with smoke. The subway cars started to fill with smoke, and the subways actually stopped. They then diverted us around the World Trade Center to Park Place, which is one stop beyond the World Trade Center. We got to that train station at around 10:35, Peter, and it was a scene unlike I’ve ever seen before in my entire life. As we tried to get out of the subway station and walk up into the street, it was pitch black, midnight black, snowing soot all down through downtown Manhattan. This was about two blocks from the World Trade Center. You couldn’t see a foot in front of your face at that time.”

2. Cynthia McFadden, ABC

5:56 PM, Narrative Reporting

“We’ve been told that all victims now who are taken out of the blast site are going to be taken here first. . . . Part of the problem initially was that when the first rescue workers went in — and we have talked to some of them, some of the second wave of rescue workers — the first wave of rescue workers who went in were trapped, many of them killed by the second blast. . . . There have been hundreds of people at area hospitals, as you note. But they don’t believe that anywhere near the full weight of this has yet been uncovered, that there are hundreds and

Appendix A: Statements by 36 Explosion Reporters

thousands of people who have been injured in this blast, and that's the people that they expect to bring here."

3. Harold Dow, CBS

10:05 AM, Eyewitness Reporting

"Yes, I arrived on the scene about an hour and a half ago. Believe it or not, there was another major explosion. The building itself, literally the top of it came down, sending smoke and debris everywhere. I tried to run to get away from all of the debris. A number of other people here are trapped in the subway here in a shoe store, trying to get away from most of the debris. It's just an incredible sight."

4. Tom Flynn, CBS

11:03, Eyewitness Reporting

"At that time, maybe 45 minutes into the taping that we were doing, which was maybe a half hour after, there was — it was an explosion. It was way up where the fire was. And the whole building at that point bellied out in flames, and everybody ran."

5. Mika Brzezinski, CBS

11:15 AM, Eyewitness Reporting

"Dan, we're three blocks from the scene and we saw it all after the first two hits. We saw the explosion and also the collapse of the tower."

6. Pat Dawson, NBC

10:55 AM, Source-based Reporting

"Just moments ago I spoke to the Chief of Safety for the New York City Fire Department, who was obviously one of the first people here on the scene after those two planes were crashed into the side — we assume — of the World Trade Center towers, which used to be behind me over there. Chief Albert Turi told me that he was here just literally

22. *How 36 Reporters Brought Us the Twin Towers' Explosive Demolition on 9/11*

10 or 15 minutes after the events that took place this morning, that is, the first crash. . . . [He] told me that shortly after 9 o'clock he had roughly 10 alarms, roughly 200 men in the building trying to effect rescues of some of those civilians who were in there, and that basically he received word of a possibility of a secondary device — that is, another bomb going off. He tried to get his men out as quickly as he could, but he said that there was another explosion which took place. And then an hour after the first hit here, the first crash that took place, he said there was another explosion that took place in one of the towers here. So obviously, according to his theory, he thinks that there were actually devices that were planted in the building. One of the secondary devices he thinks, that took place after the initial impact, he thinks may have been on the plane that crashed into one of the towers. The second device he thinks, he speculates, was probably planted in the building. So that's what we have been told by Albert Turi, who is the Chief of Safety for the New York City Fire Department. He told me that just moments ago. . . . But the bottom line is that, according to the Chief of Safety of the New York City Fire Department, he says that he probably lost a great many men in those secondary explosions. And he said that there were literally hundreds if not thousands of people in those two towers when the explosions took place.”

3:02 PM, Narrative Reporting

Dawson asks a police officer: *“How would you describe your efforts to organize to the rescue effort now, given that we saw a sequence of events this morning? A sequence of crashes, then explosions, and then the collapses.”*

7. Anne Thompson, NBC

12:43 PM, Eyewitness Reporting

“And I was walking on Broadway at Fulton, and suddenly we heard an explosion. It was the first tower coming down. And down Broadway you could just see this wall of debris flying at us. . . . It looked like a war zone. Debris, dust ankle deep, cars on fire, cars turned askew in

Appendix A: Statements by 36 Explosion Reporters

the explosion. . . . Then at about 10:30 it looked like everything was all clear. I started to walk out. I walked down Broadway towards Canal. And we heard the second explosion. . . . At that point a fireman came into the building and said we all had to stay in one place. He then told us all to get out of the building because they felt if there was a third explosion that this building would be in danger.”

8. Aaron Brown, CNN

Note: Although Aaron Brown is a news anchor, we include him among the explosion reporters because he was positioned outside and witnessed the events directly, and his direct perception played a major role in his evolving interpretation of the event.

9:59 AM, Eyewitness Reporting

“Wow! Jamie. Jamie, I need you to stop for a second. There has just been a huge explosion. We can see a billowing smoke rising. And I can’t — I’ll tell you that I can’t see that second tower. But there was a cascade of sparks and fire and now this...it looks almost like a mushroom cloud, explosion, this huge, billowing smoke in the second tower. This was the second of the two towers hit. And I, you know, I cannot see behind that smoke obviously, as you can’t either. The first tower in front has not changed. And we see this extraordinarily (sic) and frightening scene behind us of this second tower now just encased in smoke. What is behind it...I cannot tell you. But just look at that. That is about as frightening a scene as you will ever see.”

10:02 AM, Eyewitness Reporting

“Again, there has been a second explosion here in Manhattan at the Trade Center. We are getting reports that a part of the tower, the second tower, the one a bit further to the south of us, has collapsed. We are checking on that. . . . What we can tell you is that just in the last several minutes here — two or three minutes — a second or third, I guess, technically, extraordinary event has happened here in lower Manhattan. You can see this extraordinary plume of smoke that is, or was at least, the second tower of the World Trade Center.”

9. Rose Arce, CNN

10:29 AM, Eyewitness Reporting

"I'm about a block away. And there were several people that were hanging out the windows right below where the plane crashed, when suddenly you saw the top of the building start to shake, and people began leaping from the windows in the north side of the building. You saw two people at first plummet and then a third one, and then the entire top of the building just blew up, and splinters of debris are falling on the street."

10:50 AM, Narrative Reporting

"It looks like a large chunk of that debris has hit a building very close by, about two blocks away next to an elementary school, causing another explosion. . . . So as people are coming up the street running from the scene of this new explosion you can see them slipping on the ash and literally having to drag each other up the street."

Note: We include Rose Arce's statement at 10:50 AM as narrative reporting because it indicates that she initially perceived and then continued to interpret the destruction of the Twin Towers as explosions.

12:26 PM, Narrative Reporting

"As you walk through the ash you can see debris from inside the World Trade Center itself, a very eerie scene, pieces of paper from people's desks, office supplies many, many blocks from the site the actual explosion where they now are fearing that there may be yet another explosion because of this potential gas leak."

10:43 PM, Eyewitness Reporting

"People were rushing to the windows. They were taking clothes — one thing looked like a blanket that they were waving — and then suddenly there was another, an explosion, and you saw folks start to jump out the front window of the building and plunge. I saw at least six people do this. Folks were pushing each other. Some people were screaming for help and then just falling out."

10. Patty Sabga, CNN

10:57 AM, Eyewitness Reporting

“About an hour ago I was on the corner of Broadway and Park Place — that’s about a thousand yards from the World Trade Center — when the first tower collapsed. It was a massive explosion. At the time the police were trying desperately to evacuate people from the area. When that explosion occurred it was like a scene out of a horror film.”

10:59 AM, Narrative Reporting

“The scene was like a ghost town in the Financial District. Very eerie. You saw people being wheeled on gurneys away from the site of the explosion. . . . Now, at the time I was back on the corner again of Broadway and Park Place. At that time, the police started running toward us telling everybody to move who was left on the street. I looked up and that’s when I heard the — [coughs] pardon me — that’s when I heard the explosion. That’s when the second tower came down.”

11. Alan Dodds Frank, CNN

11:07 AM, Narrative Reporting

“Aaron, just two or three minutes ago there was yet another collapse or explosion. . . . But at a quarter to 11:00 there was another collapse or explosion following the 10:30 collapse of the second Tower. And a firefighter who rushed by us estimated that 50 stories went down. The street filled with smoke. It was like a forest fire roaring down a canyon.”

Note: We include Alan Dodds Frank’s statement at 11:07 AM as narrative reporting because it indicates that he interpreted the destruction of the Twin Towers as possibly being an explosion-based event.

12. David Lee Miller, Fox News

10:01 AM, Eyewitness Reporting

22. *How 36 Reporters Brought Us the Twin Towers' Explosive Demolition on 9/11*

“Jon, the scene is horrific. One of the two towers literally collapsed. I was making my way to the foot of the World Trade Center. 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. . . . And I am now standing in a black cloud of smoke. . . . I’m on a pay phone on the street right now and I literally cannot see more than quarter-block away. That’s how thick the smoke is. I’m on Murray Street and West Broadway for those who know Lower Manhattan. 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.”

10:31 AM, Eyewitness Reporting

“Jon, just seconds ago there was a huge explosion, and it appears right now the second World Trade tower has just collapsed.”

13. Rick Leventhal, Fox News

10:05 AM, Eyewitness Reporting

He asks a police officer: *“Do you know if it was an explosion or if it was a building collapse?”*

Then he asks: *“How many people would you say were on the ground when the building exploded or collapsed?”*

10:06 AM, Eyewitness Reporting

“When the building did collapse — or whatever it was that happened — it was a huge explosion, a huge rumbling cloud of smoke and fire came a cross Church Street and started billowing this way. . . . The FBI is here, as you can see. They had roped this area off. They were taking photographs and securing this area just prior to that huge explosion that we all heard and felt.”

10:12 AM, Eyewitness Reporting

“And we were standing here when there was some sort of collapse or explosion and everyone started running in this direction.”

14. Ashleigh Banfield, MSNBC

9:59 AM, Eyewitness Reporting

Chris Jansing (news anchor): *"It does appear that there has been a third explosion in the area of the World Trade Center. There was first one plane that hit one of the Twin Towers. A second plane, each about one hour ago. And now a third explosion. Ashleigh Banfield is in Manhattan. Ashleigh, did you see or hear anything just moments ago?"*

Ashleigh Banfield: *"God. Oh my god, Chris, this is incredible. I'm looking right at it."*

Jansing: *"What are you seeing, Ashleigh?"*

Banfield: *"Well, I saw the explosion, for one."*

Jansing: *"Could you feel it?"*

Banfield: *"I can smell it. Everyone around screamed at the time it happened. It's just unbelievable. I can't see that it's another building. It looks almost in the same position as the second bomb, or second explosion. It's unbelievable."*

Jansing: *"What's the scene around you? What are people doing?"*

Banfield: *"Most people, as I said earlier, are absolutely aghast."*

Jansing: *"Are they running?"*

Banfield: *"No one's running. No, I'm not close enough at this point to be seeing that. I wouldn't be showered with debris from my position here. I'm too far north of it. But I have a bird's eye view of what's happening. The route that I'm on is the emergency route right now, so all of the emergency vehicles are streaming past us. But as I was looking up I saw the entire explosion. It looked exactly like the first two. Unbelievable. And everyone who watched it around me screamed. It was just a chorus of "oh my gods" from everyone standing around. I'm walking, so what I'm hearing are a lot of people whose cars are parked, who've got their radios tuned to local news stations and trying to catch up on just exactly what's happening. But now I'm seeing people running. But I really don't think they're running from the area. We're too far away to be in the direct line of any debris. But we certainly had*

22. *How 36 Reporters Brought Us the Twin Towers' Explosive Demolition on 9/11*

the most perfect vantage point for that explosion. It was unbelievable. And the smoke now is so thick. It's just incredible."

10:54 AM, Narrative Reporting

"Well, we just heard another explosion go off a couple minutes ago, Chris, and saw a bunch more people sort of running this way. A woman on her bike was screaming as it went off. And there was a New York City officer who was plain-clothed walking by with a radio. I tried to stop him to ask what happened. And all he said was 'car bomb, car bomb.' And then I couldn't ask him for any information. He said, 'I have no time for this.' We haven't seen anything since. But the cloud of smoke is still extremely thick right around the direct vicinity of the World Trade Center. I am now about, I'd say — what do you say, we're about five or 10 blocks north of it now? About five or 10 blocks north of it, and just unbelievably the sun has come out. There's blue sky above us. We started with sheer blackness. When that cloud of debris and of smoke came out, when the explosion happened, we couldn't see anything, we couldn't breathe. We tried to make our way a few blocks up and we've made contact with some other NBC crew here."

10:55 AM, Narrative Reporting

"It's terrifying here, Chris. When that last bomb — or when that last collapse happened, and the cloud came out, it was like something out of Hollywood. . . . It's really eerie seeing the people who got caught in that blast, because everyone looks like a ghost."

1:35 PM, Narrative Reporting

"What did you see in the epicenter when you came out of that explosion?"

1:36 PM, Narrative Reporting

"At the very start of the day when this happened, we were right in the epicenter where the explosion was. Right now I'm covered in the debris and the dust from the explosion itself. I was hit with a cloud of debris and smoke."

1:37 PM, Narrative Reporting

"That is 7 World Trade Center. Apparently on the south side, that's

Appendix A: Statements by 36 Explosion Reporters

the side that's not facing us, about halfway way up it's still burning pretty badly, because it was rocked with a lot of the explosion from the force of the Twin World Trade Centers, when they came down. A large concern is what's going to happen with that brown building now, which is why we keep getting moved further and further north. You can see people down on the street moving towards us. Even media who originally were allowed to have more sort of free rein to report this story, we're being pushed out as well as, because there was some concern that there might be additional explosions, possibly other bombs."

15. Rick Sanchez, MSNBC

10:52 AM, Narrative Reporting

"You have to understand that when this first happened, they certainly didn't imagine that there would be second or tertiary explosions. So they parked some of their vehicles in those areas. And many of those vehicles — people in those vehicles have lost their lives."

11:26 AM, Narrative Reporting

"Well, we've been told, as matter of fact moments ago, to try and get out of this area, because they're moving everyone out. And the fear is, of course, that there are gas leaks, natural gas in this area that either fed into or out of the buildings that have exploded. And now those lines are open and may rupture."

12:07 PM, Source-based Reporting

"Well, I'm in that area, if you're familiar with this area of where West Broadway and Hudson come together, right at Chambers. That would put us about a block and a half away from the site of where the explosion was. That area has just been evacuated because police have found what they describe as a suspicious device. They fear that it might be something that could lead to another explosion. Obviously, there's a real sense of caution here on the part of police. I spoke with some police officials moments ago, Chris. And they told me that they have reason to believe that one of the explosions at the World Trade Center — aside from the ones that may have been caused by the impact of the plane

22. *How 36 Reporters Brought Us the Twin Towers' Explosive Demolition on 9/11*

with the building — may have been caused by a van that was parked in the building that may have had some type of explosive device in it. So their fear is that there may have been explosive devices planted either in the building or in the adjacent area. And that's why they're being so cautious in this vicinity right now."

12:09 PM, Narrative Reporting

"This is why it's so difficult for them in this area where we are. Imagine, they came here originally to deal with a crisis. They set up some command centers, and they had many of their chiefs and many of their supervisors in the area of the building. The second and third explosions literally have wreaked havoc on those field forces and those command centers. So they've had to back up. And now they're trying to see how they can approach it again."

