

WHITE PAPER



9/11: A Brief History and A Case Study of America's Worst Terrorist Attack

*Report of SAC LSUS for the 9/11
Symposium, September 10, 2016*

Gary D. Joiner, PhD.

Alexander Mikaberidze, PhD.

W. Christopher Hale, PhD.

Michael Bronner

Ashley Dean

Warren Ward

W. Lane Callaway

Dennis Pinner

*Prepared for
The Strategy Alternatives Consortium
Lt. General USAF, (ret.) Robert J Elder, Jr.
Senior Advisor*

STRATEGY ALTERNATIVES CONSORTIUM

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Gary D. Joiner, Ph.D.

Dr. Gary D. Joiner received a B.A. in history and geography from Louisiana Tech University, a M.A. in history from Louisiana Tech University and a Ph.D. in history from St. Martin's College, Lancaster University in the United Kingdom. He is a Professor of History at Louisiana State University in Shreveport and serves as the Chair of the Department of History and Social Sciences, where he holds the Mary Anne and Leonard Selber Professorship in History and serves as the Director of SAC LSUS and the Red River Regional Studies Center.

Dr. Joiner is the principal author of prior SAC LSUS White Papers including *OPERATION SENIOR SURPRISE; The Secret Squirrels and the opening of Operation Desert Storm* and *DETERRENCE: A Brief History and a Case Study in Cold War Practice, Part I: 1945 – 1953*. He is the author or editor of 26 books including: *History Matters, Shiloh and the Western Campaign of 1862, One Damn Blunder From Beginning to End, Through the Howling Wilderness, The Red River Campaign: The Union's Last Attempt to Invade Texas, No Pardons to Ask Nor Apologies to Make, Little to Eat and Thin Mud to Drink, Mr. Lincoln's Brown Water Navy, The Red River Campaign: The Union's last Attempt to Invade Texas, The Battle of New Orleans: a Bicentennial Tribute, Red River Steamboats, Historic Shreveport-Bossier, Lost Shreveport: Vanishing Scenes From the Red River Valley, Historic Haunts of Shreveport, Historic Oakland Cemetery, Wicked Shreveport, and Legendary Locals of Shreveport*. Dr. Joiner is also the author of numerous articles and technical reports and served as a consultant for ABC, the Associated Press, A&E Network, C-SPAN, the Discovery Network, Fox News, HGTV, the History Channel, MSNBC, MTV, SyFy Channel, and Louisiana Public Broadcasting among others.

Alexander Mikaberidze, Ph.D.

Dr. Alexander Mikaberidze is the Sybil T. and J. Frederick Patten Professor of History at LSUS. He holds a graduate degree in international law from Tbilisi State University and worked as an international law expert at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia (1996-2000), where he handled relations with the Council of Europe. In 2000, Dr. Mikaberidze moved to the US to pursue his doctorate in history, graduating from Florida State University in 2003. He is the chair of the Literary Prize Committee of the International Napoleonic Society and a board member of the Consortium on the Revolutionary Era.

Dr. Mikaberidze has taught history at Florida State University and Mississippi State University and lectured on strategy and policy at the U.S. Naval War College and US Military Academy. He is an award winning author and editor of almost two dozen books on military history of Europe and the Middle East. Most recently, he has participated in the writing of the critically acclaimed *West Point History of Warfare*, official military history textbook of the US Military Academy. He is also a co-author of the SAC LSUS White Papers *OPERATION SENIOR SURPRISE; The Secret Squirrels and the opening of Operation Desert Storm* and *DETERRENCE: A Brief History and a Case Study in Cold War Practice, Part I: 1945 – 1953*.

W. Christopher Hale, Ph.D.

W. Chris Hale is an Associate Professor of Criminal Justice and Program Director at Louisiana State University Shreveport. He received his Ph.D. in Criminal Justice from Sam Houston State University in August 2005. He earned his M.S. in Experimental Psychology from Emporia State University and earned a B.S. in Psychology from Kansas State University. He is a former member of the United States Army Reserve. Prior to LSUS, he was the Associate Director of Information Technology for the Institute for the Study of Violent Groups, where he developed and administered a database capable of tracking thousands of global and domestic extremist groups. He has published and presented research in the areas of cybercrime, terrorism, and intelligence analysis. Dr. Hale is a member of several professional organizations, including the Terrorism Research Center, Proteus Management Group, Armed Forces Communications & Electronics Association, American Society of Criminology, and the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences.

Michael Bronner

Michael Bronner is a highly acclaimed author, film producer, director and journalist. He served as co-producer of *Captain Phillips* (2013), *Green Zone* (2010), *National Geographic: Inside 9/11* (one episode, 2006), *United 93* (associate producer), and *60 Minutes Wednesday*, (Television miniseries co-producer, 2000 – 2005). He is a founding editor of *Warscapes*, an independent online magazine that provides insight into current conflicts worldwide.

Mr. Bronner's research and writing for *United 93* in 2006 led to one of the first Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests concerning 9/11. His article on the events of 9/11 from inside the NORAD command post in upstate New York, "9/11 Live: The NORAD Tapes," published in *Vanity Fair* on October 17, 2006, remains the gold standard for readers and researchers about the chaos, confusion, and heroism as the hijacking events unfolded.

Ashley Dean

Ashley Dean is a graduate student at Louisiana State University Shreveport. She received a B.A. in history in 2015 and is currently pursuing a Master of Liberal Arts and Sciences at LSUS. She is the senior graduate assistant for SAC LSUS. She is a co-author of the SAC LSUS White Paper *DETERRENCE: A Brief History and a Case Study in Cold War Practice, Part I: 1945 – 1953*.

Warren G. Ward

Warren G. Ward, Colonel USAF (retired) hails from Ashdown, Arkansas. He earned a BS in Electrical Engineering from Louisiana Tech University in 1985, a MS in Systems Science from LSU-Shreveport in 1992 and a MS in Military Operational Arts and Sciences from Air University in 1999. He was a command pilot with more than 3,400 hours in the B-52G, B-52H, T-37B and T-38A/C aircraft. Significant flight experience includes the first operational use of the Conventional Air Launched Cruise Missile during a 35.4-hour sortie beginning Operation Desert Storm and later circumnavigating the earth during a non-stop 47-hour sortie in 1994. He commanded a Basic Military Training squadron from 2004-2006 where his team trained more than 10,500 recruits to replenish USAF combat capability. He also served on the United States Strategic Command staff and the Headquarters Eighth Air Force staff before retiring in 2010. As a civil servant, he is currently the

Deputy Chief of the Programming Division, Air Force Global Strike Command responsible for long-range resourcing for the entire B-1, B-2, B-52, UH-1N and ICBM fleets for the USAF.

William Lane Callaway

William Lane Callaway served in the United States Army as an Infantry Officer, serving in increasing levels of command and operations staff as well as joint service (nuclear and country desk) duties in the United States, Germany and Korea retiring at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He is currently the Historian of Headquarters Eighth Air Force at Barksdale AFB. A native Shreveporter, Lane has a Bachelor's degree in History from Northwestern State University, Masters in History from the University of Kansas as well as two business-related degrees from Webster University and graduated from several military command and staff schools. He has earned numerous military and Department of the Air Force civilian awards and decorations. Lane possesses for-profit business experience. He recently finished six years (2010-2016) serving on the Board of Directors, Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation and currently is a Special Advisor to that Board. He was the inaugural Chair of the Shreveport Historic Preservation Commission for three years (2013-2016) and continues serving as a Commissioner. Lane makes his home in Shreveport.

Dennis W. Pinner

Dennis W. Pinner is the 2d Bomb Wing Historian, Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana. He is responsible for providing historical services to the Wing Commander and 19 squadrons within four groups chronicling every significant event undertaken by the wing as a result of its multidimensional operational missions. He prepares a classified historical account of wing assigned activities and an unclassified annual heritage pamphlet. He also conducts in-depth studies on significance of heritage and the combat history of assigned or formerly assigned tactical and support groups/squadrons. Additionally, he manages approval for unit emblems and deploys in support of various unit and/or Air Force Global Strike Command taskings.

Mr. Pinner is the recipient of the Meritorious Service Medal (with 3 Oak Leaf Clusters), Air Force Commendation Medal (with 3 Oak Leaf Clusters), Joint Service Achievement Medal, Air Force Achievement Medal, Air Force Good Conduct Medal (with 1 Silver Oak Leaf Cluster and 1 Oak Leaf Cluster), National Defense Service Medal (with 1 Bronze Service Star), Korean Defense Service Medal, Southwest Asia Service Medal (with 1 Bronze Service Star), Kosovo Campaign Medal, and the Armed Forces Service Medal.

PREFACE

The Strategy Alternatives Consortium (SAC) was developed to advance national policies, plans, strategies, programs (resources), and professionals to enable strategic alternatives development. Initially, the Consortium consists of two parts. External to the Louisiana State University System is a non-LSUS 501(c3) organization comprised of retired senior officers from the United States Air Force and other branches, active duty officers and professional analysts as well, that act as a project initiating, outside funding source (if available), and co-sponsor for symposia and publications. This entity is the Strategic Alternatives Council. The second unit, the Strategic Alternatives Center operates under the umbrella of the LSU System 501c 3 status as a non-profit and all accounting is conducted through LSUS. LSUS houses and maintains all office space and computer access.

The Strategic Alternatives Consortium (SAC) at LSUS (SAC-LSUS) examines strategic issues and events across time and regions, offers analysis and define outcomes, and identifies alternative solutions. SAC-LSUS is the focal point in collecting, synthesizing, and archiving data. The unit also acts as a single point of contact for information, inquiries, and requests for information from the Strategic Alternatives Consortium collaboration network (as entities in other academic institutions are added), public and news media. This includes being as well, the one-stop distribution point for Strategic Alternatives Center papers, presentations, and other materials as appropriate.

The Strategy Alternatives Consortium's goals are: (1) Identify major strategic events or processes, (2) Provide results to agencies or clients, (3) Deploy the results in publications, symposia, and to the public, and (4) Educate leaders, professionals, students and the public.

The Strategy Alternatives Consortium's objectives are: (1) Identify and clarify positions of strategic thought, (2) Educate the anticipated audience of these findings, and (3) Publish the results to enhance future outcomes.

SAC-LSUS serves to further the mission of the United States Air Force Global Strike Command. The Center provides a multi-disciplinary approach to strategic issues faced by the United States Air Force and Department of Defense. The central mission of the Center is to examine issues brought forth in direct contact with Air Force and Department of Defense officials and provide in-depth analysis of emerging issues. LSUS's close proximity to Barksdale Air Force Base has historically had, and continuing through today, provides close ties with base personnel and leadership.

Many faculty members have close relationships with Barksdale Air Force Base either through continued direct contact or retirement. Among the historians at LSUS, Dr. Gary Joiner (Professor and Chair of the Department of History and Social Sciences) has worked with the Eighth Air Force Museum (now Global Airpower Museum) at the base, advising on curation of the collections and cataloguing objects. During 2012-2014 Dr. Joiner committed to an eighteen month-long assistance to both the Eighth Air Force general staff and Global Strike General Staff in commemorating the 70th anniversary of the creation of the Eighth Air Force, the 60th anniversary of the B-52, and the 40th anniversary of the Linebacker II operations in the Vietnam War, which drove the North Vietnamese to the negotiating table and effectively ended that war. At the end of this effort early in 2014, Dr. Joiner worked with retired Air Force Lt. General Robert Elder to create a symposium at Barksdale Air Force Base to coincide with the annual Air Force-wide bombing competition. The result was a well-received symposium featuring Dr. Joiner and Dr. Alexander Mikaberidze (Associate Professor of History at LSUS) lecturing to the Global Strike and Eighth Air Force leadership, headquarters staff, and air crews. Dr. Joiner's topic detailed the use of air power as a strategic and tactical deterrent in Operation Northern Watch and Operation Southern Watch between Operation Desert Storm and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Dr. Mikaberidze's lecture covered the development and changing environment of

the Soviet and later Russian Air Force from 1970 to the present. This symposium was the impetus for the development of the Strategic Alternatives Center. The result is an ongoing relationship between LSUS and these commands with the intention of widening the scope of symposia and scholarly white papers and to bring historical and geopolitical events into focus for Air Force decision makers and other interested agencies and partners.

Barksdale Air Force Base was created in the mid-1930s as a major expansion of U.S. Army Air Corps presence in the South. The original concept of the airfield being home to the 3rd Tactical Air Wing changed with World War II, when Barksdale Airfield became the home of bomber training for B-17, B-24, B-26 and B-29 bombers. It also served as home for anti-submarine bomber patrols in the Gulf of Mexico during World War II. After the war, and with the creation of the Department of the Air Force, Barksdale became the headquarters of the Second Air Force and took on the mission of hosting B-47 and later B-52 strategic nuclear bombers. At the close of the Vietnam War in 1975, Barksdale became home of the Eighth Air Force, which remains there today. In addition, with the realignment of strategic forces, Barksdale is also the headquarters of Global Strike Command, which controls all nuclear capable war fighting assets in the United States Air Force. The Center and Louisiana State University as whole, are committed to this endeavor.

Executive Summary

Tuesday morning, September 11, 2011, is a seminal date that all Americans alive at that time will remember and carry with them throughout their lives. Since that Tuesday morning, the United States has waged constant war, either with nation-states or non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The lines of battle in this war are not distinct, sometimes waged on the peripheries of nations that have proven to be lukewarm allies or outright failed nation-states. New forms of fighting have resulted. New alliances have been created and some broken. The fact that 9/11 changed America's worldview is an understatement. The focus of this project is to define what led up to that fateful day. How did America become the focus of such wrathful, destructive desires?

The authors divided the subject into ten chapters which can be studied separately or combined to provide a more concise overview of the personalities and events leading up to 9/11 and the immediate response to the events unfolded. The origins of the events of 9/11 are murky and can be traced to the mid-twentieth century. As the timeline approaches the day of the attacks, a clearer depiction of actions become well organized.

Chapter 1 describes, as the chapter title suggests, "the end of innocence." America was self-absorbed following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. This chapter focuses on that insular view and provides an introduction to the events of 9/11.

Chapter 2 details the litany of warnings that led to the attacks of 9/11, events that occurred, signals missed, and lessons learned and those unheeded. The warnings missed are the most grievous through four presidencies and six administrations.

Chapter 3 follows the philosophical trail of the modern jihadists, tracking the progression of anti-Western, anti-moderate ideologies. The chapter places events from the 1950s through 2000 in context and bolsters the concepts brought forward in Chapter 2.