16. John Bussey, CNBC Contributor, Wall Street Journal Reporter

11:52 AM, Eyewitness Reporting

"I was getting ready to talk with Haines [inaudible], and the fire was raging in both buildings. I looked up at the south building, the second World Trade Center to be hit, and explosions were coming down the building. It looked as if charges had been set on each floor and they were in succession going off. Now, this is probably not what was happening. It just looked that way to me. The building just blew out floor by floor, and it probably had something to do with the structural damage that was done by the planes hitting it. When I saw the floor-by-floor explosions happening, I dove out of the office where I was because the windows looked directly over the World Trade Center. We are in the World Financial Center directly across West Street from the two Trade Centers. By the time I came up from under a desk where I sought shelter, the entire floor, the entire room where I was completely dense with cement and smoke. You could not see."

Note: Here Bussey has started to interpret the phenomena he witnessed as the building simply collapsing. However, it is clear from

Appendix A: Statements by 36 Explosion Reporters

this and from his other accounts of the event (Source 1, Source 2) that his initial interpretation was that explosives were destroying the building.

11:55 AM, Narrative Reporting

“We were so close to the building that you could feel it hitting your shoulder as it rained down. But we were on the safe side of the building — much, much safer than where the firefighters were on the other side of the building, exposed directly to the explosion.”

17. Ron Insana, CNBC

12:41 PM, Eyewitness Reporting

“Well, I was heading down after we had learned of it, about 9:00 or 8:55 this morning, I had called in to see if we should go down and aid the coverage. And I was on my way down. We got fairly close to the building, and I ran into a camera man from MSNBC and we were trying to get across town past the World Trade Center to the Westside Highway, which is on the lower southwest corner of Manhattan to hook up with our colleagues from CNBC. And as we were going across one of the restricted zones, the building started to explode, I guess the only way I could describe it. It was hard to tell if it was an actual explosion, but the building began to come down. . . . We heard, we heard — I wouldn’t call it an explosion. We did notice that the building began to blow at the top, and that material began to come down. . . . And as we turned to run, material just began to fall. And like that scene in Independence Day, where wind was just whipping down the street in the wake of an explosion, that’s exactly what we experienced. It went down the street, curved around corners, and blew with a fair degree of intensity, again, Tyler, until the sky was completely black.”

1:08 PM, Eyewitness Reporting (appearing on NBC)

“As we were moving towards the building we saw the top begin to blow out in a plume of smoke. And we heard the noise associated with an implosion.”

22. *How 36 Reporters Brought Us the Twin Towers' Explosive Demolition on 9/11*

18. Bob Pisani, CNBC

2:42 PM, Narrative Reporting

“And the real panic, I think in my mind, occurred, Maria, I was outside when you were when the second explosion occurred, because so many people had been attracted to what was going on. The explosion threw debris on top of a lot of people. That was when the real panic began.”

19. N.J. Burkett, WABC

9:59 AM (unknown air time), Eyewitness Reporting

“And you can see the two towers — a huge explosion now raining debris on all of us! We better get out of the way!”

20. Michelle Charlesworth, WABC

10:10 AM, Eyewitness and Narrative Reporting

“I can only hope that people got out of the area on the sidewalks below the South Tower before it came tumbling down. But it literally exploded and came down as though it had been hit. Plumes of smoke moving out into the harbor. . . . To give you some idea of where I am, I’m approximately 20, 30 blocks from where this latest explosion just happened.”

21. Nina Pineda, WABC

10:17 AM, Eyewitness Reporting

Bill Ritter: *“Nina, I want you to describe one more time what it felt like when that tower collapsed. What did it feel like to you on the ground there?”*

Nina Pineda: *“We were standing probably about three blocks away advancing toward the scene to try and gather some photos and some videotape. And it felt like the entire ground shook. It felt like what it feels like to be in an earthquake. The ground was shaking followed by*

Appendix A: Statements by 36 Explosion Reporters

plumes and plumes of overwhelming smoke and flying debris, ash, and pieces of the building. As the ground was shaking . . .”

Lori Stokes: “Was there sound?”

Pineda: *“There was a tremendous booming sound, and then it just felt like a rumbling. But it didn’t sound like an explosion. It sounded like a loud rumbling. And then the next thing we saw were the streets — the way the streets looked were just overcome by smoke, just plumes and plumes of smoke like a bomb had gone off, coming up the street as people were racing to get in front of these clouds of smoke, and not doing too good of a job.”*

10:18 AM, Narrative Reporting

“And what were doing when the explosion happened was shooting pieces of the plane. There are pieces of the plane on Church Street.”

10:19 AM, Narrative Reporting

“Seconds before the explosion happened there was another kind of a renewed interest in really getting people away. Because, of course, out of curiosity everyone’s trying to get pictures of the World Trade Center on fire. They started screaming, ‘Get back! Get back! There’s another explosion happening.’ I guess they were being warned on their radios that the top was going to come down, because it was burning for the better part of half an hour. And they screamed to get people back. They started screaming, ‘Leave Manhattan if possible. Everybody leave Manhattan if possible.’”

Unknown time, Narrative Reporting

Pineda: *“The ladies that are with me were in the World Trade Center in the first building and escaped through the lobby where they report that they believe there was a bomb in the lobby.”*

Michelle Scott (witness): *“And even the turnstile was burnt and it was sticking. And they just told us to run.”*

Igarlow Sweezer (witness): *“And we were coming out, we passed the lobby, there was no lobby. So I believe the bomb hit the lobby first, and a couple of seconds and the first plane hit.”*

Unknown time, Narrative Reporting

22. *How 36 Reporters Brought Us the Twin Towers' Explosive Demolition on 9/11*

"If you can see behind me, this a moment ago you could see all the way through. But from that last explosion that Jeff Rossen was telling us about, it is now again dark. It was strangely and eerily calm here in the Financial District because everything's been evacuated."

Unknown time, Narrative Reporting

"The only thing left in the street are people's shoes as they ran out of their shoes to escape the fire bombs and the explosions."

22. Cheryl Fiandaca, WABC

10:38 AM, Eyewitness Reporting

"I was right next to the South Tower. I was about two blocks away. It was just a small explosion, and then rocks and debris and everything started pouring down."

Unknown time shortly after 10:38 AM, Eyewitness and Narrative Reporting

"Right, we were about two blocks away when the second explosion hit. And all we heard was just a small explosion. And then we saw a roar of an explosion, and all kinds smoke coming billowing out, debris falling down, people running, the firefighters and police screaming at everyone to run as the debris was coming down and hitting people."

23. Joe Torres, WABC

Unknown Air Time, Eyewitness Reporting

"Ten o'clock this morning, photographer Glenn Mayrose and I, along with FBI agents, police officers, fire officials, we all thought for sure a bomb was set to explode underneath our feet outside 7 World Trade Center. We took off running for our lives north on Church Street. We had no idea the top of one of the Twin Towers had just exploded. . . . As others looked back in shock and horror, we started another interview with a Port Authority engineer who worked at World Trade Center and spoke to us about the strength and integrity of the skyscrapers. Then, suddenly, the second tower erupted right before our eyes."

24. Carol Marin, CBS Reporter appearing on WCBS

10:59 AM, Narrative Reporting

Carol Marin: *“After the second tower went down, I was trying to make my way to a CBS crew or to try to help CBS crews if I could. And then, I don’t know what it was, John. But another explosion, a rolling blast of fire, a rolling column of fire towards us. My respect for fire and police already knew no bounds given the danger, it now exceeds what I thought it could, because a firefighter threw me into the wall of a building, covered me with his body as the flames approached us. And another police officer in New York named Brendan Duke, wherever he is, got me through smoke that neither one of us could see more than about a foot ahead of us. There are still people in there. Excuse me, I’ve breathed a fair amount of soot. The personnel, the police and the fire working in there are doing so against really dangerous odds. And they still don’t know if there’s something left to explode, John.”*

John Slattery: *“Where were you at the time?”*

Marin: *“I was — not being a New Yorker, you’ll have to help me here. I came around Stuyvesant High School, and that street at the north end. And I came up and asked if anyone had seen a CBS crew. And I was directed by a firefighter who said, ‘Walk down the middle of the road, because you don’t know what’s going to come down.’ At which point, we heard a rumble like I’ve never heard before, and a firefighter ran towards me. We ran as fast as we could. I lost my shoes. I fell down. He picked me up and slammed me into a wall and covered me with him until we could make it more to safety.”*

John Slattery: *“Was this from the first rolling blast or the second?”*

Carol Marin: *“John, I looked at my watch. It was about 10:44, is what my watch said. So it was after the second tower, I think the second tower explosion.”*

Note: The focus of Marin’s account is one of several widely corroborated explosions that occurred between 10:38 AM and 11:30 AM after both towers had come down. However, Marin’s reporting qualifies her as an explosion reporter in regard to the Twin Towers be-

22. *How 36 Reporters Brought Us the Twin Towers' Explosive Demolition on 9/11*

cause she references “the second tower explosion,” and it is clear she interprets the towers’ destruction as an explosion-based event.

25. John Slattery, WCBS

11:44 AM, Narrative Reporting

“There were many tears. There was an awful lot of anguish. And then, with subsequent explosions, and when a portion of World Trade 1 hit the ground, there was an enormous burst, a cloud of smoke and debris that started moving north.”

26. Marcella Palmer, WCBS

Unknown time, Eyewitness Reporting

Marcella Palmer: *“We heard another explosion. And I’m assuming that’s the one that came from the lower level, since there were two.”*

Unidentified Anchor: *“Right, because it was like 18 minutes apart?”*

Palmer: *“Well, this is — no, the first explosion, then there was a second explosion in the same building. There were two explosions.”*

27. Vince DeMentri, WCBS

Unknown time, Narrative Reporting

“Very difficult to breathe, but look around. This must have been Ground Zero where this thing blew up. Car after car after car, buses, completely burned and obliterated straight down to the steel.”

28. Walter Perez, WNBC

9:59 AM, Eyewitness Reporting

“We’re not sure exactly what happened, but it was another explosion on the far side of one of the buildings from where we’re standing. The reverberation — and another explosion on the right-hand side! Another building has gone up on the right-hand side of the road. People are now

Appendix A: Statements by 36 Explosion Reporters

running down the street. We're not sure if that was another explosion or if that was advanced debris."

10:00 AM, Eyewitness Reporting

"At this point, as you can tell, there's absolute pandemonium in this area because of what has just happened. Exactly what, I can't confirm. But on the far side of the building, there seemed to be another explosion and also on the right-hand side, there was also another explosion. We're not sure if that was extra reverberation from what happened at the World Trade Center or if that was an added explosion. At this point, there's a lot of smoke, massive plumes of smoke falling from the building across the street. People that were running down the street or walking are now running away. We don't have any information as far as what the most recent reverberations were. But from two blocks away you could feel what happened."

10:27 AM, Eyewitness Reporting

"As you can imagine, it was a pretty frenzied scene here. Just a few moments ago, I'd say about 20 minutes ago, we're not sure exactly what it was, we have not confirmed it. But something either exploded or fell off the side of the one building that was attacked and caused a massive plume of smoke."

29. Kristen Shaughnessy, NY1

9:59 AM, Eyewitness Reporting

"Oh, it is just coming down, Pat. It is just coming down. It's exploding. It is billowing. Pat, the debris is flying. I'm going to run."

10:42 AM, Narrative Reporting

"Good morning again, Pat. I am actually just across from City Hall, I don't have to tell you. With that second explosion the dust did not seem as bad."

10:43 AM, Narrative Reporting

"It's unbelievable because you hear these explosions. In fact, I just heard another one — I don't know if it was like an aftereffect or what not — just while you were on the phone talking about the school closings."

22. *How 36 Reporters Brought Us the Twin Towers' Explosive Demolition on 9/11*

It wasn't as big, obviously, as the other ones. But it still sent a tremor all the way over here, and I'm obviously on the other side of the World Trade Center, on the other side of the city. And it's just unbelievable."

10:45 AM, Narrative Reporting

Kristen Shaughnessy: *"I'm hearing another explosion, just so you know. I'm hearing another rumble. It's not as bad as the other ones were. But, I don't know if you have pictures."*

Sharon Dizenhuz: *"We have a picture and we don't see anything beyond the enormous billows of smoke that have been there. But no additional bursts from our vantage point."*

Shaughnessy: *"Okay, didn't mean to interrupt, Sharon. What you can feel when these tremors come is that it literally comes up under your feet. That's what it feels like. That's the best way I know to describe it."*

30. Andrew Siff, NY1

10:12 AM, Eyewitness Reporting

Sharon Dizenhuz: *"Andrew, when you saw this happen, what did it look like to you at close range? Because to us it seemed almost like dominoes, you know, going floor by floor by floor."*

Andrew Siff: *"It was a little difficult to tell at first to figure out what was happening. We heard an explosion. We heard either an explosion or the sound of something making impact. We were in the middle. I was with news assistant Jason Post, and we were walking down West Street. And when we heard the sound we whipped around and saw just a buckling of the tower. And it just looked like it collapsed within itself. You could just see the top of the tower collapse. We can't tell what happened to the bottom half of the tower from here."*

31. John Schiumo, NY1

10:18 AM, Narrative Reporting

"There's another explosion as we speak!"

Appendix A: Statements by 36 Explosion Reporters

Note: Although the phenomenon Schiumo describes occurs between the destruction of the two towers, which happened to the South Tower at 9:59 AM and the North Tower 10:28 AM, we classify him as an explosion reporter because he refers to it as “another explosion” — thus suggesting he understood the destruction of the South Tower to be an explosion-based event — and because the explosion he describes may have come from the North Tower and been related to its eventual destruction 11 minutes later.

32. Andrew Kirtzman, NY1

11:11 AM, Narrative Reporting

“Mayor Giuliani appeared about 45 minutes ago on Chambers Street near Church Street. We began walking up Church Street when the second building proceeded to collapse, and a huge plume of smoke flew up into the air, went up into the air, and the mayor and his party started running up 6th Avenue. A plainclothes detective threw his arm around Mayor Giuliani as we took off, not knowing what the repercussions of a second explosion would be.”

11:12 AM, Narrative Reporting

“And for about 10 minutes they tried to break into the fire station as the mayor stood by and the police commissioner stood by waiting to set up an operations center. That’s — kind of wanted to paint a picture of kind of the seat-of-the-pants operation that they’ve been forced to construct here because of the explosion downtown.”

33. Jack Kelley, USA Today

Unknown time apparently around 5:30 PM, Source-based Reporting

Jack Kelley: *“Apparently, what appears to have happened is that at the same time two planes hit the building, that the FBI most likely thinks that there was a car or truck packed with explosives underneath the building which also exploded at the same time and brought both of them down.”*

22. *How 36 Reporters Brought Us the Twin Towers' Explosive Demolition on 9/11*

USA Today Anchor: *"Now that's the first time we're hearing that. So two planes and explosives that were in the building, is that correct?"*

Kelley: *"That is the working theory at this point. That is still unconfirmed, but that is what the FBI is going on at this point."*

34. First Unidentified Reporter at Giuliani and Pataki Press Conference

2:43 PM, Narrative Reporting

"Do you know anything about the cause of the explosions that brought down the two buildings yet? Was it caused by the planes or by something else? Those second explosions."

35. Marcia Kramer, WCBS, at Giuliani and Pataki Press Conference

2:44 PM, Narrative Reporting

"Mr. Mayor, could you tell us, do you expect any further attacks on New York? Is there anything to indicate that there could be more bombs, more planes out there? I know originally there was a report that eight planes had been hijacked. Four have only been accounted for. What about the remaining four? And is there any possibility that there could be bombs on the ground planted by someone?"

Note: Kramer was in the studio when the destruction of the Twin Towers occurred, but later went into the field to conduct reporting, including attending the afternoon press conference with Mayor Giuliani and Governor Pataki. While watching the destruction of the first tower from the studio in the morning, Kramer hypothesized that it was caused by an explosion or bomb, which explains the rationale for her questions during the press conference.

At 10:02 AM, three minutes after the destruction of the first tower, she stated, "Right now police have to determine if whether that explosion was caused from the initial impact of the plane or whether it was something that was exploded on the ground. Generally speaking,

Appendix B: Statements by Four Non-Explosion Reporters

for a building to collapse in on itself like that, it would seem to indicate — obviously, this is just early speculation — but it would seem to indicate that there could have been an explosion, a bomb planted on the ground, that would make the building collapse within itself.” Then, at 10:14 AM, she stated, “Well, we have a number of updates. Number one: CNN is now reporting that there was a third explosion at the World Trade Center, probably an explosion from the ground that caused World Trade Center 1 to collapse on top of itself. Again, there was a third explosion. It is unclear what caused it, whether it was a bomb or whether the first plane that crashed into the tower had somehow been booby-trapped with a bomb that was timed to explode later after the crash had occurred. But CNN is reporting that there was a third explosion that caused World Trade Center 1 to collapse within itself and then collapse on other surrounding buildings.”

This is a brief glimpse at how CNN and one of the anchors at WCBS interpreted the destruction of the Twin Towers. In our next article, we will delve much deeper into how the anchors at each of networks interpreted destruction of the Twin Towers.

36. Second Unidentified Reporter at Giuliani and Pataki Press Conference

2:54 PM, Narrative Reporting

“So the only National Guard we’ll see will be in Lower Manhattan in the bomb site area, they won’t be patrolling the rest of Manhattan?”

Appendix B: Statements by Four Non-Explosion Reporters

1. Don Dahler, ABC

10:00 AM

Peter Jennings: “[Don] Dahler from ABC’s Good Morning America

22. *How 36 Reporters Brought Us the Twin Towers' Explosive Demolition on 9/11*

is down in the general vicinity. [Don], can you tell us what has just happened?"

Don Dahler: "Yes, Peter. It's Don Dahler down here. I'm four blocks north of the World Trade Center. The second building that was hit by the plane has just completely collapsed. The entire building has just collapsed as if a demolition team set off — when you see the old demolitions of these old buildings. It folded down on itself and it is not there anymore."

Jennings: "Thanks very much, [Don]."

Dahler: "It has completely collapsed."

Jennings: "The whole side has collapsed?"

Dahler: "The whole building has collapsed!"

Jennings: "The whole building has collapsed?"

Dahler: "The building has collapsed."

Jennings: "That's the southern tower you're talking about?"

Dahler: "Exactly. The second building that we witnessed the airplane enter has been — the top half had been fully involved in flame. It just collapsed. There is panic on the streets. Thousands of people running up Church Street, which is what I'm looking out on, trying to get away. But the entire — at least as far as I can see, the top half of the building — at least half of it, I can't see below that — half of it just started with a gigantic rumble, folded in on itself, and collapsed in a huge plume of smoke and dust."

10:02 AM

Jennings: "The southern tower, 10:00 eastern time this morning, just collapsing on itself. This is a place where thousands of people work. We have no idea what caused this. If you wish to bring — anybody who's ever watched a building being demolished on purpose knows that if you're going to do this you have to get at the under infrastructure of a building and bring it down."

Dahler: "Peter?"

Jennings: "Yes, Dan."

Dahler: "What appeared to happen from my vantage point, the top

Appendix B: Statements by Four Non-Explosion Reporters

part of the building was totally involved in fire, and there appeared to be no effort possible to put that fire out. It looked like the top part of the building was so weakened by the fire the weight of it collapsed the rest of the building. That's what appeared to happen. I did not see anything happening at the base of the building. It all appeared to start at the top and then just collapse the rest of the building by the sheer weight of it. There was no explosion or anything at the base part of it. But I did see that the top part of it started to collapse. The walls started to bulge out, glass things coming out. And then it collapsed down on itself. And then it appeared to just fold down from there, from the very top."

Jennings: "Thanks, Don, very much."

2. Drew Millhon, ABC

11:09 AM

"I was at the corner of Varick and Canal, which is about 10 to 12 blocks north of the World Trade Center, where roughly 300 to 400 people were gathered watching the flames and the smoke from both the World Trade Centers going through the air. And I began to cross the street and I heard a collective scream from this group of people. And I looked up and the first World Trade Center that collapsed was falling down. The shriek lasted for quite a long time. And then many of these people fell into tears, just crying and sobbing. 'I don't know where my mother is. I don't know where my friends are.' That sort of thing was heard all around this crowd."

3. Bob Bazell, NBC

10:08 AM

"I was actually standing and saw that collapse. And everybody here [at St. Vincent's hospital on West 12th Street] just gasped. Even the medical workers and the ambulance attendants when they saw that, people who are used to tragedy, grabbed each other and hugged each other. And some started to cry."

4. John Zito, MSNBC

10:36 AM

Chris Jansing: *"Were you able to feel the collapse of that second tower?"*

John Zito: *"The second tower, no. But the first tower that went down, I was very close, I'd say about five blocks away. And CNBC's Ron Insana and I were trying to hook up with a truck or find any NBC contact down there. And we were very close to when that tower came down. And debris came showering down, and Ron and I both ran for cover. I managed to get inside an alcove of buildings. And all the scaffolding around collapse in front of me and broke the window next to me. And I climbed inside that and stayed in there for about 10 minutes. I couldn't get out of there. It was pitch black outside."*

Appendix C: Borderline Cases

This appendix contains three borderline cases that we determined could not be clearly classified as explosion or non-explosion reporters.

1. Minah Kathuria, NBC

Kathuria is a borderline case because it is unclear whether she suspects the destruction of the South Tower to have been a demolition or whether she is merely likening the destruction to a demolition in its appearance. In the case of Don Dahler, who is included in [Appendix B](#) as a non-explosion reporter, it is clear that he ultimately interpreted the destruction as a fire-induced collapse even though he likened the destruction to a demolition in its appearance.

10:11 AM

"We're on the corner of Duane and West Broadway walking down towards the Twin Towers, and it just collapsed. It looked like a — it

looked sort of like the building just demolished. Smoke, clouds — I mean, clouds of smoke everywhere.”

2. Brian Palmer, CNN

Palmer is a borderline case because he is asked by CNN’s Aaron Brown if it sounded like an explosion or just the sound of the collapse itself, and he does not favor one interpretation over the other, and he describes the sound as a “boom,” which was not strong enough in our view to classify him as an explosion reporter. We view Palmer as being distinct from Alan Dodds Frank, who, although he did not commit to one interpretation over the other, readily asserted the possibility that the destruction of the towers was an explosion-based event.

10:41 AM

Aaron Brown: *“Brian, did it sound like there was an explosion before the second collapse, or was the noise the collapse itself?”*

Brian Palmer: *“Well, from our distance, I was not able to distinguish between an explosion and the collapse. We were several hundred yards away. But we clearly saw the building come down. I heard your report of a fourth explosion: I can’t confirm that. But we heard some ‘boom’ and then the building fold in on itself.”*

3. Maria Bartiromo, CNBC

Bartiromo is a borderline case because she repeatedly uses the word “explosion” and her description of what she witnessed corroborates the explosion hypothesis, but although she uses the word “explosion” to describe what she witnessed, she attributes it to the sound of the buildings collapsing.

10:14 AM

Maria Bartiromo: *“Now I’m standing on the floor of the exchange. But I just came back from outside and I am covered with soot. Basically, I was outside when that third explosion occurred. . . . The whole*

22. *How 36 Reporters Brought Us the Twin Towers' Explosive Demolition on 9/11*

area turned pitch black when that third explosion happened. . . . I don't know if you can see my jacket and my shoes, but I'm completely covered in white smoke from that third explosion."

Unidentified Anchor: *"Maria, do you know what that explosion was?"*

Bartiromo: *"That was about 10 — I'd say 15 minutes ago."*

Unidentified Anchor: *"But do you know what caused it?"*

Bartiromo: *"No, I don't."*

Mark Haines: *"At the moment, Maria — and for the people with you — at the moment there are eyewitnesses who feel that another plane, a third plane . . ."*

Bartiromo: *"Yes, some people are saying that . . ."*

Haines: *". . . hit the base of the South Tower."*

Bartiromo: *"I was under the impression that it was just the actual collapse of the building. But some people are speculating that. I didn't want to say that because . . ."*

Haines: *"We had — at the moment it happened — we had MSNBC's feed up, and we could hear people shouting 'a third plane, a third plane.' And then there was an explosion — 'another plane, another plane,' and there was an explosion."*

Bartiromo: *"That's right. And I was outside during that explosion."*

10:49 AM

"The second explosion I witnessed was about 10:00 AM, and that was, in retrospect, the collapse of that tower. And again, debris came at us. The whole area turned pitch black. All we could see was smoke. We couldn't even breathe practically. We were closing our eyes. I actually went under the building across the New York Stock Exchange."

12:24 PM

"I walked outside a little while ago. There are dust, white dust, this thick on the floor. Debris and smoke just settling after the explosions. I mentioned to you earlier in the coverage that I myself witnessed two of the explosions. The first one that I witnessed was when the second plane went into the second tower. And truly it was out of a movie. This

plane going right in, putting a hole into the second tower. The second thing that I myself witnessed, the further collapse of one of the towers. And this huge bang down on Wall Street. Everyone ran for their lives.”

1:01 PM

“I was outside a little while ago. It almost looks like there’s snow on the ground. There are piles, and really just a thick sheet of dust — white, white dust — from the explosion. . . . Then about 15 minutes later I went back outside, thinking that it was safe again. And lo and behold I witnessed the third explosion, which of course was the sound of the tower collapsing. And at that time, when I heard the tower collapsing — again, it was a huge, huge thump and explosion noise. You’re looking at the scene right now. And that’s what we were all watching. The building collapsed. We all ran for our lives. Metal and papers and debris were flying at us in the face.”

1:37 PM

“Then, 10 minutes or 15 minutes later, I walked out there again thinking that, you know, we had seen the worst. And, of course, then there was a third explosion. And that third explosion was the sound of the second tower collapsing.”

2:42 PM

“Bob and I took a walk together outside and we came back really, really covered with it earlier, when I witnessed that third explosion, the third explosion being the collapse of one of the towers.”

Ted Walter is the director of strategy and development for AE911Truth. He is the author of AE911Truth’s 2015 publication [Beyond Misinformation: What Science Says About the Destruction of World Trade Center Buildings 1, 2, and 7](#) and its 2016 publication [World Trade Center Physics: Why Constant Acceleration Disproves Progressive Collapse](#) and co-author of AE911Truth’s 2017 [preliminary assessment of the Plasco Building collapse in Tehran](#). He holds a Master of Public Policy degree from the University of California, Berkeley.

Graeme MacQueen received his Ph.D. in Buddhist Studies from Harvard University and taught in the Religious Studies Department of Mc-

22. *How 36 Reporters Brought Us the Twin Towers' Explosive Demolition on 9/11*

Master University for 30 years. While at McMaster he became founding Director of the Centre for Peace Studies at McMaster, after which he helped developed the B.A. program in Peace Studies and oversaw the development of peace-building projects in Sri Lanka, Gaza, Croatia and Afghanistan. Other works in MacQueen's body of historical 9/11 research include: 118 Witnesses: The Firefighters' Testimony to Explosions in the Twin Towers; Waiting for Seven: WTC 7 Collapse Warnings in the FDNY Oral Histories; Did the Earth Shake Before the South Tower Hit the Ground?; Eyewitness Evidence of the Twin Towers' Explosive Destruction; and Foreknowledge of Building 7's Collapse.

23. The Triumph of the Official Narrative: How the TV Networks Hid the Twin Towers' Explosive Demolition on 9/11

This article constitutes the second part of the project Ted Walter and I set out to complete with respect to same-day US television coverage. Having shown (see the [preceding article](#)) that explosive destruction of the Towers was a major hypothesis of on-the-ground reporters on the morning of 9/11, we wished to discover how it was that by the end of the day all major TV networks and stations were singing the song of Bin Laden's destruction of the buildings through fire and airplane impact.

Our conclusion was that evidence-free claims, combined with repetition and a dramatic yarn, were the major mechanisms used. We also found that the evident precision and coordination demonstrate the existence of—yes, we should acknowledge it—an extremely ambitious and detailed conspiracy.

Please note: It may take a while for all videos to load: 20
in [Part 1](#), 105 in [App A](#), 64 in [App B](#).

Published in [Architects & Engineers for 9/11 Truth](#), 8 Sep 2022



Introduction

Editor's Note: At the end of this article are two appendices containing 169 video clips of news coverage from the day of 9/11. An immense debt of gratitude is owed to AE911Truth Operations Manager Andy Steele for the time and care he put into preparing these video clips.

A PDF of the article with video links is available [here](#).

This article is the second installment of a two-part research project we began in July 2020 with the article "[How 36 Reporters Brought Us the Twin Towers' Explosive Demolition on 9/11.](#)"

In that article, our goal was to determine the prevalence, among television reporters on 9/11, of the hypothesis that explosions had brought down the Twin Towers. Through careful review of approximately 70 hours of news coverage on 11 different channels, we found

that the explosion hypothesis was not only common among reporters but was, in fact, the dominant hypothesis.

Our second question, which we set aside for the present article, was to determine how, despite its prevalence, the explosion hypothesis was supplanted by the hypothesis of fire-induced collapse.

In this article, we shall concentrate not on reporters in the field, as in Part 1, but on the news anchors and their guests who were tasked with discovering and making sense of what was happening. As we trace the supplanting of the explosion hypothesis with the fire-induced collapse hypothesis, we witness the great shift toward what quickly became the Official Narrative.

We do not see our task as trying to discover whether the Official Narrative of 9/11 is true or false. In the 21 years since the attacks took place, it has been proven beyond all reasonable doubt, we believe, that the Official Narrative is false.

While we support and participate in the further accumulation of evidence for this position, as well as the presentation of this evidence to the public, we believe it is also important to look into *how* the triumph of the Official Narrative was accomplished. If we are able to discover this, we will greatly advance our understanding of the psychological operation conducted on September 11, 2001 — and, thus, our understanding of how other psychological operations are perpetrated on the public.

Our Argument

Our argument is that two strategies were employed to accomplish the triumph of the Official Narrative:

(a) Where news anchors were sincerely dedicated to discovering the facts of the situation, Strategy One was employed. This strategy involved directly confronting the news anchor of the relevant network with an “expert” who would explain that the destruction of the Twin Towers was caused by structural failure induced by the air-

plane impact and the ensuing fires. This would allay concerns about reports of explosions in the towers and would domesticate the news anchor so that he or she would stop raising problematic questions. Of course, as we can see clearly today, these experts could not possibly have known what they so confidently proclaimed. In fact, we can now see that their explanations were simply wrong. But their interviews seem to have accomplished their goals on 9/11. To illustrate this strategy, we shall choose as our chief examples CNBC and CNN, whose anchors showed the most interest in the explosion hypothesis, and we will also look at CBS and NBC.