Chapter 4 follows the trail of the conspirators that carried out the 9/11 attacks. Little information has come forward about these men outside official documents. Fortunately, their story can be constructed. It is reasonable to ask the question, "Why were they allowed into the United States with legitimate visas and why were they not tracked by authorities?" The answers to these questions are defined for the reader to decide.

Chapter 5 uses the Chapter 8 of the Final Report of the 9/11 Commission to describe the months leading up to the attacks. No better rendition exists. This chapter ties in chapters 1, 2, and 4 to set the stage for 9/11.

Chapter 6 is the second-by-second activities within the North American Air Defense Command's (NORAD) Northeast Air Defense Sector (NEADS) operations center in upstate New York. These Air Force personnel were the first to identify the hijacked aircraft and began the coordination in an attempt to stop them. They were the only frontline unit controlling responses that day. *Vanity Fair* magazine published an article by Michael Bronner, "9/11 Live: The NORAD Tapes," of the first account of NEADS activities through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request on October 17, 2006. The article was groundbreaking in several respects. It was the first of its type. Bronner was allowed to interview those crewmembers that were in NEADS that day. *Vanity Fair* has agreed for SAC to use this article and Michael Bronner is listed as a full co-author. We appreciate both in this endeavor. Links are provided to the *Vanity Fair* article, and, within that piece, readers can listen to portions of the audio tapes generated. Links are also provided to listen to the full audio files of the military tapes housed in the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

Chapter 7 provides a synthesis of thousands of hours of audio, video, text message, and still photography files located in NARA. Links are provided to 47.61 gigabytes (GB) of these records. Contained in this digital folder are 1, 677 individual files from every microphone, video link, and still photo folder generated that day by NEADS, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) air traffic controllers (TRACON) in Boston, New York, Washington, D.C., and other TRACON centers, New York Fire Department (FDNY), New York Police Department (NYPD), and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey Police Department (PAPD). Several thousand hours of this data exist. *The New York Times* created a synthesis of what they believed were pertinent portions of this material and published them with interactive maps of the courses of the airliners and the reactions of the first responders. A link has been provided to the NYT website as well.

Chapter 8 follows the first responders of the FDNY, NYPD, and other metro New York agencies in responding to an event that would overtax any metropolitan emergency teams in the world. Lists are provided of personnel losses by Fire Company and battalion, police department, and emergency medical response units.

Chapter 9 describes the activities and movements of President George W. Bush and his team on 9/11 beginning in Sarasota Florida, then following the flight of Air Force One, and actions to protect him. Among the events of that day, particular attention is paid to the President's landing at Barksdale Air Force Base in Bossier City, Louisiana and his first address to the American public.

Chapter 10 provides information on actions taken in response to the events of 9/11. The changes in the legal system, new agencies and departments created and the ramifications on American society are discussed.

This paper forms the third portion of a multi-part project that will trace deterrence theory and practice from the end of World War II through the end of the Cold War and beyond. SAC LSUS is committed to the concept of taking complex issues and distilling often disparate information into a digest format for military civilian leaders, and others in the public interest.

Gary D. Joiner, Ph.D.
Director, SAC LSUS
Shreveport, Louisiana
September 2016

ABBREVIATIONS

AA – American Airlines	FAS – Federation of American Scientists
ABC – American Broadcasting Company	FBI – Federal Bureau of Investigation
ADL – Anti Defamation League	FDNY – New York City Fire Department
AFIO – Authorization for Interceptor Operations	FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Administration
ALCM – Air Launched Cruise Missiles	FISA – Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978
ANO – Abu Nidal Organization	FLETC – Federal Law Enforcement Training Center
AOR – Area of Responsibility	FOIA – Freedom of Information Act
ARMCO – Arabian American Oil Company	GIA – <i>Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya</i> also EIJ
ATC – Air Traffic Controller (TRACON)	GIA – Algerian Armed Islamic Group
AWAC – Airborne Warning and Control Aircraft	HAMAS – Islamic Resistance Movement
BBC – British Broadcasting Company	HUM – Harakat ul-Mujahidin
BCE – Before the Common Era (A.D.)	IA – U.S. Marine Corps, Intelligence Activity
BOAC – British Overseas Airways Corporation	IAF – Israeli Air Force
CAP – Combat Air Patrol	ICBM – Intercontinental Ballistic Missile
CBS – Columbia Broadcasting System	ICE – Immigration and Customs Enforcement
CBP – Customs and Border Protection	ICITE – Intelligence Community Information Technology Enterprise
CGI – Coast Guard Intelligence	IDF – Israeli Defense Forces
CIA – Central Intelligence Agency	ID-Techs – Air Force radar intercept controllers
CNN – Cable News Network	IG – Inspector General
CONR CC – NORAD Continental United States Command Center	INR – U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research
CONUS – Continental United States	INS – Immigration and Naturalization Service
CSG – Counterterrorism Security Group	INSCOM – U.S. Army, Intelligence and Security Command
DAT – Digital Audio Tape	IRS – Internal Revenue Service
DCA – FAA code for Reagan National Airport	IS – Islamic State (Caliphate)
DCI – Director, Central Intelligence	ISIS – Islamic State in Syria, also IS, ISIL, Da'esh
DEA – Drug Enforcement Administration	ISR – U.S. Air Force, Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance
DHKP/C – Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front	IT – Information Technology
DHS – Department of Homeland Security	JFK – John F. Kennedy International Airport, New York
DIA – Defense Intelligence Agency	KSM – Sheikh Khalid Mohammed
DO – Director of Operations	LAT/LONG – Latitude and Longitude
DOD – Department of Defense	MAK – <i>Maktab al-Khadamat</i>
DOE – Department of Energy, Office of Intelligence and Counterintelligence	MCC – Mission Crew Commander
EADS – Eastern Air Defense Sector (NORAD)	MOSSAD – Israeli Intelligence Service, <i>HaMossad leModi'in uleTafkidim Meyuhadim</i>
EDT – Eastern Daylight Time	NARA – National Archives and Records Administration
EIJ – Egyptian Islamic Jihad	
ELT – Emergency Locator Transmitter	
EMT – Emergency Medical Technician	
EU – European Union	
FAA – Federal Aviation Administration	

NASDAQ – National Association of Securities Dealers
 Automated Quotations
 NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization
 NBC – National Broadcasting Network
 NCA – National Capital Area
 NEADS – Northeast Air Defense Sector (NORAD)
 NGA – National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency
 NGO – Non Governmental Organization
 NIDS – National Institute for Defense Studies (Tokyo)
 NIMA – National Imagery and Mapping Agency
 NLETS – National Law Enforcement
 Telecommunications System
 NORAD – North American Air Defense Command
 NORDO – No Radio Contact
 NPR – National Public Radio
 NRO – National Reconnaissance Office
 NSA – National Security Agency
 NSB – Federal Bureau of Investigation, National
 Security Branch
 NSC – National Security Council
 NSLU – National Security Law Unit
 NYPD – New York Police Department
 ODNI – Office of the Director of National Intelligence
 OIA – U.S. Department of the Treasury - Office of
 Intelligence & Analysis
 OIPR – Office of Intelligence Policy and Review
 ONI – Office of Naval Intelligence
 PA – Public Address
 PAN AM – Pan American Airlines
 PAPD – Port Authority of New York and New Jersey
 Police Department
 PBS – Public Broadcasting Service
 PDB – President’s Daily Brief
 PLF – Palestine Liberation Front
 PFLP – Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
 PFLP-GC – Palestinian Front for the Liberation of
 Palestine – General Command
 PIJ – Palestine Islamic Jihad
 PLO – Palestinian Liberation Organization
 PNP – Philippine National Police
 PSWG – Protective Services Working Group
 PWHCE – Perspectives on World History and Current
 Events
 PWSG – Protective Services Working Group
 RADES – Radar Evaluation Squadron

RAF – Royal Air Force
 SEADS – Southeast Air Defense Sector (NORAD)
 SEIB – Senior Executive Intelligence Brief
 SIGINT – Signal Intelligence
 SITREPS – Situation Reports
 SST – Supersonic Transport
 THREATCON – Threat Condition
 TMU – Traffic Management Unit
 TRACOM – Air Traffic Control (Iers)
 TSA – Transportation Security Administration
 TSC – Terrorist Screening Center
 TWA – Trans World Airlines
 UK – United Kingdom
 UA – United Airlines
 UAE – United Arab Emirates
 UAL – United Airlines
 UBL – Usama [Osama] bin Ladin
 UNEF – United Nations Emergency Force
 UPI – United Press International
 USC – United States Code
 USCG – United States Coast Guard
 USIS – United States Citizenship and Immigration
 Service
 USMA – United State Military Academy at West
 Point, New York
 USSTRATCOM – United States Strategic Command
 VFR – Visual Flight Rules
 VJ Day – Victory Over Japan Day
 WJLA – ABC Channel 7, Washington, D.C.
 WPIX – WB Channel 11, New York City
 WTC – World Trade Center
 Z – Elevation in feet, in aircraft, also flight level
 ZULU – Greenwich Mean Time or Universal Standard
 Time

CHAPTER 1

THE END OF INNOCENCE: THE WEEK BEFORE

"I only remember it as the last memory of a different life."
Michael Gershon¹

September 11, 2001, was a pivotal date in the history of the United States, indeed in the rest of the world, that it has simply achieved the abbreviation of 9/11. Other dates over the past century have achieved that notoriety and, even infamy. Among them are the end of World War I at 11 p.m. on November 11, 1918, (Armistice Day, and later Veterans Day). To those old enough to remember it, the abbreviation was 11-11-11. October 29, 1929, became forever known as Black Thursday for the day the stock market crashed in New York, plunging America and Europe into the Great Depression. Sunday, December 7, 1941, achieved its status due to the sneak attack by the Empire of Japan on the principal U.S. naval base in Hawaii. It is now remembered as Pearl Harbor Day. Sunday, September 2, 1945 was the end of World War II, with the surrender of the Empire of Japan in Tokyo Bay aboard the U.S. Battleship *Missouri*. It is simply referred to as VJ Day. Friday, November 22, 1963, is the day that President John Fitzgerald Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, Texas. Sunday, July 20, 1969, heralded the landing on the moon by astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin.

Tuesday, September 11, 2001, catapulted into the list as the date America witnessed the horrific suicide attacks by radical Muslim conspirators aboard American-owned commercial airliners on the two tallest buildings in New York City and the Pentagon building across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C. A fourth aircraft was brought down by passengers before it could reach another target in Washington, believed to be either the White House or the Capitol Building. In each case, those living through the event knew exactly where they were at the instant the news broke. It marked their lives as a seminal moment, never to be forgotten, always to be carried in their hearts and minds and recalled on each anniversary.

Each brought an end to normalcy, changing the country's attitudes. This work attempts to define September 11, 2001, as the beginning of the world in which we live. What happened immediately prior to the attacks? Who carried them out? Why was the United States targeted? Why were we caught by surprise? How did we respond? What are the enduring legacies from the tragedies of 9/11?

Fully fifteen years after the 9/11 attacks, it is difficult to remember what people were doing and talking about during the previous days and weeks. That complacency evaporated at 8:47 a.m. that Tuesday morning (Eastern Daylight Time) when the first plane slammed into the twin towers of the World Trade Center. Placing the week prior to the attacks in context provides a clear view of what the world was like before everything changed.

In Politics – President George W. Bush had begun to push for a forward antimissile defense program to counter possible Russian aggression against Europe and the United States. Senator Joe Biden (Democrat -

¹ Michael Gerson was the chief White House speechwriter under President George W. Bush. Joel Achenbach, "The lost world of 9/10: The Sept. 11 attacks and the end of American Innocence," *Washington Post*, September 10, 2011.

Delaware) openly criticized the program, hoping to delay or eliminate funding for the research and development phase of the program on September 10.² This was the beginning of a major effort by the Democratic National Committee to thwart the President's initiative.³ Bush's closest advisors, including Defense Secretary Robert Gates and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, were advocates of the plan. The President spent so much time promoting the plan and pushing for a rollback of the then current anti-ballistic treaty that he was later accused of all but ignoring the threat posed by nongovernmental organization (NGO) terrorist cells.⁴

Millionaire businessman Michael R. Bloomberg and Herman Badillo, among others, spent the evening of Monday, September 10, worried that bad weather would drive people away from the polls the following day. Both sought the Republican nomination to succeed Mayor Rudy Giuliani as mayor of New York City.⁵ The primary was rescheduled to late September due to the attacks. WPIX newscaster Kaity Tong reported the story with the New York skyline behind her. The most prominent structures were the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center.⁶

Michael Gerson, President Bush's principal speech writer, spent that Monday crafting a speech, "Communities of Character," concerning civil engagement. It was never delivered by the President.⁷

President Bush spent Sunday, September 9, at the White House. The National Football League 2001 season was to begin the next day with



Figure 1. Screenshot of WPIX 11 (WPIX (New York City WB Channel 11), on their 10 p.m. (EDT) newscast (www.PIX11.com).

² *Washington Post*, September 10, 2001; Massimo Calapresi, "Behind Bush's Missile Defense Push"; Megan Angelo, "These were SUPPOSED To Be The Big Headlines on September 11, 2001"; *Business Insider*, September 11, 2011.

<http://www.businessinsider.com/september-11-2001-2011-9?op=1>

³ Robin Wright, "Democrats Plan Attack on Missile Defense," *Los Angeles Times*, September 10, 2001.

⁴ *Time Magazine*, June 5, 2007.

⁵ *New York Daily News*, September 10, 2001; WPIX (New York City WB Channel 11) evening broadcast September 10, 2001.

Video of first 11 minutes of the broadcast are found on *New York Daily News* website <http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/video-haunting-news-headlines-evening-sept-11-2001-article-1.1451389>; Angelo, "These were SUPPOSED To Be The Big Headlines," *Business Insider*, September 11, 2011

⁶ www.PIX11.com

⁷ *Washington Post*, "The lost world of 9/10: The Sept. 11 attacks and the end of American Innocence," September 10, 2011.