(b) Strategy Two was used on all networks, regardless of the stance of the news anchors. This strategy involved developing two related narratives — two engaging, emotionally charged stories — that appeared to explain the day's horrors and offered viewers a set of active responses. They were not scientific hypotheses and were not directly related to the destruction of the Twin Towers, but indirectly they appeared to favor the fire-induced collapse hypothesis more than the explosion hypothesis. By the end of the day, they had silenced the explosion hypothesis.

The first of these two stories is what we shall call the War on Terror narrative. This grand narrative, resonant with older storied events, explained how the righteous, the civilized, the United States had been subjected to an act of war from the evil, the uncivilized, the terrorists supported by nations in the Middle East and Central Asia; and how American leaders must respond to this aggression with an initiative that was warlike on many levels. This narrative was articulated early (before noon on 9/11) and was repeated throughout the day. It established the foundations of the Global War on Terror.

The second story is the Bin Laden narrative, which nested within the wider War on Terror narrative and was used to transform myth into plausible history. According to this narrative, an evil Saudi national based in Afghanistan had masterminded the attacks.

It is extremely important to grasp the relationship between these

two narratives and what may seem as detailed — even esoteric — facts about the destruction of the Twin Towers. If the buildings were destroyed by pre-planted explosives — as we believe has been demonstrated through years of research — the two narratives, however rational and moral they appeared to be to many television viewers, are profoundly misleading in their political analysis and profoundly immoral in their prescriptions.

Numerical Analysis of Statements by News Anchors and Experts Articulating the Explosion Hypothesis

To understand how the explosion hypothesis was supplanted by the fire-induced collapse hypothesis, it is first important to establish whether, and to what degree, the explosion hypothesis was considered by news anchors, their guests, and others at the television networks.

As we showed in [Part 1](#), 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 how the Twin Towers were destroyed then continued to be prevalent among reporters on the ground, who essentially viewed the destruction of the towers as an explosion-based attack subsequent to the airplane strikes.

Given what the reporters were communicating to the rest of the world, how did their colleagues in the studios absorb this information and make sense of what had happened for the viewing public?

As in [Part 1](#), to answer this question, we reviewed approximately 70 hours of continuous news coverage from 11 different networks, cable news channels, and local network affiliates.

Table 1 below shows the news coverage we compiled and reviewed. (For further description of our data collection, see [Part 1](#) of the series.)

23. *The Triumph of the Official Narrative: How the TV Networks Hid the Twin T*

Table 2 lists the mentions of the explosion hypothesis by network. Table 3 lists the mentions of the explosion hypothesis by the time they occurred.

Videos and transcripts of every mention of the explosion hypothesis are shown in Appendix A.

Table 1: Television Coverage Compiled

Networks

- ABC: 8:50 AM to 6:07 PM
- CBS: 8:52 AM to 12:00 PM + one excerpt at ~12:15 PM
- NBC: 8:51 AM to 6:30 PM

Cable News Channels

- CNN: 8:32 AM to 12:00 AM (midnight)
- Fox News: 8:51 AM to 5:00 PM
- MSNBC: 8:52 AM to 1:42 PM
- CNBC: 8:50 AM to ~4:16 PM

Local Channels

- WABC: 8:50 AM to 10:50 AM + nine excerpts from various times
- WCBS: 8:50 AM to 11:33 PM, 11:40 AM to 12:04 PM + six excerpts from various
- WNBC: 8:50 AM to 10:30 AM (switches permanently to NBC network at 10:30 AM)
- NY1: 8:50 AM to 11:20 AM

Table 2: Explosion Hypothesis Mentions by Network

↑ **Table 3: Explosion Hypothesis Mentions by Time**

In total, when we include seven ambiguous mentions of the explosion hypothesis — which we defined as an anchor describing the occurrence of an explosion in conjunction with the collapse of either tower but not implying that the explosion necessarily caused the collapse — we found that the explosion hypothesis was mentioned 70 times across all 11 channels.

To our great interest, we found that news anchors or guest experts on every channel, with the exception of Fox News, at some point in the day believed, considered, or at least articulated the possibility that explosions had caused the Twin Towers' destruction. In addition, several channels, including Fox News, displayed banners or captions or crawls in their lower thirds stating that explosions had caused the Twin Towers' destruction.

The explosion hypothesis was first mentioned by several anchors on several different channels within minutes of the South Tower's destruction at 9:59 AM and — within our pool of television coverage — was mentioned for the final time by NBC's Tom Brokaw at 4:48 PM. It is noteworthy that more than half of the mentions of the explosion hypothesis occurred in the first 31 minutes after the South Tower's destruction. As we shall discuss below, on some channels the explosion hypothesis was eventually explicitly discarded while on other channels it simply stopped being mentioned.

In some cases, discussion of the explosion hypothesis was driven by the anchors' own observation and intuition while in other cases it was driven by information provided by reporters on the ground (and, in some cases, both). In a few cases, especially in the lower third captions, mention of the explosion hypothesis appears to have been driven by information circulated on the newswire.

Altogether, the data reflect that the explosion hypothesis was broadly, though in most cases fleetingly, considered by news anchors, their guests, and others at the networks.

The one notable exception was on Fox News, where the anchor,

Jon Scott, assertively pushed the fire-induced collapse hypothesis while fabricating the War on Terror and Bin Laden narratives before our eyes. All the while, he seemed uniquely unsurprised and unbothered by the events, as compared to other anchors who exhibited varying degrees of shock, disbelief, and horror. Although Fox News reporters on the ground, like those of other networks, were describing explosions, Scott went out of his way to correct their impressions of what they had witnessed and make the fire-induced collapse hypothesis seem credible to viewers. Because of Scott, no experts were needed to establish the Official Narrative on Fox News. There was only one hypothesis in the foreground, and this hypothesis was so quickly solidified that by noon on 9/11, all of the major elements of the coming Global War on Terror had been set forth.

However, for the anchors who were sincerely dedicated to discovering the facts, Strategy One was employed.

Strategy One for Accomplishing the Triumph of the Official Narrative: An “Expert” Visits a News Anchor

In discussing Strategy One we shall use CNBC and CNN as our chief examples and also look briefly at CBS and NBC.

↑ CNBC

CNBC saw, perhaps, the most notable rise and fall of the explosion hypothesis.

CNBC’s consideration of the explosion hypothesis started at 10:01 AM with news anchor Mark Haines hearing from witnesses on the street that a third airplane had crashed into the South Tower. He surmised that this third airplane impact was responsible for the South Tower’s total destruction.

In a discussion with CNBC reporter Maria Bartiromo, who was on the ground at the New York Stock Exchange, Haines’ suspicion of a third airplane causing the South Tower’s destruction was reinforced by Bartiromo’s repeated reference to “the explosion,” which Bartiromo deduced was “just the actual collapse of the building” but that Haines suggested was a third airplane impact.

After about 15 minutes, Haines was informed that the Associated Press was reporting only two airplane strikes. As Haines began to accept that there was no third airplane strike, he and another anchor (we were unable to determine this person’s name) agreed that some sort of explosion must have caused the South Tower’s destruction. At around 10:21 AM, Haines looked closely at footage of the South Tower’s destruction and began to analyze it with an accuracy and clarity that was unique among news anchors:

“But here you see an enormous explosion about midway up in the South Tower, and the entire structure collapses. It just disappears.... Now that’s interesting from a forensic point of view. The explosion that leveled the South Tower came, it seemed, roughly halfway up. And yet it took the entire tower out.”

Minutes later, Haines reacted in horror as he watched the destruction of the North Tower in real time, exclaiming:

“We have an enormous explosion in the remaining World Trade Tower Center!”

Haines then went on to analyze the destruction as he had done before with the following series of comments:

“It happened the same way. The explosion started high in the building and worked its way down.”

23. *The Triumph of the Official Narrative: How the TV Networks Hid the Twin T*

“There you see — I don’t understand, and I would be very anxious to hear in the future some, the forensics of this situation.”

“This is — there you see the building imploding. It, it — do you see what’s happening? Now, what would cause that I don’t know.”

In response to Haines’ comments, his co-anchor, Bill Griffeth, acknowledged the possibility of what Haines was suggesting, stating:

“Certainly, the structure had been weakened by the impact. But you’d have to wonder if there was something else there. But we just don’t know at this point.”

Haines responded with his opinion that the destruction of both towers could not have been accidental:

“I don’t think ... I think we’re safe — here I think I’m on safe ground, Bill. I don’t think — This was clearly, the way the structure is collapsing, this was the result of something that was planned. This is not — it’s not accidental that the first tower just happened to collapse and then the second tower just happened to collapse in exactly the same way. How they accomplished this, we don’t know. But clearly this is what they wanted to accomplish.”

A few minutes later, at around 10:34 AM, Haines left the studio, apparently in shock, and did not return for the day. We can only wonder how aggressively Haines might have continued to pursue the explosion hypothesis had he remained in the newsroom. (Sadly, Haines died of congestive heart failure in 2011.)

At 11:07 AM, co-anchor Griffeth brought structural engineer Eric Gass into the studio for an interview, asking him “whether it would be necessary for a further attack upon the buildings before they would collapse.” Gass happened to be working on the construction of a nearby building for CNBC at the time.

Over the course of his interview, Gass extinguished any remaining suspicion Griffeth and others may have had, making a number of unfounded assertions about the inability of the buildings to withstand the airplane impacts and fires.

Bill Griffeth: “Which is something I wanna get into here, Sue, because there’s been all kinds of speculation about how that would happen, whether it would be necessary for a further attack upon the buildings before they would collapse. And as it happens we have with us in studio here is a structural engineer, Eric Gass, who happens to be in the process of building a building that we’re putting together here at CNBC down the road. And you would have some sense since you’ve been a part of the construction of buildings of this magnitude, Eric, to give us some insight of what would happen with the kind of damage that was done with the jet attacks on the buildings and whether that’s enough to bring those buildings down by themselves.”

Eric Gass: “Well, I think you’ve a got a couple of issues that are going on here. One is, these are concrete reinforced structures. And concrete is a compressive material. So as you can see, especially from the second attack, as it comes in, it appears to shear into the side of the building.”

Herrera: “The plane.”

Griffeth: “Right.”

Gass: “Absolutely. So you have a couple of issues. One, it probably has taken all the concrete away from the steel.”

Herrera: “And now you’re seeing that second plane.”

Gass: “Absolutely. So this structure, and I think as you see as it will collapse later on, it begins to tilt to that side. It has taken all of the concrete and put it into tensile property.”

Herrera: “And these are large planes.”

23. *The Triumph of the Official Narrative: How the TV Networks Hid the Twin Towers*

Gass: "Absolutely. If we're dealing with a Boeing 767, you're not just dealing with a large plane, you're dealing with a large plane that's coming in at over 500 mph. So you have all of the impact going in to those members. There is no building that I'm aware of that can take this kind of impact."

Griffeth: "So as we watch the first of the towers collapsing there, it was enough from the initial attack by the jet to bring the tower down eventually. Is that your understanding?"

Gass: "I would say so. Especially the second thing you would have going on, of course, is the airplane's going to have a great deal of fuel, and the fire is going to be working against that structural steel, which of course is why the fire codes are so stringent in this country. So then you're going to have a problem with once the fire takes place it's going to work against the structural strength of that steel and begin to collapse."

...

Griffeth: "So you're not surprised that these would go down just based on the jet crashing into the buildings here, Eric?"

Gass: "No. As a matter of fact, as we were seeing the explosion the first time, that was the first thing that occurred to us, is that there would be an immediate weakening on that side of the building. I think if you look at the second tower that collapsed, you will see that it begins to collapse straight down, which as it appears from what happened in the impact, it impacted much more into the center of the building. Again, you would have gotten rid of all of the ability for fire protection to have gotten rid of some of the fire and the flames, which apparently is why it took longer. The other point too is that you have 15 floors of extremely heavy material bearing down on this situation. It would be impossible to see why it would be able to hold up."

...

Griffeth: "The terrorist bombing of some years ago against the World Trade Center, which occurred essentially in the parking struc-

ture below the building, why didn’t that bring that down at the time?”

Gass: “Well, I think you’re dealing with a different issue. One, you’re dealing with a static explosion, where someone pulls a small truck underneath so you have all of the concrete not only keeping both of the floors above and below. But you’re dealing with the biggest structural strength of that building is sitting underground. Of course, New York is pure bedrock. So that would have been the worst place to attack it. Clearly it did not do that much damage, enough structurally to make major structural problems with the design, as I understand it. Here, you have a much larger vehicle, with much more speed, and literally shearing any of its structural capacity in those particular areas.”

Hours later, at around 2:25 PM, Griffeth repeated Gass’s unfounded assertions.

Griffeth: “We were witness to this horrifying spectacle of the Twin Towers just disintegrating to the ground. And we had heard from this structural engineer that we interviewed earlier that once these towers had been struck by these jets – I mean, these are structures that are built mainly, of course with steel, but with concrete. The concrete essentially was liquefied. Not to that degree, but it just was very suspect in the structure. And according to him it was only a matter of time before it came down. And course that is exactly what happened after the crashes.”

To summarize, engineer Eric Gass, the “expert,” was able to put a stop to the legitimate questioning of Mark Haines and Bill Griffeth. Although we know now that Gass’s hypothesis is false, it would have seemed plausible at the time both to news anchors and the viewing public.

↑ CNN

Shortly after 9:59 AM, news anchor Aaron Brown was standing on a roof in New York City about 30 blocks from the World Trade Center. He was looking directly at the South Tower as it was destroyed. He was, therefore, not just a journalist and not just a news anchor: He was an eyewitness.

He immediately interrupted a journalist who was reporting live on the Pentagon:

“Wow! Jamie. Jamie, I need you to stop for a second. There has just been a huge explosion...we can see a billowing smoke rising...and I can't...I'll tell you that I can't see that second Tower. But there was a cascade of sparks and fire and now this...it looks almost like a mushroom cloud, explosion, this huge, billowing smoke in the second Tower...”

Having reported honestly what he saw with his own eyes, Brown next did exactly what he should have done as a responsible news anchor. He let his audience know that, while he did not know what had happened, it was clear that there were two hypotheses in play, the explosion hypothesis and the fire-induced collapse hypothesis. And then he went to his reporters on the scene, as well as to authorities, to try and sort out which hypothesis was correct.

Here are examples of his setting forth — after the first building was destroyed and again after the second was destroyed — the rival hypotheses:

At 10:03 AM: “...and then just in the last several minutes there has been a second explosion or, at least, perhaps not an explosion, perhaps part of the building simply collapsed. And that's what we saw and that's what we're looking at.”

At 10:04 AM: “This is just a few minutes ago...we don’t know if...something happened, another explosion, or if the building was so weakened...it just collapsed.”

At 10:29 AM: “[W]e believe now that we can say that both, that portions of both towers of the World Trade Center, have collapsed. Whether there were second explosions, that is to say, explosions other than the planes hitting them, that caused this to happen we cannot tell you.”

At 11:17 AM: “Our reporters in the area say they heard loud noises when that happened. It is unclear to them and to us whether those were explosions going on in the building or if that was simply the sound of the collapse of the buildings as they collapsed, making these huge noises as they came down.”

Brown’s honest reporting of his perceptions was balanced repeatedly by his caution. Here is an example:

At 10:53 AM: “...it almost looks...it almost looks like one of those implosions of buildings that you see, except there is nothing controlled about this...this is devastation.”

His next move, having set forth the two hypotheses, was to ask his reporters on the scene, who were choking on pulverized debris and witnessing gruesome scenes, what they perceived.

Reporter Brian Palmer said honestly that he was not in a position to resolve the issue.