Monday Night Football. The President, surrounded in the Rose Garden by Pop Warner League children football players from the metro Washington, D.C. area, tossed a coin to determine which team would kick-off on opening day. The coin landed tails up.⁸

President Bush flew to Florida on Monday morning, delivering a speech on one of his central domestic policy themes, literacy and education. He delivered a speech in Jacksonville in which he said “It’s so much easier to watch TV and not read. And yet you learn so much more when you read. Reading is essential. And we’ve got to get it right as a nation.”⁹

First Lady Laura Bush entertained Janette Howard, the wife of Prime Minister John Howard of Australia, on September 10. After lunch she worked on a briefing to be delivered the next day to the Senate Education Committee. Later, her in-laws, former President George H.W. Bush and his wife, Barbara, came to the White House to spend the night.¹⁰

International News – Alexander Lukashenko, the incumbent President of Belarus, won a rigged election on September 9, with an overwhelming 77.4% of an overall turnout of 83.95% of the nation’s electorate.¹¹ The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe affirmed that the electoral process was “not democratic,” nor “free and fair.”¹²

Violence continued in Afghanistan as an opposition leader was injured in a bomb blast.¹³

The *Los Angeles Times* reported on September 10 that U.S. Navy sources indicated that an oil tanker (ship) was ablaze, attempting to smuggle Iraqi Oil.¹⁴

European ministers had gathered the previous week and announced on September 10 that they backed a new security force to help stabilize Macedonia.¹⁵

The lowest caste in India, the “untouchables,” were converting to Buddhism in increasing numbers.¹⁶

Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq, Tariq Aziz, briefed President Saddam Hussein, showing a model of the new *al-Amiria* shelter in Baghdad on September 3. The shelter was hit during the Gulf War in 1991, killing more than 400 occupants.¹⁷

Air France began retraining Concorde Supersonic Transport (SST) crews for a return to trans-Atlantic service on September 4. This followed the grounding of the fleet after a catastrophic crash outside Paris that killed 133 people in July 2000. The first flight took off from Charles de Gaulle Airport, north of Paris.¹⁸

Business – Elaine Kurtenbach of the Associated Press reported that China, with the world’s fastest growing economy, faced potential crisis in its business model and the global economic system.¹⁹

⁸ United Press International (UPI), September 9, 2001.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ National Public Radio (NPR), “The Day Before America Was Interrupted: Nine People Recall Sept. 10, 2001,” aired September 9, 2014.

¹¹ Dieter Nohlen and Philip Stöver, *Elections in Europe: A data handbook* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 2010), 252.

¹² BBC News, “Belarus vote “neither free nor fair,” September 10, 2001.

¹³ Associated Press “Afghan Opposition Leader Hurt in Blast,” September 10, 2001.

¹⁴ *Los Angeles Times*, September 10, 2001.

¹⁵ Multiple wire services including Reuters and Associated Press, September 10, 2001.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Alan Taylor, “9/11: The Week Before,” *The Atlantic*, September 7, 2011.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Elaine Kurtenbach, “China Faces Potential Crisis, Despite Economic Growth,” the Associated Press, September 10, 2001.

During the week before the attacks on New York and Washington the New York Stock Market reacted to wild swings in the markets both in Europe and Asia, which led to massive losses. The Dow Jones Industrial Average began Monday morning down 11% but fought back up 0.34 points, finishing at 9,605.11.²⁰ NASDAQ, which had suffered a 32% drop during 2001, including 6.5% the preceding week, recovered half of one percent that day, finishing at 1,695.38.²¹



Figure 2. The Monday evening storm rolls over Manhattan on September 10, 2001.

Photo by Evan Kuz. Posted on ABC News Australia.

Image taken from the grounds of the Statue of Liberty.

(<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2011-09-05/evan-kuz-sept-102c-2001/2863826>)

Weather – The Associated Press reported on Monday that a large storm, Hurricane Erin, a Category 3 storm, brushed by the island of Bermuda doing little damage.²² The sun set in New York City at 7:06 p.m., but no one saw it. A sudden storm dumped .41 inches of rain on the city.²³ The ABC Washington affiliate, WJLA Channel 7, noted during the 11 p.m. newscast that the storm was out at sea and the rain that it had brought would end that evening and the next day would be bright and sunny.²⁴ The day had been warm and humid, but a cold front swept down from the north that day, bringing strong winds and rains on New York City.²⁵ The cold front brought lightning, flooding, and two people were hit by lightning.²⁶ This front pushed Erin out to sea, 400 miles east of the city. In the New York area, stiff winds blew out of the due north that night and the next morning.

²⁰ Graeme Beaton, “Wall Street: Monday close,” *Daily Mail* (London), September 10, 2001.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Associated Press, “Bermuda Skirted by Storm,” September 10, 2001.

²³ Rick Hampson, “The Day Before,” *USA TODAY*, September 9, 2002.

²⁴ WJLA, ABC Washington 7 newscast, 11 p.m. (EDT), September 10, 2001.

²⁵ The Weather Channel, “September 11th Tragedy from Weather Satellites,” September 11, 2014.

²⁶ WPIX (New York City WB Channel 11), 10 p.m. news, September 10, 2001 <www.PIX11.com>.

America seemed to be preoccupied with itself on September 10, 2001, and during the weeks and months preceding it. Important things were overlooked and the trivial was magnified.²⁷ The peace dividends of the end of the Cold War lured the United States into a sense of false complacency, even though events showed that this was a dangerous assumption. The twelve years since the fall of the Berlin Wall had moved the country into a false sense of security akin to the “splendid isolation” preceding America’s entry into World War I. Gallup published a poll on September 10 showing that 55% of Americans were “dissatisfied with the way things are going in the United States.”²⁸ The national news media was fixated on celebrity, the trivial, and the sordid. Former actor Robert Blake was being investigated for killing his wife after taking her out to an eatery. He was not yet charged, but the media carried the investigation in every news cycle. He was eventually acquitted of the crime, but his career was ruined.²⁹ United States Representative Gary Condit (D-California) splashed across the TV and newsprint media for denying an affair with Chandra Ann Levy. Monday, September 10, marked the 133rd day of her disappearance. Her skeletal remains were found in Rock Creek Park in Washington that May. Although Condit was never named as a suspect, the coverage cost him the next election and ended his political career.³⁰

On September 10, the horoscope for Virgos (born Aug. 23-Sept. 22) foretold “There are major upheavals afoot. ... Even if your life is thrown into turmoil over the next 48 hours, something good will come of it eventually.”³¹

That night, the National Football Season began with Monday Night Football played in Denver, Colorado, a game between the New York Giants and the Denver Broncos. It lasted until after midnight on the East Coast.³² Many of the eastern viewers complained about the late hour and getting to bed late. Some who worked in the World Trade Center would be grateful for getting to their jobs late.³³

September 10, 2001, was characterized by authors as being essentially unremarkable. “The Day Before,”³⁴ “Nightmare Eve,”³⁵ “The Day before the world changed,”³⁶ “The Day Before America Was interrupted...,”³⁷ “The Week Before,”³⁸ “The Lost World...,”³⁹ and “the end of American Innocence.”⁴⁰ All convey a time of gentle complacency that was lost abruptly at 8:47 a.m. that Tuesday morning when the first plane slammed into the twin towers of the World Trade Center.

²⁷ Rick Hampson, “The Day Before,” *USA TODAY*, September 9, 2002.

²⁸ Gallup, Inc., September 10, 2011; Rick Hampson, “The Day Before,” *USA TODAY*, September 9, 2002.

²⁹ Hazel Jones, “Picture Exclusive: Baretta Star Robert Blake, 81, returns to scene of wife’s 2001 murder outside LA restaurant 10 years after being acquitted of killing her,” *Daily Mail* (London), June 5, 2016. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3092192/PICTURE-EXCLUSIVE-Barreta-star-Robert-Blake-81-returns-scene-wife-s-sensational-2001-murder-outside-LA-restaurant-10-years-acquitted-killing-her.html>

³⁰ Kathryn S. Wenner, “How the Chandra Levy Saga Took Off,” *American Journalism Review*, September 2001. <http://ajrarchive.org/article.asp?id=2845>

³¹ *USA TODAY*, September 10, 2001.

³² John Branch, “Nightmare Eve, the Game Before 9/11,” *The New York Times*, October 23, 2005.

³³ Rick Hampson, “The Day Before,” *USA TODAY*, September 9, 2002.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ John Branch, “Nightmare Eve, the Game Before 9/11,” *The New York Times*, October 23, 2005.

³⁶ Carol Kuruvilla, *New York Daily News*, September 10, 2013.

³⁷ “The Day Before America Was Interrupted: Nine People Recall Sept. 10, 2001,” NPR, September 9, 2014.

³⁸ Alan Taylor, “9/11: The Week Before,” *The Atlantic*, September 7, 2011.

³⁹ “The lost world of 9/10: The Sept. 11 attacks and the end of American Innocence,” *Washington Post*, September 10, 2011.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 2

WARNINGS HEEDED AND MISSED

*“Don't let the zealots make Muslim a terrifying word,
I urged myself; remember when it meant family.”*
Salmon Rushdie⁴¹

The attacks on the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and on United Airlines Flight 93 on September 11, 2001, jolted America out of its sense of isolation. Almost three thousand of its citizens were killed. The iconic twin towers in lower Manhattan collapsed. The fire and smoke were seen from space. Great billowing clouds of dust and debris, some quite toxic, expanded outward from what would quickly be called “Ground Zero.” Lower Manhattan looked like a scene from a Hollywood disaster movie. The difference was, of course, that it was all too real. The great bastion of American security, the Pentagon, was violated. The images of the New York attacks were captured live by the major networks and local affiliates in the New York market. The world immediately saw the damage inflicted. The first Americans to stand and fight against Islamic terror on that fateful day were extraordinarily brave, ordinary citizens who recognized the airliner in which they were passengers had itself been hijacked. Amid their own fear, these total strangers personally took the fight to the hijackers and in their final moments of life, certainly preventing the savage terrorists from striking another high-value iconic American facility and killing countless more of our citizens.

The United States had previously experienced terrorism, both domestic and foreign. The twin towers of the World Trade Center, a prime example, were attacked in 1993, but the sheer scale of this episode forced a new reality. The world literally changed in an instant. The media and civilians immediately began asking difficult questions. Who did this? Why did they do this? Why do they hate us? Are we going to retaliate? How did they do this? Are we safe? To understand these questions, to answer them, and to establish what the United States did and did not do, underlying information must be examined.

Definitions of Terrorism

The word “terrorism” is, at the core, filled with emotion. Ultimately, those witnessing a violent act determine whether the act is committed by terrorists. They are the audience for which it is intended.⁴² A simple definition of the word yields over two hundred variants, depending upon type, target, and philosophy.⁴³

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), as well as all other Federal agencies responsible for enforcing the laws defines terrorism as stated in the U.S. Code –

⁴¹ Salman Rushdie, Address at Columbia University. “1,000 Days Trapped Inside a Metaphor” *The New York Times*, December 12, 1991.

⁴² Brian Jenkins, *International Terrorism: A New Mode of Conflict*, California Seminar on Arms Control and Foreign Policy, Research Paper No. 48 (Los Angeles: Crescent, 1975), 2.

⁴³ Stephen Sloan, *Terrorism: The Present Threat in Context* (New York: Berg, 2006), 19; Alex P. Schmid and Albert J. Jongman, *Political Terrorism: A New Guide to Actors, Authors, Concepts, Data Bases, Theories and Literature* (Amsterdam: SWIDOC, 1998, Chapter 1, “Terrorism and Related Concepts.”)

18 U.S.C. § 2331 defines "international terrorism" and "domestic terrorism" for purposes of Chapter 113B of the Code, entitled "Terrorism":

"International terrorism" means activities with the following three characteristics:

- Involve violent acts or acts dangerous to human life that violate federal or state law;
- Appear to be intended (i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; (ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or (iii) to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping; and
- Occur primarily outside the territorial jurisdiction of the U.S., or transcend national boundaries in terms of the means by which they are accomplished, the persons they appear intended to intimidate or coerce, or the locale in which their perpetrators operate or seek asylum. *

"Domestic terrorism" means activities with the following three characteristics:

- Involve acts dangerous to human life that violate federal or state law;
- Appear intended (i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; (ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or (iii) to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping; and
- Occur primarily within the territorial jurisdiction of the U.S.

18 U.S.C. § 2332b defines the term "federal crime of terrorism" as an offense that:

- Is calculated to influence or affect the conduct of government by intimidation or coercion, or to retaliate against government conduct; and
 - Is a violation of one of several listed statutes, including § 930(c) (relating to killing or attempted killing during an attack on a federal facility with a dangerous weapon); and § 1114 (relating to killing or attempted killing of officers and employees of the U.S.).
- * FISA⁴⁴ defines "international terrorism" in a nearly identical way, replacing "primarily" outside the U.S. with "totally" outside the U.S. 50 U.S.C. § 1801(c).⁴⁵

The U.S. Code, Title 18, specifies that the FBI "has primary investigative jurisdiction for all federal criminal laws except cases in which responsibility is, by statute or otherwise, specifically assigned to another agency."⁴⁶ Several statutes can trigger FBI involvement in an investigation. Among them among the most powerful is the Hobbs Act which "Makes it a federal offense to obstruct interstate commerce by robbery or extortion or to use or threaten to use violence against any person or property in interstate commerce."⁴⁷ Strictly speaking prior to the 9/11 attacks, the FBI's responsibility was to enforce laws within the United States and its territories.

The Central Intelligence Agency, (CIA) is charged with protecting American interests outside the United States and its territories. The CIA defines terrorism based upon Title 22 of the U.S. Code, Section 2656f(d):

- The term "terrorism" means premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents.

⁴⁴ Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 ("FISA" Public Law 95-511, 92 Stat. 1783, 50 U.S.C. chapter 36.

⁴⁵ <https://www.fbi.gov/about-us/investigate/terrorism/terrorism-definition>

⁴⁶ https://www.fbi.gov/about-us/investigate/vc_majorthefts/arttheft/legislation

⁴⁷ Title 18, United States Code, Section 1951 - Interference with Commerce by Threats of Violence (Hobbs Act).

- The term “international terrorism” means terrorism involving the territory or the citizens of more than one country.
- The term “terrorist group” means any group that practices, or has significant subgroups that practice, international terrorism⁴⁸

The Department of Defense (DOD) defines terrorism as “the unlawful use of - or threatened use of - force or violence against individuals or property to coerce or intimidate governments or societies, often to achieve political, religious, or ideological objectives.”⁴⁹ The DOD definition is confined to the military aspects of the subject.

Prior to 9/11, both the FBI and the CIA handled their own areas of responsibility. Communication between them was poor and inter-service rivalries hindered operations. The level of distrust reached a level at which information gathered by one agency was often discarded or viewed as incorrect by the other. There was no mechanism to share data that both could reliably use.

Terrorism is as old as organized society. In essence, terrorism is the use of violence, or the threat of violence, to achieve a political, ideological, or religious aims by a weaker foe over a dominant government, group, or individual. An ancient Chinese proverb attributed to Sun Tzu, the great military philosopher writing in c. 500 BCE stated, “kill one person and frighten ten thousand.”⁵⁰ The 9/11 attacks were Sun Tzu writ large.

The late nineteenth century, the entire twentieth century, and now the twenty-first century are filled with examples terrorism. Targets span the globe and the causes encompass the entire political range from anarchists to proto-monarchists. The United States has not been spared, losing four presidents, governors, presidential candidates local and state politicians. The difference was that traditionally, these assassinations had little to do with foreign interests. Aircraft hijackings, or skyjackings, occurring in the United States during the mid-twentieth century were either for obtaining ransom or by a disgruntled individual wishing to leave the country for Cuba or elsewhere. The act was always homegrown, not a foreign conspiracy. To understand the events surrounding 9/11, one must first delve deeper into the factors that created the animosity leading to the attacks and involves the circumstances of the formation of Israel.

Israel, the Arab States, and the Palestinians

Animosity between the Jews and Arabs can be traced to the Old Testament of the Bible. In the Biblical tradition, The real roots of the conflict can be traced to the Jewish Patriarch Abraham, who did not wait on God’s promise for a son, but rather fathered a son he named Ishmael through a concubine. When his wife later gave birth to a son call Isaac, the house became divided. Through Ishmael, the Arab tribes were fathered. Through Isaac, the Jewish tribes were fathered. Both have Abraham in common and both Judaism and Islam trace their lineage to the Abrahamic tradition.

Modern day Israel, particularly, was not as lucky dealing with military threats and terrorism. Arab States and radical Muslim groups targeted Israel from its independence in May 1948. The United States has backed Israel at every turn, with the exception of the 1956 attempt to take the Suez Canal from Egypt. This alliance, in the Muslim world, made America a great evil and Israel simply a puppet to be destroyed. Arab distrust of

⁴⁸ “How Do You Define Terrorism?” Central Intelligence Agency, last modified April 19, 2013, <https://www.cia.gov/news-information/cia-the-war-on-terrorism/terrorism-faqs.html>

⁴⁹ Department of Defense, *Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, Joint Publication 1-02 (November 8, 2010, As Amended Through February 15, 2016.* https://fas.org/irp/doddir/dod/jp1_02.pdf

⁵⁰ Sun Tzu, *The Art of War* (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Ediciones Lea S.A. 2015) provides, perhaps, the best modern translation in English.

America and her allies goes back to World War I, when Britain and France privately schemed to divide up the Middle East and turned a blind eye on public and private promises to the Arabs to create an independent Arab State through the 1917 Balfour Declaration.

The same promises were made to the Jews, although it would be 1948 before the difficult process of creating Israel would happen. The United Nations divided Palestine into separate Jewish and Palestinian states on November 29, 1947. The boundaries between the Jewish and Palestinian populations and states were drawn where people lived at that time. No thought was put into the viability of governance. This was the reverse practice in creating the nation of Yugoslavia after World War II. Ethnicities were ignored to create a small Pan-Slavic state. The Israeli-Palestinian plan was unworkable. Israel declared its independence on May 14, 1948 and was attacked the next day by five Arab nations, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Egypt and Saudi Arabia that were created by the original mandate following World War I. Although hard pressed from the beginning, the Israelis, using equipment that was donated, bought or stolen as it could be obtained, defended themselves admirably. Volunteers and immigrants had poured into the British Mandate during the years prior to independence. Many of these people were highly trained in technology and the weapons they were to use. Others were academics who lent their knowledge to building the new state in ways only dimly imagined beforehand. One example was Jewish émigré Norman Dlin, who, prior to the War for Independence, was sent with a group of experts into the Sinai to map every topographic feature.

Dlin was among a small cadre of cartographers that created a detailed map of Palestine and Sinai. Most were viewed by the Arabs as eccentric campers.⁵¹

The Arabs were highly confident that the Jewish settlers would be no match to their armies, some of which had been trained by former Nazi Germans. Israel defeated the combined forces and won its independence.⁵² The stunning loss to the Jews sustained an ethnic and religious hatred. In the post-World War II world of increased polarity between America and its allies and the Soviet Union and its allies, the Middle East became one of the prime areas to garner support by the two superpowers. Although neither side understood the implications of the War of Independence for Israel, it set the region on a course of instability, inflated egos with access to large arrays of armaments, and animosities of Biblical proportions.

As a result of this war 700,000 Palestinians became refugees. Most left their homes voluntarily. About one-third fled the West Bank, which, at that time was ruled by Jordan and to Jordan proper. Another third went to the Gaza Strip, then ruled by Egypt. The remainder made their way to Lebanon and Syria. Only Jordan offered citizenship to the refugees entering its lands, excluding the West Bank.⁵³ It was widely assumed that these people would eventually be able to return to their homes. This was not the case to the vast majority of the Palestinian Arabs.

⁵¹ Norman Dlin (1926-2005) earned his PhD and became an associate professor of geography at Louisiana State University in Shreveport. Information concerning his role in military cartography is contained in an oral interview with Gary D. Joiner, August, 2004; Information on Dlin's teaching activities at LSUS are found in Lynnette Weissnien, *Almagest* (Shreveport, LA: Louisiana State University Shreveport, November 8, 1974.

⁵² U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, "The Arab-Israeli War of 1948", Milestones 1945-1952.

<https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/arab-israeli-war>

⁵³ Anti-Defamation League (ADL). "Palestinian Refugees." www.adl.org



Figure 3. The original partition of the Middle East under the Treaty of San Remo following World War I.
<http://israelipalestinian.procon.org/view.timeline.php?timelineID=000031>

Although tensions remained high, a second Arab-Israeli war did not erupt until July 1956. The president of Egypt, Ga Abdel Nasser, nationalized the Suez Canal, which threatened the economic lifelines of Great Britain and France. Israel attacked on October 29. Britain and France sent troops to assist Israel and fighting ended on November 5.⁵⁴

The United States and The Soviet Union were caught by surprise. The United States brought pressure to have Israel withdraw. The United Nations sent troops, the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) to the Egyptian-Israeli border on December 4 to separate the combatants and to keep the Suez Canal open to commercial traffic.⁵⁵ Britain and France withdrew their forces by December 23. Israel finally withdrew on March 8, 1957.⁵⁶ Israel received UN protection with multi-national troops ensuring that Gaza and Aqaba were both open to Israeli commercial shipping. Egypt was allowed into Gaza to administer it as a protectorate.⁵⁷ Egyptian President Gamel Abdul Nasser, still stinging over the humiliation of the 1956 war, created an alliance with Syria and Jordan with the intent to utterly annihilate the Jewish state. He announced this in a speech to Egyptian National Assembly in May 1967.⁵⁸

⁵⁴U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, "The Arab-Israeli War of 1948", Milestones 1945-1952. <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/arab-israeli-war>; Anti-Defamation League (ADL). "The 1956 Sinai Campaign." www.adl.org; U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, Milestones 1953-1960, "The Suez Crisis, 1956." <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1953-1960/suez>. The Strategic Air Command (SAC) conducted Operation Power Flight in January 1957. This was the first instance (there have been three) when B-52s circumnavigated the Earth non-stop. This was part of SAC's intent to demonstrate to the Soviets that America did in fact have the ability to get to the Suez flying from CONUS bases and messaged clearly to the Russians to not interfere.

⁵⁵ U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, Milestones 1953-1960, "The Suez Crisis, 1956." <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1953-1960/suez>

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*; Anti-Defamation League (ADL). "The 1956 Sinai Campaign." www.adl.org

⁵⁸ www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/.../NasserNationalAssembly67.htm/

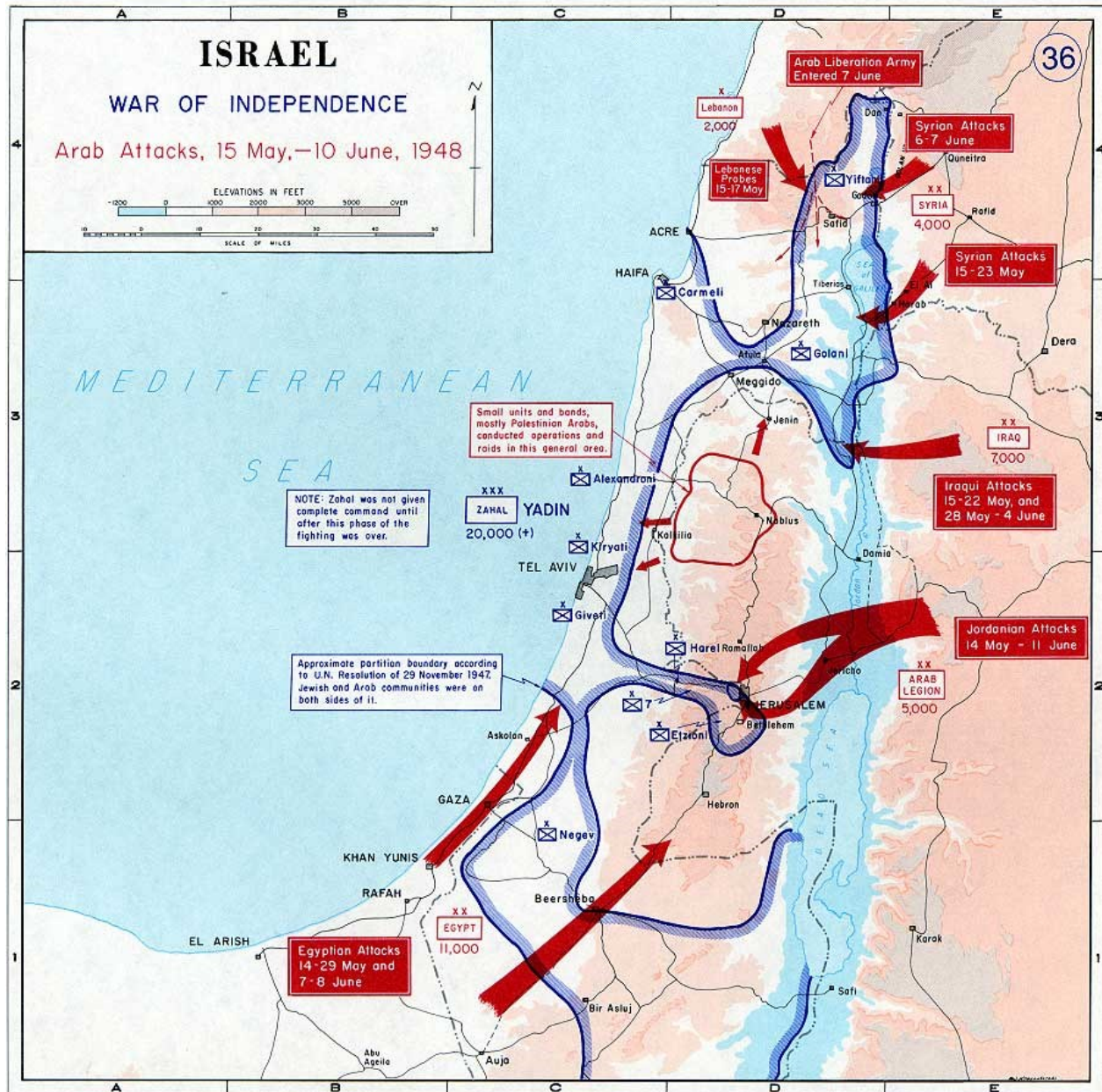


Figure 4. Map of Israel War of Independence Plate 41, Arab Attacks May 15 – June 10, 1948. United States Military Academy (USMA) at West Point, New York, Department of History *West Point Atlas*, Plate 36.

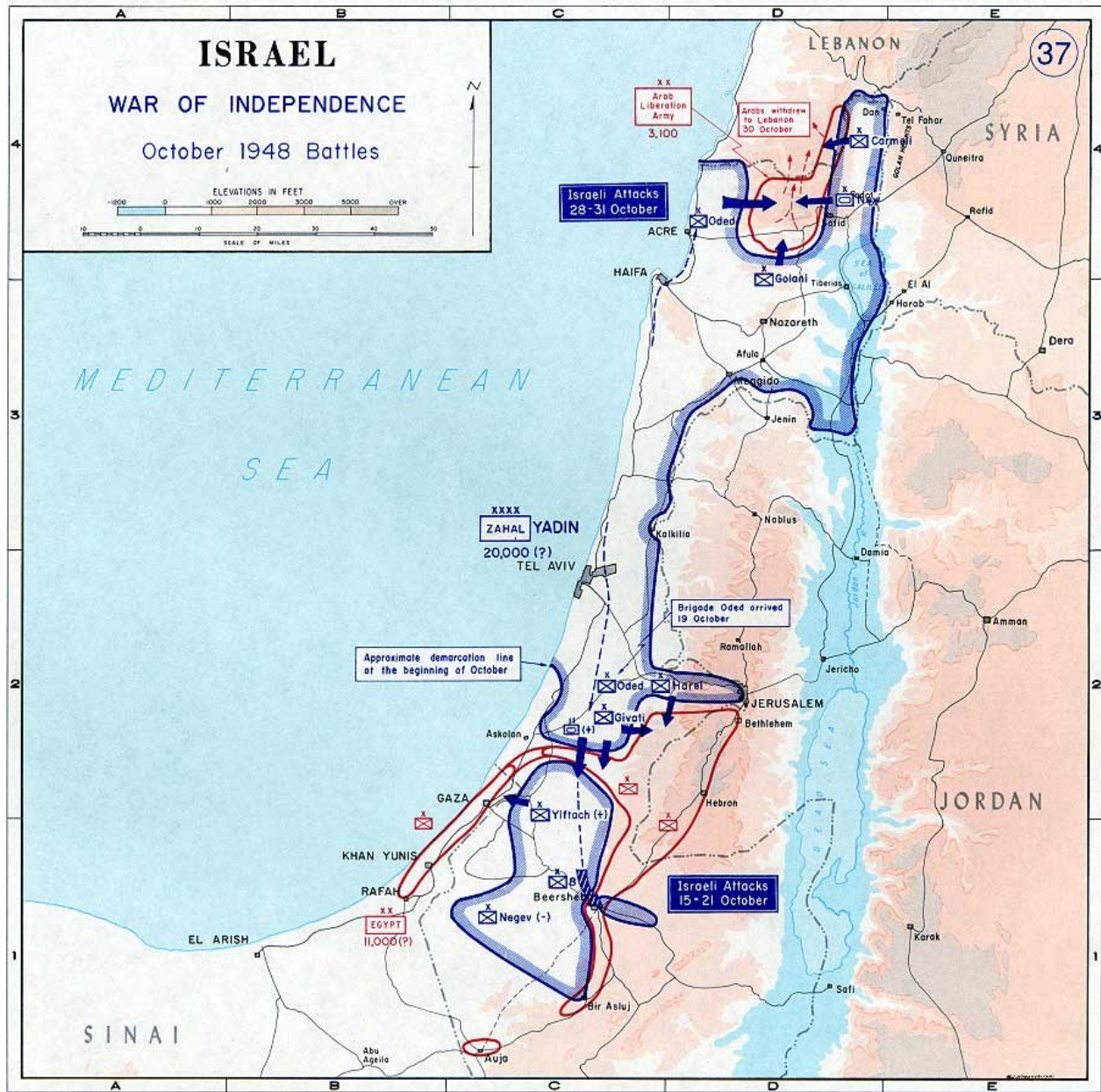


Figure 5. Map of Israel War of Independence October 1948 Battles.
 United States Military Academy (USMA) at West Point, New York, Department of History *West Point Atlas*, Plate 37.