Brown at 10:41 AM: “Was there...Brian, did it sound like there was an explosion before the second collapse, or was the noise the collapse itself?”

23. *The Triumph of the Official Narrative: How the TV Networks Hid the Twin Towers*

Palmer: “Well, from our distance...I was not able to distinguish between an explosion and the collapse. We were several hundred yards away. But we clearly saw the building come down. I heard your report of a fourth explosion: I can’t confirm that. But we heard some ‘boom’ and then the building fold in on itself.”

Two other reporters were more definite about what they perceived.

Brown at 10:29 AM: “Rose, whadya got?”

Rose Arce: “I’m about a block away. And there were several people that were hanging out the windows right below where the plane crashed, when suddenly you saw the top of the building start to shake, and people began leaping from the windows in the north side of the building. You saw two people at first plummet and then a third one, and then the entire top of the building just blew up...”

...

Brown at 10:57 AM: “Who do we have on the phone, guys? Just help me out here. Patty, are you there?”

Patty Sabga: “Yes, I am here.”

Brown: “Whaddya got?”

Sabga: “About an hour ago I was on the corner of Broadway and Park Place — that’s about a thousand yards from the World Trade Center — when the first tower collapsed. It was a massive explosion. At the time the police were trying desperately to evacuate people from the area. When that explosion occurred, it was like a scene out of a horror film.”

Clearly, the explosion hypothesis was flourishing on CNN. In what is striking to read today, even the news caption at the bottom of the screen at 10:03 AM, shortly after the destruction of the South Tower, was dramatically articulating the explosion hypothesis:

“THIRD EXPLOSION SHATTERS WORLD TRADE CENTER IN NEW YORK”

After checking with his reporters, Brown continued to explore his two hypotheses, this time by consulting authorities.

First Brown consulted a political authority. He got the mayor of New York City on the line.

Brown at 12:31 PM: “Sir, do you believe that...was there another set of explosions that caused the buildings to collapse, or was it the structural damage caused by the planes?”

Giuliani: “I don’t, I don’t know, I, uh, I, uh...I, I saw the first collapse and heard the second ’cause I was in a building when the second took place. I think it was structural but I cannot be sure.”

Later in the afternoon, Giuliani had more confidence in his script. At a press conference that aired on nearly every channel, he ruled out the explosion hypothesis when a reporter asked him, “Do you know anything about the cause of the explosions that brought down the two buildings yet?”

Finally, at 4:20 PM, Brown was visited by an engineer, Jim DeStefano, who we were told was with the National Council of Structural Engineers (the actual name of DeStefano’s organization is the National Council of Structural Engineers Associations). His brief comments put an end to Brown’s explosion hypothesis and rendered CNN’s news coverage safe for public consumption.

Brown: “Jim DeStefano is a structural engineer. He knows about big buildings and what happens in these sorts of catastrophic moments. He joins us from Deerfield, Connecticut on the phone. Jim, the plane hits...what...and I hope this isn’t a terribly oversimplified question, but what happens to the building itself?”

DeStefano: “...It’s a tremendous impact that’s applied to the building when a collision like this occurs. And it’s clear that that impact was sufficient to do damage to the columns and the bracing system supporting the building. That coupled with the fire raging and the

high temperatures softening the structural steel then precipitated a destabilization of the columns and clearly the columns buckled at the lower floors causing the building to collapse.”

DeStefano, surely, had a right to make a guess, but he had no right to claim that he knew what had happened. He did not say, “Here is one hypothesis.” He said, in effect, “This is what happened.” But there had been no photographic or video analysis of the buildings’ destruction, no analysis of the physical remains, no cataloguing of eyewitnesses, no examination of seismic or thermal evidence, and so on. He was shooting in the dark, and he was silencing a journalist who was sincerely trying to discover the truth.

As we have discovered since that day, DeStefano's confidence was misplaced and his hypothesis was wrong. But his explanation appears to have succeeded in ending Aaron Brown's interest in the explosion hypothesis.

↑ **CBS and ABC**

The deployment of Strategy One was not unique to CNBC and CNN. Dan Rather, Peter Jennings and Tom Brokaw, the evening news anchors for CBS, ABC and NBC, respectively, all considered the explosion hypothesis at various points during the course of the day. Two of them, Rather and Jennings, were met with experts who apparently put an end to their curiosity.

In Rather's case, he was visited by a government official named Jerome Hauer. On 9/11, Hauer was director of the federal Office of Public Health Preparedness and was senior advisor to the Secretary for National Security and Emergency Management. In January 2001, Hauer had been hired to run a new crisis management group at Kroll Associates, the security consulting firm that had designed the security system for the World Trade Center complex in response to the 1993 bombing. And before that, from 1996 to 2000, he was director of the New York City Office of Emergency Management (OEM), where he was chiefly — and controversially — responsible for installing

the OEM’s Emergency Operations Center on the 23rd floor of World Trade Center Building 7, which would also collapse later that day.

A little after 12:00 PM on 9/11, Rather and Hauer had this exchange:

Rather: “Is this massive destruction of the World Trade Center — based on what you know, and I recognize we’re dealing with so few facts — is it possible that just plane crash could have collapsed these buildings? Or would it have required the sort of prior positioning of other explosives in the building? What do you think?”

Hauer: “No, my sense is that just, one, the velocity of the plane, and the fact that you have a plane filled with fuel hitting that building that burned. The velocity of the plane certainly had an impact on the structure itself. And then the fact that it burned and you had that intense heat probably weakened the structure as well. I think it was simply the planes hitting the building and causing the collapse.”

One would expect a national security official, especially one working for a company responsible for security at the World Trade Center, to be pursuing all possibilities. Indeed, we know that officials at the FDNY, the NYPD, and the FBI suspected that explosives had brought down the towers. Hauer’s confidence that explosives had nothing to do with the towers’ destruction, less than two hours after it had happened, is at best grossly irresponsible.

In the case of Jennings, he interviewed a structural engineer by the name of Jon Magnusson, who on 9/11 was a partner at the structural engineering firm that had designed the Twin Towers. Magnusson would go on to be a member of the FEMA Building Performance Study, the first official investigation into the Twin Towers’ and Building 7’s destruction.

Earlier that morning, upon learning that the South Tower had completely collapsed, Jennings remarked:

23. *The Triumph of the Official Narrative: How the TV Networks Hid the Twin T*

“We have no idea what caused this. If you wish to bring — anybody who’s ever watched a building being demolished on purpose knows that if you’re going to do this you have to get at the under infrastructure of a building and bring it down.”

Twenty minutes later, apparently having trouble accepting NBC reporter Don Dahler’s interpretation that the building had simply collapsed from the airplane impact and fires, Jennings said:

“I’m still desperately confused, John, about what may have caused the building to collapse.”

To our knowledge, Jennings did not articulate the explosion hypothesis after that point. Nevertheless, later in the day, Magnusson was brought on to explain to Jennings and millions of viewers why the buildings had collapsed. Magnusson’s interview on ABC was preceded by a pre-recorded piece that put forth the fire-induced collapse hypothesis, basing its claims on advice from engineers at Magnusson’s firm. Once the piece ended, Jennings began his interview with Magnusson.

Jennings: “This is the second time from Robert Krulwich and also from some architect engineers we talked with a little bit earlier that say it was the heat which caused the building to collapse, because the steel at the top of the building would maybe have only been able to sustain an hour, hour-and-a-half of intense fire, and then the steel begins — as Robert points out so clearly — collapse upon itself all the way down to the bottom.

“I think we have with us, on the phone or in person, from Seattle, Jon Magnusson, who is an engineer — Jon, are you there? — Jon Mangusson, who is with the company that actually built the World Trade Center towers. Jon, have you heard our two laymen explanations tonight of what it was we think collapsed the building? And do you agree or disagree?”

Magnusson: “I agree.... The description of the fact that steel, when it gets up to 1,500, 1600°F, that it loses its strength is accurate. The buildings actually survived the impact of both the planes. And it was really the fire that created the disaster.”

Jennings: “And the upper floor fell on the next floor down, which fell on the next floor, and the sheer accumulation of weight just forced the whole building to collapse on itself?”

Magnusson: “Right. From the videotape — and I can only go from what I’ve seen on television — but the videotape showed that several of the upper floors fell onto the next lower floor that was still intact. And once that happens, there’s going to be an instant overload situation. And then it will fail. And then that will drop down to the next floor, into another instant overload situation. And so the floors just progressively collapsed down all the way to the bottom.”

Magnusson was somewhat more cautious in his explanation than Gass, DeStefano and Hauer. At the same time, he was arguably the most equipped to recognize that the towers had possibly been destroyed with explosives, yet he advocated solely for the fire-induced collapse hypothesis. As a partner at the very firm that had designed the Twin Towers, his early endorsement of the fire-induced collapse hypothesis was essential in supplanting the explosion hypothesis.

Was it chance that led a series of “experts” to disarm these independent-minded news anchors with one false hypothesis after another? We think that is unlikely.

Consider that many building professionals and technical experts are known to have immediately suspected that explosives were responsible for the Twin Towers’ destruction. Notable examples of experts who first suspected explosives but then quickly changed their position include Van Romero, an explosives expert from New Mexico Tech, and Ronald Hamburger, a structural engineer who went on to work on the FEMA Building Performance Study and later on the NIST World Trade Center investigation. On 9/11, Romero 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 Center there were some explosive devices inside the buildings that caused the towers to collapse.’”

On September 19, 2001, Hamburger told the *Wall Street Journal*:

“‘It appeared to me that charges had been placed in the building,’...Upon learning that no bombs had been detonated, ‘I was very surprised.’”

Much like these experts, Dr. Leroy Hulsey, a professor emeritus of civil engineering at the University of Alaska Fairbanks who conducted a four-year computer modeling of Building 7’s collapse, has said that he told his students the week after 9/11 that the Twin Towers could not have collapsed in the way they did due to the airplane impacts and ensuing fires. Similarly, Dr. Fadil Al-Kazily, a civil engineering professor from Sacramento State, once commented to this author (Ted Walter) that he was not aware of a single colleague of his who believed the fire-induced collapse hypothesis.

So, how is it that every “expert” who appeared on national television that day advocated the fire-induced collapse hypothesis when there were so many who favored the explosion hypothesis?

Although it cannot be proven, we suspect that intentionality, coordination, and deception are on display in these interviews. We shall see even more of this in the deployment of Strategy Two.

Strategy Two for Accomplishing the Triumph of the Official Narrative: The War on Terror and Bin Laden Narratives

We tell ourselves stories in order to live, or to justify taking lives...tell ourselves stories that save us and stories that are the quicksand in which we thrash and the

well in which we drown.” — Rebecca Solnit, *The Faraway Nearby*

On 9/11, the power of narrative to evoke horror, anger and a call-to-arms was drawn on by one prominent television guest after another. Genuine evidence, such as was produced early in the day by eyewitnesses, was pushed aside by the two narratives outlined below — the quasi-metaphysical War on Terror narrative and the Bin Laden narrative, which nested within the wider War on Terror narrative.

To the extent that these narratives were convincingly conveyed to viewers, no further argument against the explosion hypothesis was necessary. The foreign evildoers had crashed airplanes into the buildings and the buildings had come down, and that was all one needed to know.

The process of sowing these two narratives relied in part on a propaganda technique visible throughout the day’s coverage. It may be called “normalizing the abnormal.”

A good example of this technique can be seen later in the day. Both *before* and *after* World Trade Center Building 7 came down, the television audience was led to believe that such an event was normal. After all, the building was on fire, so of course it might come down! This was exemplified by the captions that began running on CNN around 4:10 PM — “BUILDING 7 AT WORLD TRADE CTR. ON FIRE, MAY COLLAPSE” — and on Fox News around 4:13 PM — “TRADE CENTER BLDG 7 ON FIRE, MAY COLLAPSE” — both more than an hour before the building came down. Of course, no such building had ever come down from fire in a way remotely similar to Building 7. Nevertheless, the television networks portrayed this event as perfectly normal, to the point of being utterly predictable.

In the case of the War on Terror and Bin Laden narratives that were imposed on the attacks as a whole, viewers received a large dose of “normalizing the abnormal.” This massive, complex operation was almost immediately blamed on a relatively small and poorly funded non-state organization based far away in one of the poorest countries

of the world. It would have been far more “normal” for the operation to have been carried out by a well-funded military-intelligence apparatus. To exclude this more normal scenario in favor of a much more abnormal scenario required *quickly* setting forth the non-state terrorism hypothesis, almost *immediately* offering Osama bin Laden as the prime suspect, and choreographing the repetition of these ideas by various authorities.

As documented below, many claims were made about Osama bin Laden by the prominent television guests. On 9/11, these would have been seen by many as plausible, much like the statements by the building professionals brought on as experts. Many of us expected at the time that the claims made by these guests would soon be supported by actual, usable evidence. But this did not happen.

As this author (MacQueen) wrote in *The 2001 Anthrax Deception* (p. 31) of the period when the U.S. was making preparations for the invasion of Afghanistan:

“Secretary of State Colin Powell stated that the U.S. would soon be preparing, for the edification of the world, a document detailing evidence of Bin Laden’s guilt. When no such document was produced, the government of the United Kingdom stepped forward. The British document of October 4 [2001] was, however, astonishingly weak. The preamble noted that, ‘this document does not purport to provide a prosecutable case against Osama Bin Laden in the court of law’ even as it was purporting to provide something of much greater import: a *casus belli*. Indeed, the document consisted mainly of unverifiable claims from intelligence agencies, the evidence seldom rising to the level of circumstantial. Anthony Scrivener, Q.C., noted in *The Times* that, ‘it is a sobering thought that better evidence is required to prosecute a shoplifter than is needed to commence a world war [the War on Terror].’”

When the 9/11 Commission later produced its report in 2004, it was unable to support its central narrative with solid evidence and resorted repeatedly to using statements obtained under torture.

In other words, on 9/11, actual evidence usable in a court of law (eyewitness evidence of explosions) was defeated by claims that, however dramatically appealing, would not be admissible in a court of law.

↑ (a) **The War on Terror Narrative**

The story of the War on Terror, as publicly set forth on television on 9/11, is a story of evil and aggression, a story that extends into the future as the righteous take up the sword of justice and vengeance. This very broad narrative, of mythical dimensions, includes the following eight elements. (Not all speakers include all eight elements, but by the end of the day all eight had been articulated.)

1. Those who carried out the 9/11 operation were evil, a threat to all of civilization.
2. These “terror thugs” have carried out an act of war against the U.S., so the U.S. should recognize and accept that a state of war now exists.
3. States that support the terror thugs (for example, Afghanistan, allegedly supporting Bin Laden) are as responsible as the terrorists themselves for the evil deeds done, so the condition of war must extend to such supporting states.
4. Not only the 9/11 terrorists and their supporters but all terrorists who have expressed evil intentions against the U.S., together with their supporters — most of whom are explicitly named — are, from 9/11 onward, to be regarded as at war with the U.S.

23. *The Triumph of the Official Narrative: How the TV Networks Hid the Twin T*

5. This new and comprehensive war, known as the “War on Terror” or “War Against Terror,” is a metaphorical war (a vigorous striving, using all means, such as economic, political, and cultural), a spiritual war, and a literal war, waged with all military methods and technologies. The terrorists and their supporters, being evil, must be eliminated.
6. The righteous must not wait for the evil doers and their supporters to strike out but must take whatever actions are necessary to strike first.
7. All countries in the world must commit themselves to action within this global conflict framework. They must make a choice whether they will be on the side of the righteous or the side of the evil — there will be no middle ground.
8. Parties at one time enemies of the righteous (Russia, China, and “moderate” Arab states) should be permitted to join in the War on Terror.