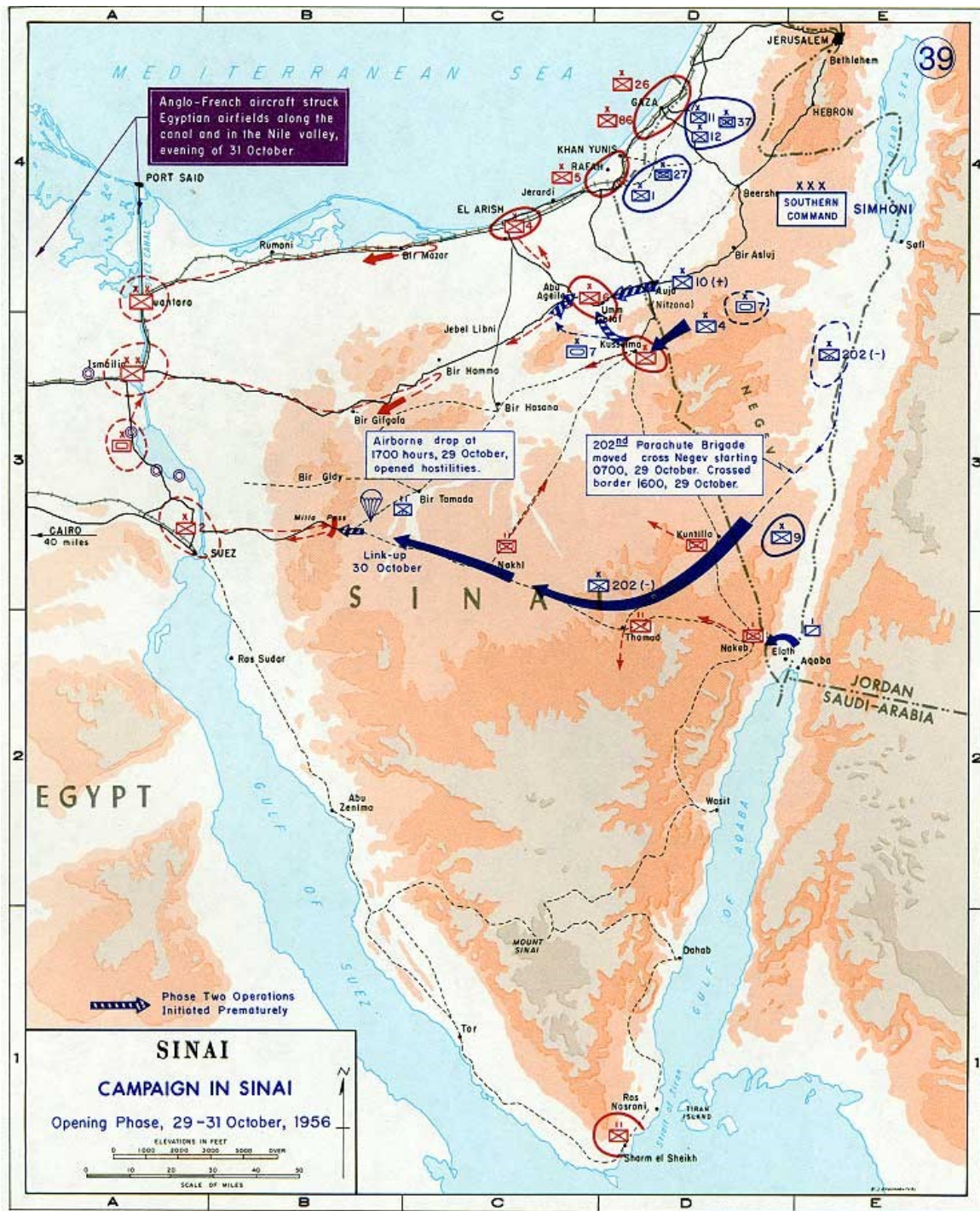


Figure 6. Map of the Sinai, Campaign in Sinai, Opening Phase October 29-31, 1956. United States Military Academy (USMA) at West Point, New York, Department of History *West Point Atlas*, Plate 39.

month Israeli and Syrian fighter aircraft fought a dogfight over the Syrian held Golan Heights on April 7, 1967. This was in response to Syrian artillery firing shells into Tel-Katzir on the Israeli side below the heights. Israel sent the planes up to destroy the artillery battery. The Syrian Air Force launched planes to counter the Israelis. The Israeli Air Force (IAF) downed six Syrian MiGs without a loss to themselves.⁶⁰ The Syrians pleaded with Egypt for assistance and Nasser responded by deploying two Egyptian combined armor and infantry divisions into the Sinai Peninsula. He also placed all Egyptian forces on high alert. The Egyptians were equipped with new Soviet tanks, weapons, and aircraft. It was clear that Egyptian arms would make the attempt to abolish Israel.⁶¹

Israeli intelligence, MOSSAD, was able to read Arab messages and quickly created a timetable for Egypt and its allies to invade Israel.⁶² The Israelis placed assets to observe the buildup and also created a cloud of disinformation, even to her allies. Israelis exhibited sophisticated abilities in signal intelligence (SIGINT) to confuse the Egyptians, Syrians, and Jordanians. They altered Arab messages and rebroadcast them. They created false traffic to confuse the Arab intelligence services.⁶³

The U.S. sent one of its intelligence gathering ships, the U.S.S. *Liberty* (AGTR-5), to gather information on both the Egyptian and Israeli electronic information. After hostilities began, the Israelis attacked the vessel with aircraft and motor torpedo boats, severely damaging the vessel.⁶⁴ Israel reported that it mistakenly identified the vessel as Egyptian, but this was a veiled attempt at disinformation. Both Israel and the United States opened inquiries with the most complete being those of the National Security Agency (NSA) and the CIA. President Lyndon Baines Johnson received daily reports on activities leading up to the war. These Situation Reports (SITREPS) are now declassified.⁶⁵ Several considerations must be identified by the United States. First, could Israel hold off and defeat the Soviet backed Arab states? The general consensus was yes. Would the Soviets enter the war to back the Arabs, particularly the Egyptians, if the tide turned against them? The answer was unknown. The Israelis attempted to dim their prospects to secure aid and a U.S. military presence if the war turned against them. This was parlayed by James Jesus Angleton, the CIA's counterintelligence chief.⁶⁶ The United States was given an incomplete image of the situation from its allies, its potential enemies, its own intelligence community, and assets that should have been able to provide a more complete view of the unfolding events. The Russians made open comments about coming to the Arabs' rescue.

Just five years after the Cuban Missile Crisis, it was possible that the two superpowers could be at the brink again. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara recommended in a meeting with the President and the national security team that the U.S. Sixth Fleet (Mediterranean) should be sent to the eastern Mediterranean to let the Soviet Union know that the United States was prepared to intervene if the Arab States attempted to

⁶⁰ Tom Segev, *1967: Israel, the War, and the Year that Transformed the Middle East* (New York: Macmillan, 2008), 209

⁶¹ U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, Milestones 1961-1968, "The Arab-Israeli War."

<https://history.state.gov/milestones/1961-1968/arab-israeli-war-1967>; www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/67_War.html

⁶² Mossad is the abbreviation for *HaMossad leModi'in uleTafkidim Meyuhadim*. It is the cornerstone of national intelligence agencies together with Aman and Shin Bet.

⁶³ UPI, "Israel lets Egypt know how it won in 1967," April 6, 2011. http://www.upi.com/Top_News/Special/2011/04/06/Israel-lets-Egypt-know-how-it-won-in-1967/UPI-76531302114920/

⁶⁴ William D. Gerhard and Henry W. Millington "Attack on a SIGINT Collector, the USS Liberty" *NSA History Report, U.S. Cryptologic History series. National Security Agency*. Partially declassified 1999, 2003. Passim. <https://www.nsa.gov/news-features/declassified-documents/uss-liberty/assets/files/chronology-events/attack-sigint.pdf>; David E. Robarge, "CIA Analysis of the 1967 Arab-Israeli War" https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/vol49no1/html_files/arab_israeli_war_1.html

⁶⁵ David E. Robarge, "CIA Analysis of the 1967 Arab-Israeli War" https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/vol49no1/html_files/arab_israeli_war_1.html

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*; Tom Mangold, *Cold Warrior: James Jesus Angleton: The CIA's Master Spy Hunter* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989), 49, 362; "Special Draft" Military Capabilities of Israel and the Arab States, LBJ Library Archives, DECLASSIFIED April 2004.

eliminate Israel. The President agreed. CIA Director (DCI), Richard Helms noted that Soviet submarines shadowing the fleet would report to Moscow that the fleet was moving into range to conduct air strikes. The Soviets backed down from saber rattling to assist their Arab client states.⁶⁷

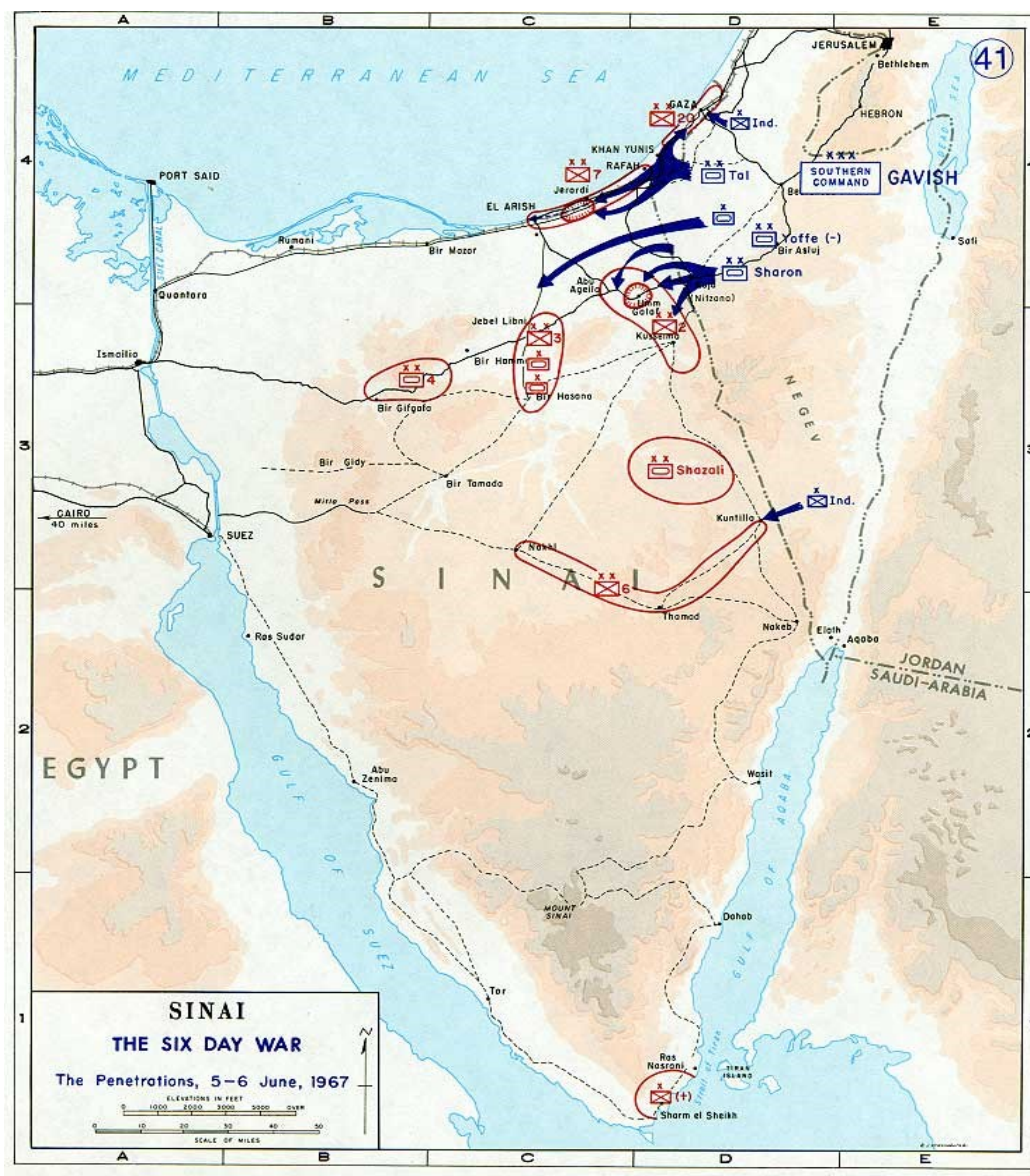


Figure 8. Map of the Sinai, Campaign in Sinai, The Six Day War, The Penetrations, June 5-6, 1967. United States Military Academy (USMA) at West Point, New York, Department of History *West Point Atlas*, Plate 41.

⁶⁷ Donald Neff, *Warriors for Jerusalem: The Six Days That Changed the Middle East* (New York: Linden Press/Simon and Schuster, 1984), 279–80; Harold Saunders memorandum, “Hot Line Meeting June 10, 1967,” October 22, 1968, *FRUS*, 1964–1968, XIX, doc. 244; https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/vol49no1/html_files/arab_israeli_war_1.html; Richard Helms, *A Look Over My Shoulder*, 295; “An Interview with Richard Helms,” *Studies in Intelligence* 25, no. 3 (Fall 1981): 5; Helms, “Global Intelligence and the Democratic Society,” speech to the American Society of Newspaper Editors, April 14, 1971, DCI Files, Job 80-01284R, box 1, folder 6, Agency Archives and Record Center.



Figure 10. Map of Israel, The Six Day War, The Jordan Salient, June 5-7, 1967.
 United States Military Academy (USMA) at West Point, New York, Department of History *West Point Atlas*, Plate 43.

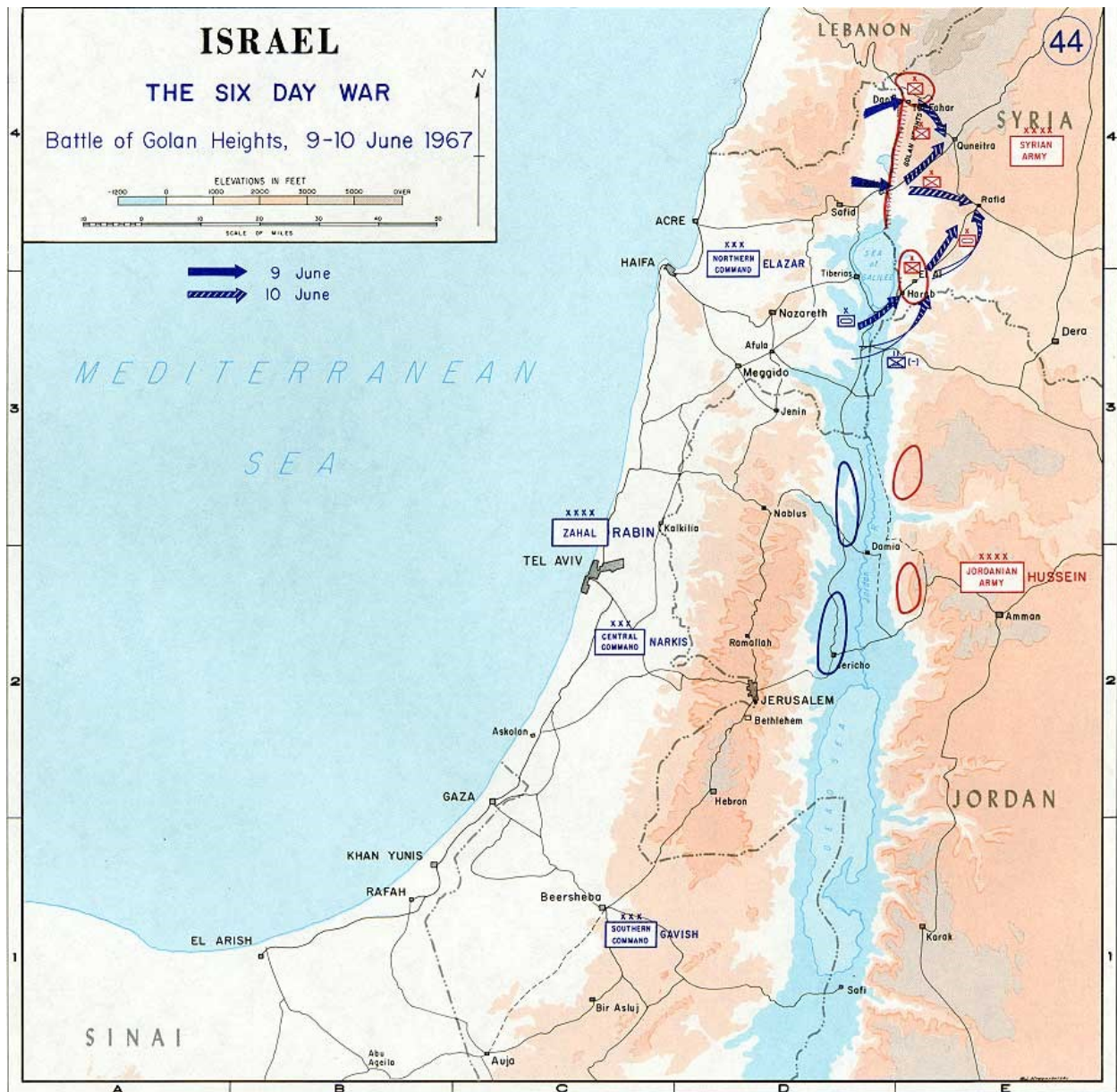


Figure 11. Map of Israel, The Six Day War, Battle for the Golan Heights, June 9-10, 1967. United States Military Academy (USMA) at West Point, New York, Department of History *West Point Atlas*, Plate 44.

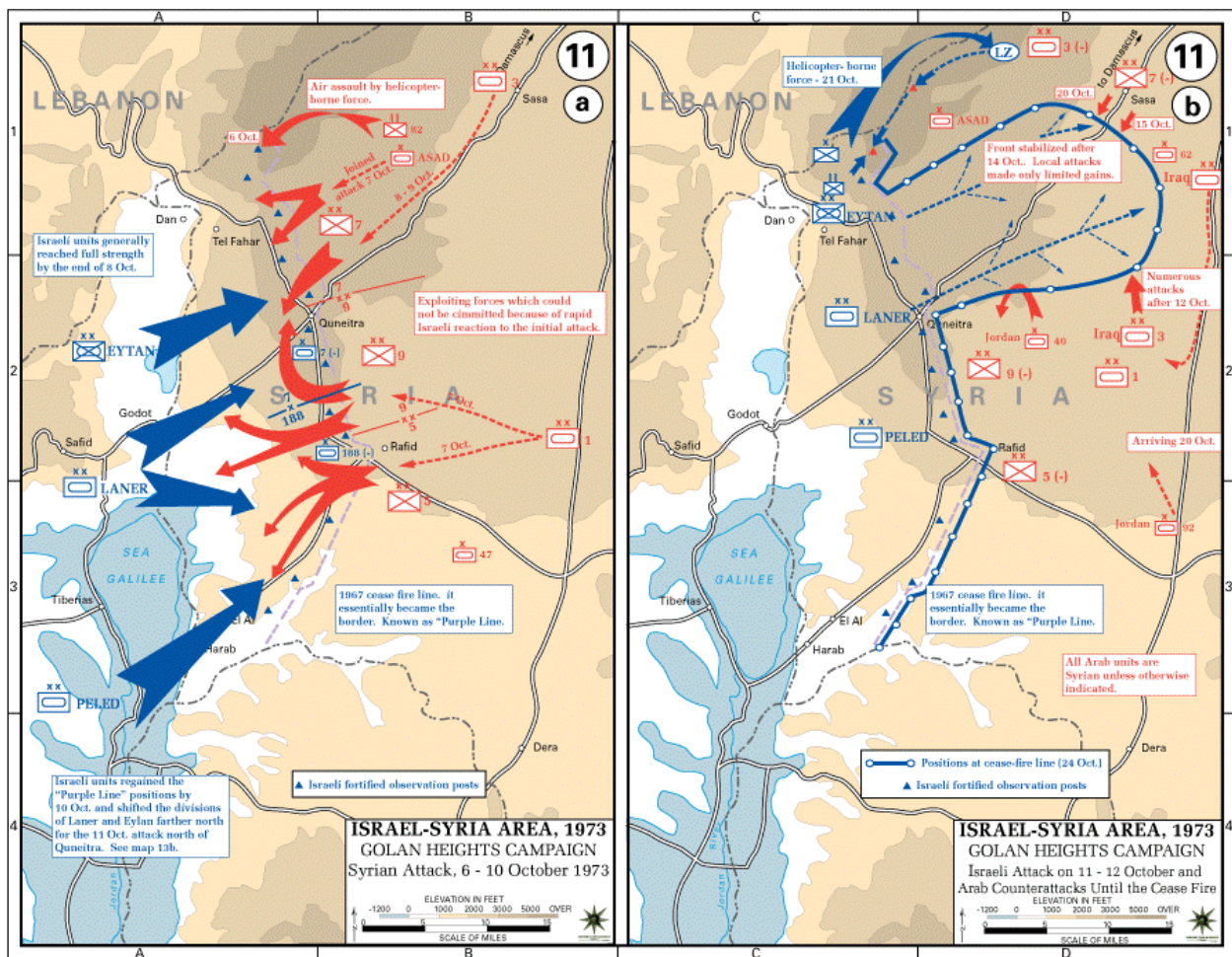


Figure 12. Map of Israel-Syria Area, 1973, Golan Heights Campaign, Syrian Attack October 6-10, 1973 (Left) and Israel Attack on October 11-12, 1973 (Right). United States Military Academy (USMA) at West Point, New York, Department of History *West Point Atlas*, Plate 11a and 11b.

During President Richard Nixon's first term in office, the Middle East continued to be a potential powder keg while the United States was still mired in Vietnam. The primary foreign policy goal for the administration was Détente with the Soviet Union. President Nixon believed that if both superpowers could work together, the Arab-Israeli tensions over the Occupied West Bank and the Palestinian refugee problem could be solved.⁶⁸ The President dispatched Secretary of State William Rogers to Moscow to negotiate the parameters of a Middle East peace. The attempt failed when the Soviet Union, Israel, and Egypt all rejected the American proposal.⁶⁹ Nixon then appointed Henry Kissinger, the National Security Advisor, to hold both that post and Secretary of State. Kissinger began what would later be called "shuttle diplomacy" in an effort to revive the conversations. Talks stalled, at American insistence, until the fall elections were held in Israel in 1973.

⁶⁸ U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, Milestones 1969-1976, "The 1973 Arab-Israeli War" <<https://history.state.gov/milestones/1969-1976/arab-israeli-war-1973>>.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

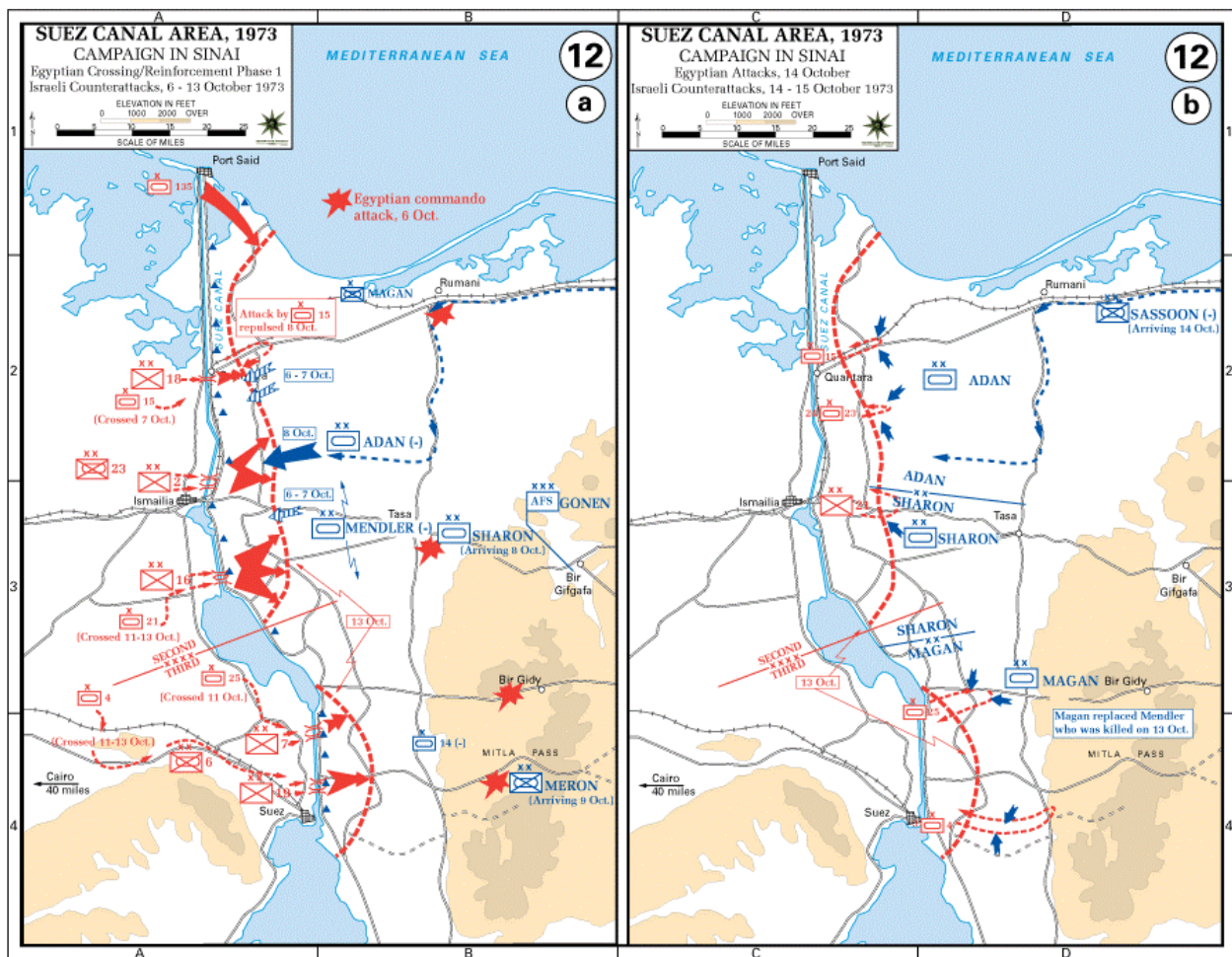


Figure 13. Map of Suez Canal Area, 1973, Campaign in Sinai, Egyptian Attack October 6-13, 1973 (Left) and Israel Attack on October 14-15, 1973 (Right). United States Military Academy (USMA) at West Point, New York, Department of History *West Point Atlas*, Plate 12a and 12b.