Although Bush administration officials gave voice to these principles in various public speeches and policy statements over a period of time after 9/11, the principles were articulated publicly on television on the day of 9/11 itself and in some cases before noon.

Presented below are three examples of the development of this narrative on 9/11: one on Fox News (by Newt Gingrich, the former speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives), one on BBC (by Ehud Barak, the former prime minister of Israel), and one on CNN (by Richard Holbrooke, a former U.S. diplomat and assistant secretary of state).

Other speakers — whose words can be found in Appendix B, which contains statements setting forth the Bin Laden narrative — also articulated the elements of the War on Terror narrative.

Note: Although elsewhere in this study we have not used BBC footage, by a stroke of fortune Ehud Barak was in London on 9/11 and

was able to spend time in the BBC studio. We include his remarks as useful expressions of this narrative by a very prominent political player.

Videos of the Newt Gingrich and Richard Holbrooke interviews are presented below along with their transcripts. Videos of Ehud Barak appearing on BBC can be found in the Internet Archive's "[Understanding 9/11](#)" archive.

↑ (i) **Newt Gingrich, Fox News**

Fox News Anchor Jon Scott at 11:32 AM (less than three hours after the attacks began):

"The former Speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich, is joining us now from our Washington bureau. Newt, what's your reaction and what should be America's reaction to these developments?"

Gingrich:

"Well, first of all, I think, everyone's reaction has to be that this is a tragedy for the families that are directly involved — the families that were hijacked on those airplanes, the flight attendants, the pilots, the people who have died today in the World Trade Center and the people who have died today in the Pentagon. I think all of us have to reach out in our hearts to them. But beyond that, as a nation, this is a 21st century Pearl Harbor. This is a 21st-century kind of war. I think we need to refer to it as an act of war. This was not a random event by a random terrorist. This was a systematic, complex operation of military proportions undertaken cleverly by people who have state support and who only survive because they have the support of some states that protect them. And I hope that the American government, the President, and the American people will react to this as an act of war. This will be more casualties, I believe, than Pearl Harbor. It is at least as horrifying as Pearl Harbor. And it deserves a complete and total American response to ensure that it never happens again."

After remarks by Scott, Gingrich continues:

23. *The Triumph of the Official Narrative: How the TV Networks Hid the Twin T*

“This is a terrible event, but it will become even more terrible if it isn’t the basis of a deliberate, systematic and total American response.”

...

“We need to recognize we can only be a free society if we are prepared to relentlessly pursue and eliminate those who would engage in this kind of war against civilians and against a peaceful society.”

Scott at 11:36 AM:

“Newt Gingrich, you mentioned that there has to be a coordinated response by the United States. Obviously, it’s too early to know who is responsible. But let’s say that it turns out that Osama bin Laden is somehow behind this. So, what does America do — what kind of pressure can we bring to bear on the Taliban government that is harboring him that we haven’t brought to bear already?”

Gingrich:

“Well, let me just say that we don’t know yet who’s done this, and I don’t think we should rush to judgment, but it is fair to say that bin Laden has claimed credit for having sponsored and financed and structured earlier attacks on the embassies in Africa, for example. It is clear that three weeks ago bin Laden said he would strike the United States in the United States. And the only point I’d make today in the middle of a tragedy — I think we first have to take a deep breath and recognize how big this tragedy is for the American people. That — I don’t think we have to become paranoid, I don’t think we have to go into a bunker mentality — but for eight years we have said publicly that bin Laden is a major threat to the United States. And yet for eight years, while we have launched Tomahawk missiles, we’ve done other things, we haven’t taken him as seriously as he has taken us. And all I’m suggesting is that if we don’t have a decisive response to convince observers that you cannot kill innocent Americans in peace time without retaliation of severe proportions — that other groups

and other people will decide that the most open society in the world is also the most vulnerable and they'll exploit those vulnerabilities. I think this is as decisive a moment for our future as Pearl Harbor was in a different way. As I said earlier, this is a 21st century opponent, not an obvious nation state, but in the Sudan, in Afghanistan, in a number of other places, we know where bin Laden's assets are, and we'd need to take the risk of going after them."

Once again, at 1:29 PM, Gingrich has joined anchor Jon Scott. Gingrich says it's way too early to have sorted out responsibility for the attacks. Then he says:

"I must say though that to hear members of Congress complain about the intelligence service when the budgets have been too small, when for the last 25 years we've adopted rules that were tighter and tighter and stricter and stricter that made it virtually impossible for the American intelligence agencies to penetrate these kind of groups. I think that if the Congress really wants to be helpful they need to pass some immediate action that strengthens our intelligence capability. And instead of playing a blame game they need to take some responsibility for strengthening and enhancing our intelligence. And then I think the Administration has to reach out around the world and make quite clear that we are going to go after whoever did this and that people can decide either to be with the terrorists or to be with the Americans, but there's not going to be any middle ground and there's not going to be any neutrality in the process of getting even. This will turn out to be vastly worse in human life than Pearl Harbor [Fox was at that time estimating 10,000 dead]...this is an act of war..."

...

“I don’t believe this was done by a relatively small group. I don’t think you could have trained and prepared for this mission; I don’t think without sanctuaries, without people who are protecting them, without safe areas; without training camps. This was not prepared in a couple of mobile homes by a handful of fanatics. This is a well-financed, systematic act, and could not be sustained without the support of some very major states. And we have to make clear that we will not tolerate any nation harboring training grounds, preparation areas, or known fugitives, and that we will exert whatever level of pressure and force is necessary to get those people released. Bin Laden has been a known opponent of the United States for eight years, and we have not exerted the kind of pressure we’re capable of. This is an act of war against the American people, against freedom as the President said, and I think we have to react on behalf as we did in 1941 after Pearl Harbor. We have to react with total effort to make sure that this doesn’t happen again.”

↑ (ii) **Ehud Barak, BBC**

Immediately after the broadcast of a statement by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, at 11:28 AM Eastern, the anchor for BBC introduces Ehud Barak:

“Joining me now here in the BBC World studio is the former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak who’s in London at the moment. Mr. Barak, welcome to BBC World. First, your reaction, having heard what’s happened. At least four planes have been hijacked. And there may be more.”

Barak:

“The world will not be the same from today on. It’s an attack against our whole civilization. I don’t know who’s responsible; I believe we will know in 12 hours. If it is a kind of bin Laden organization, and even if it’s something else, I believe that this is the

time to deploy a globally concerted effort led by the United States, the UK, Europe and Russia against all sources of terror — the same kind of struggle that our forefathers launched against the piracy on the high seas.”

Anchor:

“In your position as Prime Minister, Defense Minister, also formerly in the army, were you ever aware of any incident planned like this?”

Barak:

“Not in the dimensions, but different elements were there. Clearly, there was an attempt on the Twin Towers a few years ago, there was an attempt to explode the Holland Tunnel leading into Manhattan. But of this size and a simultaneous attack — I don’t think that anyone had predicted it in advance.”

Anchor:

“Is it something that security services, intelligence services could ever have got wind of?”

Barak:

“I’m not sure, but this is not the case. It really happened in front of our eyes, and the question is: What should be done in regard to it in order to avoid it in the future? It’s going to be a tough struggle, there will be many tough and painful moments along the way. But I believe that if we will coordinate diplomatic, operational, intelligence and economic activities that will not let them land at any airport and will isolate automatically any nation that is ready to host terror or support them. By doing this consistently along six or ten years, we will reduce dramatically this challenge to all our way of life.”

Anchor:

“Your words, Mr. Barak, are very similar to the words used to justify missile defense in the United States, which may have taken another 10 or 15 years. Here we’ve seen low-tech, hijacked by those with evil intent.”

Barak:

23. *The Triumph of the Official Narrative: How the TV Networks Hid the Twin T*

“Yeah, I believe that it’s, first of all, missile defense is also something which we’ve clearly needed as long as [Anchor interrupts:”But it doesn’t stop something like this, does it;’] rogue states...It should be done, and it should be deployed maybe not on national level but only on trans-regional level to cover exactly the threat from rogue states like Iran, Iraq, or Libya. But in this area, we will suffer. It will not be so easy to go aboard an airplane in the near future. But we have no way but to stand firm facing terror. Otherwise, all our way of life will be threatened. And to stand firm means to isolate from the world every nation that is hosting them, and calling every terror thug with the accurate name and be ready with all the pains that come with it to act upon our observations.”

Anchor:

“What price might democracy have to pay, given what has happened in the last three hours in the United States, given what you’re experiencing now in Israel in the center of Jerusalem from your own citizens now, with the bombing over the weekend?”

Barak:

“There is no shortcuts, you know. Our civilization is already highly vulnerable. Look at the entrances to the gates of boarding airplanes. It’s a situation where it’s not easy. Every simple step crossing borders or going on a plane or on a ship will become more complicated. But, at the same time, it’s a time to identify — there are no more than five or six countries in the world which are directly or indirectly responsible for hosting terror. There are no more than ten or 15 terror thugs in the world. All the organizations are well known. The MI6 know all the information; the CIA know; the Mossad know it. And the same, the [inaudible] ... and it’s time for action. Facing such an attack, we cannot but act. And these terror thugs and rogue leaders are highly skillful in identifying the slightest cracks in the will of power, power of will, of the leaders of the Free World.”

Anchor:

“But let me press this point about democracy, and the price democ-

racy may have to pay, because you know very well that many passengers in the United States have long expected to be able to walk into an airport, get on a domestic aircraft unhindered within about ten minutes of the plane taking off—they expect that as a free country.”

Barak:

“And it’s a part of the problem that we have in a world which is so turbulent that we cannot, we won’t be able to isolate our advanced way of life from what happens around. And it’s a time to launch an operational, concrete war against...em...terror, even it takes certain pains from the routine activities of our normal society.”

Anchor:

“Now, Mr. Barak, you have deep problems, greater tension in the Middle East at the moment, but you’ve used there a war against this kind of terrorism. What can be done, because the great thing that is talked about by people like you—diplomats, politicians, world leaders—is preventing conflict before it happens. When you talk about a war, how do you take a war, or a challenge, or a struggle to those who are determined, through three or four people only today, to hijack four planes—at least, as we know—hit the Pentagon, hit the World Trade Center, try and hit, we believe, somewhere else—how do you take a war to four people?”

Barak:

“I spent decades struggling terror almost, you know, with my ten fingers together with a lot of colleagues all around the world. I believe that the world intelligence community in a concerted effort can identify within few months the sources of this terror. They can identify the places where they are deployed on earth. Every such a place is within certain country. Bin Laden sits in Afghanistan. There is a source of terror...”

Anchor, interrupting:

“But who else [audio not clear] would you identify though? Because we’re not saying he’s responsible for this necessarily.”

Barak:

23. *The Triumph of the Official Narrative: How the TV Networks Hid the Twin T*

“No, no. We don’t say that he’s necessarily responsible. We know where other terror thugs are living. We know that [audio unclear] Central Asia is a major route for drugs but at the same time a major route for terror, and I know that President Putin is highly committed to the struggle against terror, and I feel that he should be part of this international effort. I believe that the MI6 is highly capable—you have proven it along decades. Your own skills in standing firm politically, and acting pointedly, operation against terror. And we should cooperate...”

Anchor:

“Preemptively?”

Barak:

“Both preemptive and by diplomatic means, namely rogue states. There are five of them: Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea. These kind of states should be treated as rogue states. And the same applies to, even to leaders like Arafat. We’ve heard him just recently condemning this — I praise him for this condemnation, but he personally is responsible for many terror events that happened in the last few years. Same happened in some other capitals in the Middle East.”

The above Barak interview is later repeated in full at least twice. At 12:10 PM Eastern, the anchor tells viewers he had Barak on earlier and that Barak thought this was “an attack on civilization.” We then get a replay of the entirety of the earlier Barak interview. At 1:28 PM Eastern, the same anchor again tells us of his interview with Barak, and he then replays the entire interview again.

At 4:12 PM Eastern, a different newscaster is hosting. He says:

“Well, I’m joined here in the studio now by Ehud Barak, who until earlier this year was the Prime Minister of Israel; by James Rubin, who was President Clinton’s Assistant Secretary of State; and by Rosemary Hollis, of the Royal Institute of International Affairs.

“Mr. Barak, first of all, should we see this as an act designed to

draw attention to what is happening in the Middle East, or should we see it as something quite separate from that?”

Barak:

“It’s clear that the whole Western civilization is at war with world terror. It might have some kind of indirect relationship to something that happened in Afghanistan or somewhere else in the Middle East, but this is not the case. Once they are ready to hit the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, it means that we are basically at war. And I am fully confident the American people, which is a tough and courageous people, and have tough leadership at the helm, they will know how to fight back, and I believe that leaders all around the world, here in the UK, in Europe, in Russia — the Russians will fully cooperate with this—Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Israel of course, and others should join hands to defeat terror, period. We cannot afford this kind of threat to our whole way of life.”

At 4:20 PM Eastern, the anchor asks Rosemary Hollis if she agrees with Barak’s position and the equally bellicose positions of others being interviewed. She says:

“Well, I think there’s a concern here, because we’re building a case during the course of this program which leans heavily on the verdict that taking it out in retaliation on Osama bin Laden will be the appropriate way to respond. Now, I imagine that means a bombing raid on Afghanistan. What about all those poor Afghans who have nothing to do with Osama bin Laden and who would not be willing supporters of the Taliban government even in Afghanistan if they had any choice? This means, in the terminology of war, collateral damage. This in itself is not resolution of a problem; it’s building more hatred and the perception that the United States wields power without compunction. That is something to be aware of.”

23. *The Triumph of the Official Narrative: How the TV Networks Hid the Twin T*

Barak's response:

"I don't see that the collateral damage is the real issue at stake now. Look at the collateral damage, so to speak, that happened in the United States. We're dealing with a world effort, not necessarily Osama bin Laden himself. We all know the names of rogue states: Iraq, Iran, North Korea, Qaddafi to an extent, maybe one more. We all know the names of rogue leaders and the name of thugs of terror. And their names are known to the MI6, to the CIA, to the [inaudible]. And there is a need for joint effort—diplomatic, economic, intelligence-wise and operation-wise. The same way our ancestors fought against the piracy on the high seas. No airport and no port terrorists should be allowed to land, and whoever host them, directly or indirectly support them, should be automatically isolated from the community and family of nations. This is the only way. Without this clarity of purpose there will be no world order possible, period."

Hollis:

"Well, we're talking about declaring war and you're talking about doing it in protection of democracy and you're talking about sacrificing some of that democracy in the prosecution of that war..."

Barak (interrupting):

"I'm not...weapons these days are accurate enough, it's not a matter — I don't want to go into the operational details. Once there is a will, a clear will of world leadership to put an end to it, it will take a lot of painful moments

- ups and downs and even tough moments like this one
- but we will prevail and democracy will overcome this phenomenon of terrorism in ten years.”