Israel prepared for both the elections and the holy days of Yom Kippur. They were caught by surprise when, on October 6, Egypt attacked across the Suez Canal into the occupied Sinai Peninsula and Syria crossed into the Golan Heights. The Arab armies made rapid gains and the Israelis were driven back on both fronts. Secretary Kissinger believed that the Israelis would recover quickly and defeat the twin invasions and that another collapse of Arab armies might bring the Soviets into the war.⁷⁰

Initial Syrian attacks were well planned and coordinated. Syrian Columns drove over the Golan Heights and toward the Sea of Galilee, but were met with an increasing dogged resistance. The Israelis countered the thrusts with brigade level response rather than division-size movements. The tide turned on October 11, and, within forty-eight hours, the Israelis recovered all of the lost territory and consolidated their gains. Israeli Air Force (IAF) air to ground attacks and combat air patrol (CAP) sorties insured air superiority on this front.⁷¹ Israel turned the tide in the Golan, but with a huge cost in materiel. The United States

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ Abraham Rabinovich, *The Yom Kippur War: The Epic Encounter That Transformed the Middle East* (New York: Schocken, 2005), passim; Howard Blum, *The Eve of Destruction: The Untold Story of the Yom Kippur War* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2004), passim.

attempted to replace lost equipment by implementing an air bridge directly from its bases in the both North America and Europe beginning on October 14.⁷²

The Soviets viewed the changing situation and refused to militarily assist its Arab allies. They agreed to broker a cease fire with the United States, but Egypt refused. At that point the Soviets began to replace lost Egyptian and Syrian equipment to prevent the collapse of both countries if the Israelis pressed toward their respective capitals. Egyptian President Anwar Sadat showed interest in a ceasefire. He approached Soviet Premier Leonid Brezhnev and soon Secretary of State Henry Kissinger flew to Moscow. The Israelis refused to halt their advances. Brezhnev suggested that the superpowers both send in troops to enforce the ceasefire on October 24 and, if the United States would not, the Soviets would unilaterally.⁷³ President Nixon responded by putting all American nuclear forces on worldwide alert on October 25. The Soviets backed down and the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 340 which called for a ceasefire and a withdrawal by the Israelis to the lines as of October 22.⁷⁴

The Israelis won a decisive victory again against the Arab nations, however, the consequences were far reaching. The war almost destroyed Détente. It brought the United States closer to the nuclear brink than any time since the Cuban Missile Crisis.⁷⁵ The American airlift to support Israel led the Arab oil producing nations to initiate oil embargos against the United States and her European allies. The anti-American animosity toward the United States rose to new heights among disenfranchised Palestinians.⁷⁶ Each succeeding Arab-Israeli war led to increasing trauma for the Palestinians. The years since the 1973 war have seen both heightened constraints in some areas and wider acceptance of the Palestinians in others. They were treated as “stateless persons” and are the largest stateless community in the world.⁷⁷ Today, with more structured accords in place, the Palestinians remain in an unviable situation, separated into two geographic areas and hundreds of thousands still living in huge cordoned-off camps.

Since the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, state to state sustained armed conflict has been a rarity between Jews and Arabs. Peace accords between Egypt and Israel and Jordan and Israel have provided some stability, even at the cost of Anwar Sadat’s life by assassination. Peace still seemed elusive.⁷⁸ An example of provocative action was the launch of Scud missiles into Israel during the January 1991 Gulf War. Tel Aviv and Haifa were both hit, but the rockets did little damage. This was an attempt by the Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein to bring Israel into the war and to force Arab States in the Coalition against Iraq to switch sides.⁷⁹ It did not succeed. It was widely believed that the entire IDF was on alert and an air armada was loaded with munitions, both conventional and nuclear, and ready to go. Speculation is that if any of those SCUDS had actually carried chemical, biological or nuclear warheads, Baghdad would have been decimated, although the Israeli government never admitted for security reasons.

⁷² U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, Milestones 1969-1976, “The 1973 Arab-Israeli War.” <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1969-1976/arab-israeli-war-1973>

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ United Nations Security Council Resolution No. 340, October 25, 1973.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ “The Real Roots of Arab Anti-Americanism,” *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2002. <http://www.cfr.org/polls-and-opinion-analysis/real-roots-arab-anti-americanism/p5260>

⁷⁷ Abbas Shibliak, “Stateless Palestinians,” *Forced Migration Review*, 26 (Fall 2006).
<<http://www.fmreview.org/sites/fmr/files/FMRdownloads/en/FMRpdfs/FMR26/FMR2603.pdf>> ;
<<http://www.fmreview.org/palestine.html>>.

⁷⁸ Shlomo Avineri, “Peacemaking: The Arab-Israeli Conflict,” *Foreign Affairs*, Fall 1978.

⁷⁹ BBC News, January 18, 1991 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/january/18/newsid_4588000/4588486.stm>.

Jewish Mandate Era Defense Groups

Pre-State of Israel pro Jewish groups led both the nation building duties and the anti-British, anti-Arab forces that both molded modern Israel and set the stage for future conflicts. Most of the military events included bombings and violent acts by splinter factions of the Haganah (translated from Hebrew as “the Defense”), which operated during the British Mandate from 1921-1948. It became the cohesive center for the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF). Acting as a protective organization, Haganah became the common military training link for Jewish youth and adults in collective settlements (*kibbutzim*) and in cities, established arms caches and brought in arms from Europe and the United States. Haganah created cells within Jewish Displaced Persons camps within Europe following the World War II and trained fighters and immigrants to come to Israel during the Mandate. The Jewish Resistance consisted of three branches – Haganah, *Irgun Zevai Le’umi* (abbreviated Etzel and more widely known as Irgun), and *Lohamei Herut Yisrael* (abbreviated Lehi and translated as “Fighters for the Freedom of Israel).

While Haganah operated in the mainstream, Arab riots in 1937 caused a split within the organization. Irgun became more militant. It split away in 1937 and in 1939, became openly anti-British. Irgun declared an end to violence against the British when World War II broke out. A second split occurred, this time within Irgun. Anti-British Irgun members formed Lehi. Irgun’s supporters joined the British Brigade of the British Army.⁸⁰ Lehi found itself isolated and radicalized.

Menachem Begin, a future prime minister of Israel led Irgun beginning in 1943. As the Nazi threat evaporated in the Middle East, Begin, in 1944, began a series of attacks on British administrative and military installations. They destroyed governmental offices, police stations, and military barracks and outposts. Following the end of World War II, the British military command headquarters for the Mandate were located in the King David Hotel in Jerusalem. British troops raided the Jewish Agency on June 29, 1946. Thousands of documents were taken to the hotel for British Intelligence for analysis. Simultaneously, 2,500 Jews in Palestine were arrested. Menachem Begin called the British authorities and told them to evacuate the hotel. The British response was “We don’t take orders from Jews.”⁸¹ His bombers then destroyed the hotel on July 22. Ninety-one people died and forty-five were injured.⁸² The British government did not admit that the warning was given until 1979.⁸³

Violence increased among the British, Arabs, and Jews in April 1947. Four Irgun members were hanged for anti-British acts in the Fortress of Acre. The Irgun broke into the prison in May and freed forty-one of their comrades. The British hanged three more Irgun commandos and Lehi hanged two British sergeants.⁸⁴

David Ben-Gurion, the first Prime Minister of Israel, led the policy making of Haganah and on May 26, 1948, the government of Israel transformed Haganah into the “Zeva Haganah Le-Yisrael,” the Israel Defence Forces. Irgun and Lehi both folded into the IDF.

Islamic Terrorist Groups

The murky world of Islamic terrorist groups, which are nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), is confusing at every level of examination. This was true in 1964 and it is more so today. During the decades

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ Menachem Begin, *The Revolt* (New York: Nash Publishing, 1977), 224.

⁸² J. Bowyer Bell, *Terror Out of Zion: The Fight for Israeli Independence* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1996), 172.

⁸³ Benjamin Netanyahu, ed. “International Terrorism: Challenge and Response,” *Proceedings of the Jerusalem Conference on International Terrorism*, July 25, 1979, (Jerusalem: The Jonathan Institute, 1980), 45.

⁸⁴ Dr. Motti Friedman, The Pedagogic Center, The Department for Jewish Zionist Education Center, The Jewish Agency for Israel. <http://www.jajz-ed.org.il>

following the mid-1960s, acts of terror were often ascribed to, and bragged by, several different militant groups. They all vied for attention and often had nothing to do with a particular act. Bedeviling researchers was the fact that groups often splintered and sometimes rejoined larger groups. When it became convenient, the perpetrators often blamed an act on another group that did not exist to carry forward diplomatic discussions. For purposes of this study, 1964 is used as a start date, although it can be traced to much older time periods.⁸⁵

The Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) was founded in 1964 as a front organization for many smaller entities that sought an independent, United Nations recognized, Muslim State of Palestine. Some of these groups were moderate, but most were radical. Some were secular and others were based on religion. Initially, the PLO was made up of Sunni Arabs of all walks of life.⁸⁶ Following the Arab-Israeli War of 1967, the more radical factions within the PLO came to the forefront. Chief among these factions was Al Fatah, founded in 1958 and led by Yasser Arafat. Al Fatah formally joined the PLO in 1968 and took control in 1969. Al Fatah in Arabic is defined as “conquering” or “victory.”⁸⁷ Al Fatah became the core of the PLO. Its philosophy became the mainstream thought. Arafat quickly experienced problems with extremist groups not towing the line of the PLO. Some splintered. Others found new patrons.

The Kingdom of Jordan was recognized as the caretaker of the Palestinians. When the PLO asserted itself in 1970, King Hussein faced an armed threat. Arafat had approximately 20,000 trained PLO fighters in Jordan. They were defeated by Jordanian Bedouins loyal to the King.⁸⁸ The incident that led to Jordanian actions against Arafat was the hijacking of four airliners by the PLO.

Black September

It remains unclear whether Arafat and the PLO leadership knew of plans by one of its more radical groups, the Popular Front For The Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) to hijack four foreign commercial airliners on September 6, 1970. The planes were El Al Flight 219, a Boeing 707-358B, headed for New York City from Tel Aviv, Israel, Trans World Airlines (TWA) Flight 741, a Boeing 707-331B, an around the world flight that took off on this segment from Tel Aviv, Swissair Flight 100, a Douglas DC-8-53, from Zurich, Switzerland to New York, and Pan American Airlines (Pan Am) Flight 93, a Boeing 747-121 which took off from Brussels, Belgium, to New York. Pan Am 93 was the aircraft that landed in Cairo. A fifth flight, British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC) Flight 775, a Vickers VC 10, was hijacked from Bombay, India to London with an intermediate stop in Bahrain. It was diverted to Dawson Field in northern Jordan. The intent was to facilitate the release of PLO terrorists being held in various European countries.⁸⁹ The terrorists acted in concert and flew the three airliners to Dawson’s Field in Zirka airfield in northern Jordan and fourth was diverted to Cairo. The Pan Am 747 diverted to Cairo because Dawson Airfield, a former Royal Air Force (RAF) base could not handle the landing criteria of the 747.

The pilot and crew of El Al Flight 219 fought back. The pilot, Captain Uri Bar Lev, took immediate action once the hijacking was apparent:

⁸⁵ See section **Israel, the Arab States, and the Palestinians**, above.

⁸⁶ Sunni Arabs, followers of Sunnism, comprise the largest religious denomination in the world. Only Roman Catholicism is second in number of adherents. Sunni Islam is mainstream or orthodox Islam. It contains 85% of all Muslims. The largest minority sect in Islam is Shi’a or Shia Muslims. The schism between the two sects goes back to the death of the Prophet Mohammed in 632 C.E. See the Council on Foreign Relations, “The Sunni-Shia Divide.” http://www.cfr.org/peace-conflict-and-human-rights/sunni-shia-divide/p33176#!/?cid=otr-marketing_url-sunni_shia_infoguide

⁸⁷ *Encyclopædia Britannica*. **Fatah** "Fatah [...] inverted acronym of *Harakat al-Tahrir al-Watani al-Filastini* [...]"

⁸⁸ Palestine Facts. http://www.palestinefacts.org/pf_1967to1991_jordan_expel_plo.php

⁸⁹ “The Skyjacking of 1970,” National Public Radio (NPR), September 9, 2003; Tom Tugend, “The Day a New Terrorism was Born,” *The Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles* (Los Angeles: Jewish Publications, February 24, 2006).

I decided that we were not going to be hijacked. The security guy was sitting here ready to jump. I told him that I was going to put the plane into Negative-G mode. Everyone would fall. When you put the plane into negative, it's like being in a falling elevator. Instead of the plane flying this way, it dives and everyone who is standing falls down.⁹⁰

The two hijackers were Patrick Argüello, a man of Nicaraguan-American descent and a woman, Leila Khaled, a Palestinian.⁹¹ They boarded using Honduran passports. Khaled gave an interview in 2000 in which she described the plan:

So half an hour (after take-off) we had to move. We stood up. I had my two hand grenades and I showed everybody I was taking the pins out with my teeth. Patrick stood up. We heard shooting just the same minute and when we crossed the first class, people were shouting but I didn't see who was shooting because it was behind us. So Patrick told me 'go forward I protect your back.' So I went and then he found a hostess and she was going to catch me round the legs. So I rushed, reached to the cockpit, it was closed. So I was screaming 'open the door.' Then the hostess came; she said 'she has two hand grenades,' but they did not open (the cockpit door) and suddenly I was threatening to blow up the plane. I was saying 'I will count and if you don't open I will blow up the plane.'⁹²

A passenger hit Argüello on the head with a bottle after he threw a grenade down the center isle (it did not explode). The hijacker then shot a steward, after which he was shot by a sky marshal.⁹³ Khaled was subdued. The plane flew onto London's Heathrow Airport. Argüello died in the ambulance on the way to the hospital and Khaled was arrested. The BOAC Flight 775 was hijacked in an attempt to gain Khaled's release. El Al Flight 219 was the most fortunate of the five hijackings.

TWA Flight 741 was hijacked after it made a stop at Frankfurt am Main on its way to New York City. A film, *Hijacked*, was made of the September 6 events. Also, PBS aired a documentary about the hijackings and interviewed the plane's purser, Rudi Swinkles:

I saw a passenger running toward first class. I ran after him, and when he came to first class to the cockpit, he turned around, had a gun in his hand, and pointed the gun at me, and said, 'Get back, get back.' So right away, I dove behind the bulkhead first class divider, and I hid behind it, over here.⁹⁴

The plane then diverted to Dawson's Field.

Swissair Flight 100 was hijacked shortly after TWA Flight 741 enroute from Zurich. Little has been written of the circumstances onboard.

Pan Am Flight 93's in-flight director John Feruggio stated:

We were ready for take-off in Amsterdam, and the aircraft came to an abrupt stop in the middle of the runway. And Captain Priddy called me up into the cockpit and says, 'I'd like to have a word with you.' I went up to the cockpit, and he says, 'We have two passengers by the

⁹⁰ Interview with El Al Captain Uri Bar Lev, PBS, www.PBS.org/Hijacked

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² Philip Baum, "Leila Khaled: In Her Own Words," *Aviation Security International*, September 2000 (11, no. 6 (December 2005). Khaled gave the interview in the SAS Radisson Hotel in Amman, Jordan.