↑ (iii) **Richard Holbrooke, CNN**

Richard Holbrooke at 1:23 PM:

“I need to underscore one point. To find the people responsible is going to take a unified international effort. No one nation, not even the United States, can do it on its own. We must have the full cooperation of the Russians, of the states in the Middle East — I think the assumption that that’s the region where this was planned —and — and I repeat this again — any nation that is seen to have harbored or abetted or sheltered any of these people must be treated as co-equally responsible. They cannot hide behind the facade we just saw in the remarks of the Taliban Foreign Minister. And Peter Bergen’s extraordinarily insightful explanation a few minutes ago on CNN, I think, is the first real glimpse into...that the viewers have had into how dangerous this is. If the Taliban shelters Osama bin Laden, as they do, and if Osama bin Laden is responsible for this, as, I think, almost everyone is going to suspect, then the Taliban must be held equally responsible for what has happened today.”

Jeff Greenfield then asks:

“Ambassador Holbrooke, what — I’d like you to be specific — what does that mean? Are you talking about a retaliatory strike...[Greenfield continues in this vein]?”

Holbrooke:

23. *The Triumph of the Official Narrative: How the TV Networks Hid the Twin T*

“Jeff, let me be very frank—and I don’t want to lapse into bloody-minded verbal excesses at a moment of high emotion. But let’s be very blunt about this. If a country, or regime — the Taliban or some other regime to be determined by the intelligence community — has sheltered people who played a role in this, they cannot hide behind the attributes of ‘they didn’t know it, they had nothing to do with it.’ They must cooperate in the pursuit of the people responsible. And since the Taliban leader has been publicly proclaimed by Osama bin Laden as the present spiritual leader of the Muslim world — I’m referring to bin Laden’s declaration that Mullah Mohammed Omar is the rightful spiritual leader of the Muslim world, something he said on tape, quoted by John Burns in the New York Times two days ago. And if, in fact, these people are in some degree of collusion, I personally believe — and I’m only speaking for myself here — I personally believe that the Taliban should be regarded as co-equally responsible for this, and therefore, if and when we consider military action, it is fully justified and the Taliban should face the same consequences.”

Holbrooke then appears again on CNN at 7:48 PM, about six hours later:

“In the past, Osama bin Laden and other terrorists, who do not represent national governments — a distinction which is critically important — but are sheltered in various countries in the world, including Afghanistan, sometimes North Korea, Iraq, Libya, have played this shell game, where the government that shelters them and protects them says, well, we don’t know where they are. I think it is absolutely essential for the United States to lead an international effort now that makes clear that

any country [video of dust and injured people and rescue workers in Manhattan playing in background while he's talking] which shelters people is part of an act of war against the United States. The United States, Paula [Zahn], cannot make the response alone ... Unless we have international united front of the European allies, the Russians, the Chinese, and — and I want to stress this — the moderate Arab states, which must close ranks to get the extremists who are behind this, we're not going to be able to succeed.”

...

“Any government which shelters the people who did this has to be held equally responsible for it as an act of war. And we are going to have to mobilize an international coalition for that position as we prepare to take the necessary military responses. [He says he is in agreement with Henry Kissinger on this.]... John King and others on your excellent coverage have suggested that the administration is 90% sure it's Osama bin Laden. If some countries don't participate, let them understand that they're joining a coalition of terrorists who have declared war on the United States.... Osama bin Laden is not a government, but if he is indeed, as the Administration appears to believe, behind this, anyone trafficking with him should be on notice that that is tantamount to an act of war by a government.”

↑ (b) **The Bin Laden Narrative**

In this narrative, the War on Terror narrative is personified in an evil individual, the Saudi and former U.S. ally Osama bin Laden. Less mythical and more political, this narrative is supported with reasoning and with what appears at first blush to be evidence.

23. *The Triumph of the Official Narrative: How the TV Networks Hid the Twin T*

In our view, the simple identification of the perpetrator, which happens early in the day, is key to this propaganda method. Equally simple, and equally important, is the constant repetition of the name of this designated perpetrator — a means of crowding out other possibilities.

Bin Laden's name was repeated on television so many times during the day that we have not attempted to make a list of each mention. We have, however, listed the most important mentions of Bin Laden during the day on two networks, Fox News and CNN. Altogether, our list totals 56 mentions on Fox News between 9:03 AM and 4:32 PM and 69 mentions on CNN between 9:55 AM and 10:50 PM. These are given chronologically, in the order in which they occurred on 9/11, in Appendix B.

Journalists play an important role in keeping the designated perpetrator in front of the public, so we have listed their names below. But the weight of respectability is achieved through dignitaries and experts, so we list them first. The dignitaries and experts who appeared on television on these two networks to lend weight to the Bin Laden narrative are given with their main titles or qualifications as of September 2001.

In total, we counted 13 promoters of the Bin Laden narrative on Fox News and 18 promoters of the Bin Laden narrative on CNN. All of them made strikingly similar claims, none of which could ever be substantiated with evidence capable of being presented in a courtroom.

↑ **Fox News**

Dignitaries

Alexander Haig General, U.S. Army; U.S. Secretary of State; U.S. White House Chief of Staff

Newt Gingrich U.S. Representative; Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives.

Sandy Berger U.S. National Security Advisor

Lawrence Korb Captain, U.S. Navy; Assistant Secretary of Defense; Member, Council on Foreign Relations ; Co-author, “Integrated Power: A National Security Strategy for the 21st Century”

Lawrence Eagleburger Secretary of State

Professor Barry Levin Terrorism Expert

Robert Maginnis Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army; Fox News military analyst

Journalists

Jon Scott Journalist and News Anchor, Fox News

Rita Cosby Journalist, Fox News

David Shuster Journalist, Fox News

Shepard Smith Journalist, Fox News

John Gibson Journalist and Co-anchor, Fox News

Tony Snow Journalist, Fox News (later White House press secretary)

↑ CNN

Dignitaries

Wesley Clark General, U.S. Army (retired, 2000); Supreme Allied Commander Europe of NATO (1997-2000)

Orrin Hatch U.S. Senator, Utah

Richard Holbrooke U.S. Diplomat; Assistant Secretary of State (twice)

William Cohen U.S. Representative; U.S. Senator; Secretary of Defense (1997-2001)

Lawrence Eagleburger Secretary of State

John Kerry Naval Officer; U.S. Senator

L. Paul Bremer Foreign Service; Chairman of the National Commission on Terrorism (appointed 1999)

James Baker White House Chief of Staff (twice); Secretary of the Treasury; Secretary of State

23. *The Triumph of the Official Narrative: How the TV Networks Hid the Twin Towers*

Bill Richardson U.S. Representative; U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations; Secretary of Energy

Julie Sirrs Military analyst, U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency, specializing in bin Laden and the Taliban

Journalists

Aaron Brown Journalist and News Anchor, CNN

John King Journalist, CNN (senior White House correspondent)

David Ensor Journalist, CNN (national security correspondent)

Judy Woodruff Journalist and Co-anchor, CNN

Paula Zahn Journalist and Co-anchor, CNN

Wolf Blitzer Journalist and Co-anchor, CNN

Peter Bergen Journalist and Terrorism Analyst, CNN

Jeff Greenfield Journalist and Senior analyst, CNN; Former Speechwriter for Senator Robert F. Kennedy

↑ **How the Stories Worked to Favor One Hypothesis of the Destruction of the Twin Towers**

As the two stories were spun on television throughout the day of 9/11, both the testimony of eyewitnesses and the explosion hypothesis based on their testimony gradually faded into the void.

The story of the evil attackers appeared to assume, even though this was seldom directly stated, that the buildings were simply knocked down by the airplanes. Precisely how these airplane impacts could have destroyed these buildings in the way witnessed was not explained, beyond the vague and erroneous statements by a few engineers. Essentially, the viewing public was encouraged to feel that it must have happened this way, and they were not encouraged to inquire deeply into the “how” of it. This process was greatly aided both by the emotions encouraged by the stories and by a well-known logical fallacy, the *post hoc* fallacy.

The *post hoc* fallacy involves the erroneous conclusion that because x comes after y, y must have caused x. In the present case,

the fallacy took the form: Planes crashed into buildings and afterwards the buildings came down; therefore, the plane crashes caused the buildings to come down.

The viewing public, it was assumed, would be easily captured by the gripping stories, and in their infantile mental state would never notice the flawed reasoning or inquire into the details of the matter.

↑ How the Stories Suited the U.S. Temperament

The stories promoted on television on 9/11 fit the American psyche like a glove. One of the most prevalent and deeply cultivated political and moral stories of the 20th century for U.S. citizens is the story of aggression. Germany was found guilty of aggression after both WWI and WWII. Japan was accused of an “unprovoked attack” in the Pearl Harbor event that was used to bring the U.S. into WWII. Since Nuremberg, “Communist aggression” became a widely used phrase and a pillar of the Cold War. The Gulf of Tonkin incident, for example, was in this way made into a pretext for massive U.S. military involvement in Vietnam.

It is not our intention to review each of these events. We believe the aggression claims in the above incidents range from fully justified through weak to fabricated. What matters here is that the U.S. national psyche was programmed to believe readily in external aggression against the U.S. and its allies, whereas aggression issuing from the U.S. or its allies was impossible to conceive, was simply outside the national narrative.

↑ Narrative versus Evidence

Had a proper investigation been initiated on 9/11, based on the experience and reasoning presented on television that day, every one of the journalists who directly witnessed explosions at the time of the Twin Towers’ destruction would have been able to offer courtroom-worthy evidence. They would have been able to recount what they

themselves had perceived with their senses.

By contrast, not one of the journalists or prominent persons on Fox News and CNN promoting the War on Terror and Bin Laden narratives would have been able to offer comparable evidence. They would have fared badly in a courtroom, having nothing to offer but speculation and hearsay.

However gripping their stories, story is not evidence.

Conclusion

We may summarize our findings on the 9/11 psychological operation by listing nine of the major propaganda elements at play that day.

First, however, let us remember a central fact lying beneath and behind the nine elements — namely, that on 9/11 television was used to evoke shock and confusion in U.S. citizens, and in citizens around the world, by transmitting the horrific images of the day. No words, no analysis, can compete with the images of the airplane strikes, the disintegrating towers, and the shocked reactions of people on the scene.

Such shock ensures that critical thinking will be at a low ebb, while old loyalties and a desire to pull together in the face of violence will be very powerful. We have not studied this aspect of the operation in this article, but all nine elements below must be understood in this context.

1. Identify the chosen perpetrator quickly. (Jon Scott on Fox News names Bin Laden approximately 42 seconds after the second airplane strike.)
2. Repeat this suspect's name very frequently, not allowing any other possibility to compete. (Fox News carried at least 56 important mentions of Bin Laden and CNN carried at least 69 in the hours of news coverage we studied.)

3. Make a variety of claims and suggestions about the perpetrator that make his/her guilt appear likely — no actual evidence necessary — and intimate that intelligence sources are, somewhere behind the curtain, building a strong case that we will eventually see.
4. Make strategic use of selected “experts.” If news anchors are toying with heretical hypotheses about the destruction of the Twin Towers, bring building professionals in to set them straight — as before, no actual evidence is necessary.
5. Normalize the abnormal. Make it seem as if it is natural that this massive and complex operation could have been carried out by Bin Laden’s crew, and do not mention the state organizations far more suited to the task.
6. Do not hesitate to make use of flawed logic where it is helpful — we have given post hoc ergo propter hoc as the example that supports the fire-induced collapse hypothesis.
7. Tell gripping stories and repeat them throughout the day. Link these specific stories to Grand Narratives fundamental to the nation, such as those of aggression and savagery.
8. Push aside actual courtroom-worthy evidence (such as eyewitness evidence) explicitly when necessary, as through the use of select “experts”; otherwise erase such evidence indirectly through dramatic story-telling that appears to support the official hypothesis being constructed.
9. Make profligate use of state authorities. Citizens reduced to a state of fear will be open to hearing from a former Secretary of Defense, even if what he has to offer is thin gruel.

To study the day’s events as they unfolded on television is to experience in a shockingly direct way how a well-oiled propaganda

23. *The Triumph of the Official Narrative: How the TV Networks Hid the Twin T*

system — of which television is a central component — can spin grand and lethal yarns that silence the citizens who experience, who witness, who suffer, and who constitute the epistemic backbone of democracy.

The ability of this propaganda system to achieve the triumph of the Official Narrative in a matter of hours suggests to us that while good science is necessary for dispelling the Official Narrative, alone it may not be sufficient.

Oftentimes, researchers (engineers, scientists, academics, etc.) carry on their research as if they were merely studying the natural world — a world that has no interest in the researchers and does not look back at them. But in cases such as 9/11, researchers are working within an intellectual context shaped by an intelligent opponent. This opponent is neither inert nor disinterested, but looks back at the researcher. It has intentionally laid down sets of false claims and dead-end trails and can be expected to continue to do so.

This does not mean that researchers and activists should give up their focus on good science. Rather, it means that those who are dedicated to revealing the truth about 9/11 must think deeply about how to carry out good science *and* good communication within the specific context of a still-ongoing psychological operation.

Evidence could not stop the Official Narrative from triumphing on 9/11, and evidence alone will not defeat the Official Narrative now.

**24. Appendix A: Statements by
News Anchors and Guests,
and Lower Third Captions**

Part IV.

Postscript

Postscript

by Dave Ratcliffe



The gleaming critical analysis presented in this volume covers genuine living history of our post-WWII world, beginning during the period when U.S. federal covert agencies stepped into the big time with political assassinations, including [Patrice Lumumba](#), [John Kennedy](#), [Malcolm X](#), [Martin King](#), [Robert Kennedy](#), [Fred Hampton](#) and [John Lennon](#). The center of this book is concerned with the acts that followed these assassinations, the one-two punch operation of the 11 Sep 2001 bombings followed by the anthrax attacks.

The purpose of producing this volume is to manifest what Graeme wrote of in an early draft of the Preface: "If we in this social movement of 9/11 dissent are not willing to tell our own stories, who

Postscript

will tell them? Wikipedia? [†][††][†††] A graduate student somewhere keen to impress his or her advisor by exposing ‘conspiracy theories?’ ”

Today’s (2020-2023) ongoing three-year psychological operation Fear and Chaos takes things a step beyond the 2001 scenarios, implementing what Vincent Salandria explained **over a half-century ago in 1971**:

[S]ecret elitist police organizations such as the CIA do not thrive on peace, democracy, and a contented and informed people. The power of intelligence agencies increases in direct proportion to the degree of sickness of a nation. A healthy and united people can localize the cancer of a power-usurping intelligence agency and eventually extirpate its malignant cells from the nation’s political life. Therefore, the intelligence apparatus which killed Kennedy has a need to keep our society in turmoil. It has—in order to maintain its power—to generate a high degree of chaos. Chaos is required to make a people willing to accept such strong medicine as is administered by the secret police in order to restore order and to stabilize a disintegrating society. It takes an acutely sick society to be able to accept as palatable the terrible cure—totalitarianism.

The relentless 24/7 print, broadcast, and digital “programming” by corporate empire state press organs is a compelling and deadly soporific for humanity. Throughout my life, I am increasingly driven by a need to understand how our world actually operates. Not the fantasy projections of how and why things are the way they are which the system of corporate governance hands down from on high, but rather the living, genuine past that informs the present.

Consider the root basis of what is termed, in the present epoch, the United States.

Since the 1970s, Shawnee/Lenape scholar [Steven Newcomb](#) has been decoding the Domination System that began with the arrival of Europeans in the Western Hemisphere. His cogent analysis includes the core understanding that, “The words that we use create and maintain the reality that we experience.” In a wide-ranging [2012 presentation](#), Newcomb illustrates and deconstructs the framework for [Doctrines of Domination](#) within 15th Century Vatican Papul Bulls and their Latin language meaning that form a [Protocol of Domination Vocabulary](#). This language continues to be fundamentally operative in today’s world. Colonization, in what Newcomb terms [the Empire Domination Model of Christianity](#), has a dual purpose of both the taking of Original Free Peoples’ lands and lives throughout the world as well as colonizing consciousness and thought patterns. As he [describes an instance of this](#):

Cultivate in Latin is *colere* which means to colonize and to design. The root of colonization is colon which is the digestive tract of the body politic, to extend that metaphor. But *colo* in Latin is to filter out impurities in the process of mining. So the background context is [the mining](#) and that means [mining everything](#) for profit, for wealth and so forth—power. The root impetus to the entire thing is greed, the will to domination; the will to be enriched in order to gain more power.

The obdurate, relentless drive for more power and control is a constant in the true history of the current corporate empire state called the United States. As John Kirby shared with me regarding this volume of Graeme’s essays, “his considerable powers make him a formidable voice who balances outrage and brilliance with profound empathy for the human condition.” Given today’s system of Warp Speed Propaganda, striving to operate as a black hole subsuming every trace of the past in an enchantment of illusion, there is a need to create reflections of our genuine history to neutralize this abyss of

Postscript

non-being.

Kirby's appreciation of Graeme's profound empathy for our fragile, irreplaceable, and gifted human family is a key to this nonpareil collection. A sliver of Graeme's understanding of how our world actually operates is found in these passages:

18 Mar 2018

Our task is clear. We must mobilize both our investigative resources and our communication resources to nullify the efforts of those who specialize in the construction and encouragement of war triggers and who wish to keep the war system robust. We lost over 100 million people to war in the 20th century. Are we really going to let this happen again?

- [Triggering War: The Urgent Need to Understand Catalytic Events that Initiate War](#)

22 Nov 2018

There is something I have always found arresting about the grassy knoll, and my concerns extend to the suppressed witnesses of September 11. In both cases we have ordinary folks—people like ourselves—who are, supposedly, citizens of a democracy. They are also, as far as we can tell, of sound mind and body, able to perceive with their senses and assess with their minds. Yet, all of a sudden, when their bodies and minds tell them something that conflicts with a government dictum, they are considered by government of no more political competence than cattle. I find it hard to think of a greater insult to these “good citizens” and to the notion of democracy, and I find it hard to think of a more brash assertion of the principle of authority.

[JFK 55 Years On: Casting Light on the JFK Assassination as well as 9/11 and Other 21st Century Crimes](#)

8 Sep 2022, with Ted Walter To study the [11 September] day's events as they unfolded on television is to experience in a shockingly direct way how a well-oiled propaganda system—of which television is a central component—can spin grand and lethal yarns that silence the citizens who experience, who witness, who suffer, and who constitute the epistemic backbone of democracy. The ability of this propaganda system to achieve the triumph of the Official Narrative in a matter of hours suggests to us that while good science is necessary for dispelling the Official Narrative, alone it may not be sufficient.

Oftentimes, researchers (engineers, scientists, academics, etc.) carry on their research as if they were merely studying the natural world — a world that has no interest in the researchers and does not look back at them. But in cases such as 9/11, researchers are working within an intellectual context shaped by an intelligent opponent. This opponent is neither inert nor disinterested, but looks back at the researcher. It has intentionally laid down sets of false claims and dead-end trails and can be expected to continue to do so....

Evidence could not stop the Official Narrative from triumphing on 9/11, and evidence alone will not defeat the Official Narrative now.

[The Triumph of the Official Narrative: How the TV Networks Hid the Twin Towers' Explosive Demolition on 9/11](#)

In these writings, Graeme's clarity of heart and mind lights the

Postscript

way, dispelling today's orchestrated mind-fog shaped 24/7/365 by the intelligent opponent authoring and directing the Official Narrative. The box office "success" since the 2001 release of the Global War on Terror Movie has deliberately grossed uncountable and unconscionable loss of life throughout Mother Earth, as well as exponentially increasing despair and a sense of meaninglessness.

In a 2017 exchange with Marty Schotz, Vincent Salandria, Ed Curtin, William Whitney, Rodolfo Cardona, and me, Graeme wrote about the process he explored in writing [Beyond Their Wildest Dreams: Sep 11 2001 and the United States Left](#). His motivation was "to understand how people come to know the world and how we can open up closed minds." He explained some of this as his "imagination approach" in the following:

I adopted the word [imagination] from German philosopher Gunther Anders, whose 1962 article, [Thesis for the Atomic Age](#) had a big effect on me over the years as a peace and environmental activist. Anders said that in the nuclear age we are doomed if we don't have imagination. He said,

The basic dilemma of our age is that "We are smaller than ourselves," incapable of mentally realizing the realities which we ourselves have produced. Therefore we might call ourselves "inverted Utopians": while ordinary Utopians are unable to actually produce what they are able to visualize, we are unable to visualize what we are actually producing.

He also said that escapists of today do not hide in imagination, they hide in the ivory tower of perception, because the senses are "'senselessly' narrow." So, he was giving a power to this word "imagination" that we don't

normally give it. “Imagination” is what we give ourselves to when we have the courage to face the world, to actually visualize what is going on. It is, he says, part of the courage to be afraid.

The imperative of having the courage to truly face the world right now—which is part of the courage to be afraid—is the polar opposite of the manufactured epidemic of fear that has colonized so many minds and hearts over the past three years. A dress rehearsal for today’s campaign to merge “national security”—read: corporate aggrandizement, consolidation, and greed founded on lies and deception—with the oxymoron of biosecurity was the 2001 anthrax attacks.

Graeme’s 2014 book, *The 2001 Anthrax Deception: The Case for a Domestic Conspiracy*, is THE go-to account of how “the group that carried out this crime consisted, in whole or in part, of insiders deep within the US state apparatus” and how the “anthrax attacks were meant to facilitate a seizure of power by the executive branch of government through intimidation of Congress and US civil society. They were also designed to achieve public acquiescence to and support for the redefinition of US foreign policy, replacing the Cold War with a new and aggressive global conflict framework, the Global War on Terror.”

After almost two decades of the Official Narrative of fighting Endless Terror, the enemy was superseded with a far more frightening menace: an invisible, non-human monster that, the world was told, would kill millions in the U.S.. The new mantra inaugurating the biosecurity state was unveiled in March 2020 with the incantation: *Two Weeks To Flatten The Curve*. From this, a historically unprecedented global “lockdown”—previously termed house arrest—was instituted in unprecedented singular lockstep by national governments, beginning an unprecedented experiment in medical and political history. The threshold breached turned weeks into years with the consequent ongoing bid to expropriate inalienable rights in service to

Postscript

the *stay safe* playbook.

My past three years have been spent studying the intellectual context of the intelligent opponent's endgame. The resulting trilogy catalogs some of the dimensions of the new Lockdown World-Mind movie: [Apprehending the False Promise of Biosecurity](#) (Nov 2020), [Conscience and The Nuremberg Code](#) (Oct 2021), and [History Will Not Absolve Us](#) (Dec 2022).

One of many obvious indicators of the opponent's intentionally directed psychological operation was—and remains—the question of why, in April 2020, the only “solution” announced from on high was that we had to wait for an experimental gene therapy injection for every human being on Mother Earth while simultaneously denying approval of [Chloroquine](#), [Hydroxychloroquine](#), [Ivermectin](#), [Budesonide](#), [Vitamin D](#), and a host of other [effective, safe, and cheap](#) repurposed drugs as [efficacious remedies available in 2020 to successfully treat C19](#).

The obvious answer: if repurposed drugs were acknowledged by officialdom to be effective, proven treatment protocols to prevent and treat COVID, then the Emergency Use Authorization—which was/is only valid ***IF*** “[there are no adequate, approved, and available alternatives](#)”—would be invalid.

Tess Lawrie, MD, PhD, has been called [The Conscience of Medicine](#). In March 2022, she succinctly summarized the intellectual opponent's C19 deception:

... what's really important about ivermectin is [it's] the key to unlocking all the secrets of this pandemic.... hydroxychloroquine was squashed as well, and if ivermectin or hydroxychloroquine had been approved, there would have been no lockdowns, there would have been no masking or any of that necessary because they're really good at reducing transmission. Ivermectin especially [as] it works for prevention as well as treatment. There would have been no Emergency Use

Authorization of experimental novel treatments and that includes the new gene-based vaccines. If you want to understand what Covid is all about then [you've got to start with ivermectin](#) and that really unlocks the whole mystery.

The mechanism whereby the intelligent opponent's Official Narrative has been perpetrated and perpetuated is the truly fearsome power of [State Censorship & Gagged Thought](#). *The* key that has locked everything up, making all the unspeakable, criminally unaccountable injury and death possible—right before everyone's eyes—is the suppression of all information, analysis, and open debate about the wisdom and intelligence of so-called democratic governing policies. Censorship is the ultimate tool to smother and extinguish the free exchange of ideas and from this, the freedom to think, free from any external influence or coercion.

Robert Heinlein captured [the essential power exercised by censorship](#) in his 1949 novel, *Revolt in 2010*. The story revolved around efforts to overthrow a 100-year theocratic totalitarian United States of America:

I began to sense faintly that secrecy is the keystone of all tyranny. Not force, but secrecy ... censorship. When any government, or any church for that matter, undertakes to say to its subjects, "This you may not read, this you must not see, this you are forbidden to know," the end result is tyranny and oppression, no matter how holy the motives. Mighty little force is needed to control a man whose mind has been hoodwinked; contrariwise, no amount of force can control a free man, a man whose mind is free. No, not the rack, not fission bombs, not anything—you can't conquer a free man; the most you can do is kill him.

Postscript

The lies and intentional deceptions are mountainous, as partially reflected in the horrifying risks and consequences of the C19 experimental injections and that the C19 injection program is a DOD Military Prototype Project.

For example, for two years, the *nom de plum* Spartacus, writing under the aegis of Institute for Coronavirus Emergence Nonprofit Intelligence (ICENI: “We maintain no member rosters. Anyone is ICENI. No one is ICENI. The simple act of researching COVID-19 on your own initiative in good faith makes you one of us.”), has demonstrated very detailed expertise in the medical science field, producing voluminous critical analysis. See, for example, **PSA - Why You Shouldn't Take the Vaccine - A highly condensed primer on why these vaccines are so dangerous** 25 Feb 2023, and the densely detailed timeline, **COVID-19: The Biodefense Mafia - Tyranny comes, wearing the cloak of biosecurity and biodefense** 13 Feb 2023.

Recently, I completed making annotated transcripts of the five-part documentary series released earlier this year and directed by Vera Sharav: **NEVER AGAIN IS NOW GLOBAL**. Ms. Sharav is the founder and president of the Alliance for Human Research Protection. From the Press Release:

This ambitious film project is the brainchild of Holocaust survivor and human rights activist Vera Sharav. The series addresses the many parallels between the Holocaust and the last three years of lockdowns and coerced medical procedures. It's rooted in Sharav's experiences both as a survivor and as the mother of Amikhai Sharav, a young man who died as the result of taking a prescribed medication whose risks had not been disclosed to the public.

In our world today, the final bid is being made in the long history of the **Doctrine of Domination**, to end the charade of so-called democratic governance and institute a genuine **Digital Dark Age**.

Finding the courage to grapple with this profoundly fearsome situation is paramount to the successful continuance of the human project. Each of us is answerable to our Creator. Each of us has an immutable relationship with the source of our existence. The ineffable mystery we each embody is eternally framed in the wonder of whatever is *really* going on here. To confront, explore, and visualize the darkness of how our world actually operates is beautifully expressed by James Douglas, author of *JFK and the Unspeakable - Why He Died and Why It Matters*, in a 2008 talk he gave about his then-newly released book:

It's that everything [in the Cold War in 1962-1963] was totally out of control and then, through a kind of incredible process where these two men were communicating secretly with each other over the year previous [Sep 1962-63], and smuggling letters back and forth to each other, in the midst of this conflict, they were beginning to trust each other.... It's a remarkable process. And it's all beneath the surface. But so are all the things that count as Merton understood.... And that's why I have some hopes that if we are willing to go deeply enough into the darkness—and Kennedy was, and Khrushchev was—anything can happen for the good. But if we don't go into the darkness it doesn't happen.

Having the courage to [go into the darkness](#), to [face the world and actually visualize what is going on](#), opens us up to unlimited conscious awareness of what can be.

[Patrice Lumumba](#) was an Indigenous Tetela/Bantu leader who was the first prime minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Speaking at the Pan-African Conference in August 1960, [he addressed](#) what Africans had to do after formal emancipation from colonialism:

Postscript

[S]ooner or later we would have to review everything...and think everything through.... We knew that we would have to create new structures...to revise the methods that had been forced upon us and above all to rediscover our most intimate selves and rid ourselves of mental attitudes and complexes and habits that colonization had trapped us in for centuries.



In all this, the irreducible reality of every person's birthright autonomy, being ultimately answerable only to one's Creator, gives us unbridled freedom to decide what we will do with these utterly mysterious lives we've been given. Understanding is based on recognition of the fact that in each moment, I choose to interpret what I

Postscript

perceive in precisely the way I *choose* to interpret it. *I* choose. No one else is response able for my state of psychic being. This makes me absolutely accountable to my self for the psychic reality I construct in each moment. This response ability exists within each of us. Life perpetually invites us to see and act upon this constantly changing but ever-present opening to greater wholeness. The choice is ours alone to make.

Graeme's meditation teacher, [Kathleen MacKay](#), says with great wisdom in a recent letter:

So many of us are living with (under) currents of intensity and seemingly overpowering emotions just below the surface, and yet, there is a 'chop wood, carry water' path through it all—the threat of loss or pain looms, so what do we do? We make dinner. We make the bed. We walk in the woods. We lie in a soft pool of sunlight on the rug and pet the cat. We cry... In short, we Live. And somehow, by the raw and perfect grace of Love's inexorable momentum, somehow it all works itself out. Do not ask me how. I am too busy standing in awe of the perfection—bright and clear, like winter sun—with eyes blurred with tears...

It is with profound gratitude that I have been invited by Life to assist Graeme in the production of this digital book. His devotion and commitment to furthering the creative evolution of the human project is absolute, affirmed by exercising his imagination to face the world and actually visualize what is going on here. From his courage to experience the fear of opening up to this and presenting his understanding of its meaning, we are gifted with a beacon providing illumination and understanding for all who likewise have the courage to plumb the darkness—for the sake of all, and all beings yet unborn on Mother Earth. We were born with a sacred obligation to be true to our Creator, true to our selves, and true to our single, human family.

To be of use

by Marge Piercy

The people I love the best
jump into work head first
without dallying in the shallows
and swim off with sure strokes almost out of sight.
They seem to become natives of that element,
the black sleek heads of seals
bouncing like half-submerged balls.

I love people who harness themselves, an ox to a heavy cart,
who pull like water buffalo, with massive patience,
who strain in the mud and the muck to move things forward,
who do what has to be done, again and again.

I want to be with people who submerge
in the task, who go into the fields to harvest
and work in a row and pass the bags along,
who stand in the line and haul in their places,
who are not parlor generals and field deserters
but move in a common rhythm
when the food must come in or the fire be put out.

The work of the world is common as mud.
Botched, it smears the hands, crumbles to dust.
But the thing worth doing well done
has a shape that satisfies, clean and evident.
Greek amphoras for wine or oil,
Hopi vases that held corn, are put in museums
but you know they were made to be used.
The pitcher cries for water to carry
and a person for work that is real.