⁹³ Interview with El Al Captain Uri Bar Lev, PBS, www.PBS.org/Hijacked

⁹⁴ Interview with Rudi Swinkles, PBS, www.PBS.org/Hijacked

name of Diop and Gueye. Go down and try to find them in the manifest, because I would like to have a word with them. ... So Captain Priddy sat them down at these two seats over here. He gave them a pretty good pat. They had a Styrofoam container in their groin area where they carried the grenade, and the 25-mm pistols. But this we found out much later.⁹⁵

Pan AM Flight 93 diverted to Beirut, refueled and added several more hijackers and explosives. After taking off, the plane diverted to Cairo because the size and weight of the plane and the runway and ramp space needed were deemed inadvisable. After landing at Cairo, the crew was allowed to deplane and the hijackers were arrested by Egyptian authorities. The plane exploded after evacuation was complete.⁹⁶

BOAC Flight 775 was hijacked shortly after departing Bahrain and seems to have been an impromptu plan since its purpose was to free Leila Khaled. Little has been written about this hijacking in the first person.

The hijackers held a press conference on September 7 to an audience of sixty members of the press. They allowed 125 passengers to leave via bus to Amman, Jordan. The terrorists retained passengers who held American, Israeli Swiss and West German passports. They asked each passenger if they were Jewish.⁹⁷ The hijackers forced the prisoners to assembled before the media while PFLP leaders read statements. Among them, Hassam Abu Sharif, stated that the hijackings were intended “to gain the release of all of our political prisoners jailed in Israel in exchange for the hostages.”⁹⁸

American reaction was swift. President Richard Nixon gathered his National Security Council on September 8. He wanted to bomb the PFLP sites in Lebanon. This was not done, presumably because of weather. He ordered the 82nd Airborne Division to go to full alert, The Sixth Fleet (Mediterranean) left its bases and put to sea, steaming east. Fighter and bomber aircraft moved from bases in the continental United States (CONUS) and Europe to forward bases in Turkey.⁹⁹



Figure 14. Airliners on the ground at Zirka Airfield, Jordan (Jordan News Agency photograph).

⁹⁵ Interview with John Feruggio, PBS, www.PBS.org/Hijacked

⁹⁶ Bryan Marquard, “John Feruggio, at 84” hero of 1970 Pan Am Hijacking,” *Boston Globe*, June 22, 2010.

⁹⁷ Tugend, “The Day a New Terrorism was Born,” *The Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles*.

⁹⁸ PBS, “Hijacked: Journalists and the Hijacking,” *American Experience*, 2006.

⁹⁹ Henry Kissinger, “Crisis and Confrontation,” *Time Magazine*, October 15, 1979; The Richard M. Nixon Library & Birthplace, “*Nixon Papers, 1970*” http://www.nixonfoundation.org/clientuploads/directory/archive/1970_pdf_files/1970_0306.pdf

British Prime Minister Edward Heath decided not to saber rattle, but to negotiate. He agreed to release Leila Khaled for all of the hostages. President Nixon strongly denounced this.

Tensions between London and Washington are reflected in a bitterly acrimonious telephone conversation between top Foreign Office official Sir Denis Greenhill and senior White House aide Joseph Sisco... 'I think your government would want to weigh very, very carefully the kind of outcry that would occur in this country against your taking this kind of action.' Greenhill replied: 'Well, they do, Joe, but there is also an outcry in this country,' expressing concern that 'Israel won't lift a bloody finger and... our people get killed. You could imagine how bad that would look, and if it all comes out that we could have got our people out but for the obduracy of you and other people so to speak... I mean people say, why the bloody hell didn't you try?'¹⁰⁰

The United Nations Security Council met on September 9 and demanded the release of all hostages. It approved Resolution 286.¹⁰¹ The following day, Jordanian forces clashed with PFLP and PLO Fedayeen¹⁰² in Amman at the Intercontinental Hotel where the 125 hostages were held.¹⁰³ It appeared that Jordan was erupting into civil war. Jordan may have been given strong diplomatic assurances by the United States. "At this point, whether because [American] readiness measures had given [King Hussein] a psychological lift or because he was reaching the point of desperation, Hussein resolved on an all-out confrontation with the fedayeen."¹⁰⁴ The PFLP blew up the airliners on September 12 and declared the city of Irbid in Jordan to be "liberated territory," in effect the capital of Palestine.¹⁰⁵ The British Broadcasting Company (BBC) aired a government statement in Arabic on September 13, stating that it would release Khaled for all of the hostages.¹⁰⁶

Cooler heads did not prevail as other governments began efforts to worsen the crisis. Syria and Iraq, both aligned with the Soviet Union, threatened to send forces in an unstated alliance with the Palestinians (who were not members of a nation-state.) In British documents declassified in 2000, King Hussein asked both the United States and Great Britain to pass a message to the Israelis, that if the Arab forces entered Jordan, would Israel bomb the Syrians if they crossed into Jordan on behalf of the Palestinians?¹⁰⁷ Syria, apparently totally unaware of the request, sent tanks over the Jordanian border. Four Israeli F-4 Phantom fighter bombers flew over the Syrian tanks, dropping no munitions. Their course, however, was noticed by everyone. Their tracks extended toward Damascus, the Syrian capital.¹⁰⁸ The warplanes veered away and the tanks headed back toward Damascus. Israeli ground units deployed along the Jordan River, ready to assist King Hussein.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁰ Douglas Davis, "Declassified documents show how UK gave in to terrorists," *Jerusalem Post*, January 2, 2001.

¹⁰¹ United Nations Security Council Resolution 286.

¹⁰² Palestinian fedayeen are militants of a nationalist orientation from among Palestinians. Most Arabs consider them to be "freedom fighters." See Francois Burgat, *Face to Face with Political Islam*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 2003), 117; and Beverley Milton Edwards, *Islamic Politics in Palestine*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 1996), 94-95.

¹⁰³ PBS, "Hijacked: Journalists and the Hijacking, *American Experience*, 2006.

¹⁰⁴ Kissinger, "Crisis and Confrontation," *Time Magazine*, October 15, 1979.

¹⁰⁵ PBS, "Hijacked: Journalists and the Hijacking, *American Experience*, 2006.

¹⁰⁶ BBC World Service, September 13, 1970; BBC News, *UK Confidential*, "Black September: Tough negotiations," January 1, 2001.

¹⁰⁷ BBC News, *UK Confidential*, "Black September: Tough negotiations," January 1, 2001.

¹⁰⁸ John Moore, "The Evolution of Islamic Terrorism: An Overview," PBS *Frontline*.

<<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/target/etc/modern.html>>

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

President Nixon saw this action as a firm indicator that Israel was, and should be, the United States' best ally in the Middle East, and more trustworthy than its NATO allies. This change in focus altered American foreign policy through today.

The Arab World, already doubting the voracity of King Hussein and Jordan to the Palestinian two-state cause, immediately sided with Arafat and the PLO. The King was now seen as a Western surrogate not to be trusted.

Yasser Arafat, moved his headquarters in Jordan closer to the Syrian border and his allies. Fighting continued all through the remainder of September and into autumn. The Jordanians pushed the PLO out of Jordan, and, to signify that the Jordanians were effectively traitors to the Arab cause, the PLO labeled these thrusts as "Black September." This became the rallying cry for a wave of new terrorist attacks led by the most radical sects of the PLO. Losses on both sides were high with PLO fighters' casualties in the high hundreds or low thousands and were much higher among the Arab population caught in the middle.¹¹⁰ By the following August, the PLO was pushed out of Jordan. They melted away and reestablished themselves in Lebanon, which had been relatively quiet. This move would all but destroy the State of Lebanon over the next three decades. The Israeli support of Jordan heightened Syrian-Israeli tensions and would usher in the next round of nation-state conflicts.

The Black September hijackings, almost forty-one years to the day before the 9/11 attacks, serve as the strategic, tactical, and philosophical progenitor for the attacks on New York and Washington. The similarities are remarkable, using planes from different airlines and airport origins, coordinating the hijackings within a limited time span to allow the planes to arrive at their targets, and the confusion created by the hijackers to gain their intentions. If the 9/11 hijackings were the fruit of decades of planning, The Black September hijackings were the seeds that planted that dark harvest.

Evolution of Terrorist Groups between 1970 and 2000

Terrorist groups gradually changed the type of targets and intended effects from the 1970s through the 1990s, as new groups appeared, new rivalries arose, and sponsors changed. The Middle Eastern groups learned from others in Central and South America and the Far East. During the 1970s, the PLO (as an umbrella organization) and its splinter groups targeted material damage with point specific attacks on soft targets. Urban attacks increased dramatically.¹¹¹ The Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1978. This changed the terrorism landscape tremendously. The United States supported the "freedom fighters," the mujahedeen in their fight to reclaim their homeland.¹¹² The United States provided the mujahedeen with anti-aircraft Stinger missiles to counter the deadly Soviet Mi-24 D Hind helicopter gunships.¹¹³ The Soviets became mired in a Vietnam-like experience that eventually weakened them to the point of collapse. The Soviet-Afghan War created a weapons proliferation vortex. New exotic weapons flowed into the region and many of them found their way into the hands of terrorist groups outside Afghanistan. At the same time Arab terrorist and guerilla groups used Afghanistan as a training ground for their best fighters. Terror targets became increasingly urban and soft civilian targets became the norm. An unintended result for groups such as the PLO, was that secular terrorist groups became a minority to fundamentalist Islam based organizations.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ Federation of American Scientists, "Significant Terrorist Incidents, 1961-2003: A Brief Chronology." <www.fas.org/irp/threat/terror_chron.html>

¹¹² Mujahedeen in Arabic translates as *mujāhidūn*, or "those who engage in jihad (Holy War)." <<https://www.britannica.com/topic/mujahideen-Afghani-rebels>>

¹¹³ Federation of American Scientists, "Mi-24 Hind D." <<http://fas.org/man/dod-101/sys/ac/row/mi-24.htm>>

Little noticed at the time was that the fundamentalists were both Sunni and Shia.¹¹⁴ This marginalized the mainstream secular organizations. Some, such as the PLO, morphed into governmental entities. The 1990s witnessed an increased pace in the scale of terrorist attacks, a wider trend towards attacking soft civilian targets, the end of the Cold War, the collapse of the Soviet Union, the reunification of Germany and, most striking, a swift change in terrorist organizations towards pure ethnic related nationalism and religious sect based organizations. The new organizations filled the sudden vacuum created by the collapse or marginalization of the older terrorist groups.¹¹⁵

Among the most heinous of terrorist attacks undertaken by pro-Palestinian, anti-Western, and anti-Israel groups between 1970 and 2000 were:¹¹⁶

- The September 5, 1972 kidnapping and murder of the Israeli Olympic team at the Munich Olympics team apartments and at Fürstenfeldbruck Air Base by Black September.
- The Entebbe, Uganda hostage crisis on June 27, 1976 in which terrorists from the Baader-Meinhof Group and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) seized an Air France airliner and its 258 passengers and forced the plane to land in Uganda. Israeli commandos successfully rescued the passengers on July 3.
- The November 4, 1979 Iranian Revolution, the overthrow of the Shah of Iran, and the taking of American Embassy personnel by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard.
- The October 23, 1983 bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut, Lebanon, leading to the death of 241 marines by Syrian and Iranian backed Hezbollah.¹¹⁷
- Attack on the U.S. Embassy Annex in Beirut in October, 1984 by Hezbollah.
- Hijacking of the *Achille Lauro* on October 7, 1985 by the Palestinian Liberation Front (PLF), taking more than 700 hostages.
- Attacks on major airports in Rome and Vienna on December 27, 1985, carried out by the Abu Nidal Organization (ANO).
- Berlin discotheque bombing on April 5, 1986 by Libyan intelligence service.
- Bombing of the Neve Shalom synagogue in Istanbul in September 1986 by ANO.
- Hijacking of Pan Am Flight 73 in Karachi, Pakistan in September 1986 by ANO.
- Creation of the first intifada¹¹⁸ in 1987 by the Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS). It remains viable today as the controlling power in the Gaza Strip.
- Attack on the *City of Poros* day cruise vessel in July 1988 by ANO.
- Bombing and downing of Pan AM Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland in 1988 by Libyan intelligence operatives working with the Palestinian Front for the Liberation of Palestine -- General Command (PFLP-GC).
- Assassination (suspected) of PLO deputy chief Abu Iyad and PLO security chief Abu Hul in Tunis in January 1991. ANO has not attacked western targets since 1988. The group still existed in Iraq as of 2000.
- Bombing of the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1992 carried out by Hezbollah.

¹¹⁴ Federation of American Scientists, *Significant Terrorist Incidents, 1961-2003: A Brief Chronology*. www.fas.org/irp/threat/terror_chron.html

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*; John Moore, "The Evolution of Islamic Terrorism: An Overview," PBS *Frontline*. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/target/etc/modern.html>

¹¹⁶ The following list was compiled from the extensive database used by the Federation of American Scientists, *Significant Terrorist Incidents, 1961-2003: A Brief Chronology*. www.fas.org/irp/threat/terror_chron.html

¹¹⁷ Party of God.

¹¹⁸ Intifada translated from the Arabic means "tremor" or "shake." <https://www.britannica.com/topic/intifada>

- Bombing of the basement and carpark of the World Trade Center in New York in 1993 by al-Qaeda.
- Attack on the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1994 carried out by Hezbollah.
- Attack on the observation deck of the Empire State Building in New York City on February 23, 1997 by a lone gunman. He killed a Danish citizen and wounded several others before turning the gun on himself. A note said that the attack was punishment against “enemies of Palestine.”
- Attack on Khobar Towers in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia on June 25, 1996 killing 19 U.S. military personnel and wounding 515 persons, including 240 U.S. personnel. Several terrorist groups claimed responsibility.
- Suicide bombing of Ben Yehuda shopping mall in Jerusalem on September 4, 1997 by HAMAS, killed eight include the bombers
- Attack on German tourists at Luxor, Egypt in November 1997 by the Al-Gamaat Al-Islamiyya (IG - the Islamic Group, al-Gama'at, Islamic Gama'at, Egyptian al-Gama'at al-Islamiyya, GI), that killed 58 tourists.
- Bombings of the U.S. Embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania on August 7, 1998 by Al-Qaeda.
- Attack on the destroyer U.S.S. *Cole* on October 12, 2000 in Aden, Yemen by Al-Qaeda. The attack killed seventeen Americans and injured thirty-nine others.

United States and European allied intelligence services failed to follow this proliferation of terror groups to the extent of considering that many may not exist. They were particularly hazy on the small Al-Qaeda group prior to the 9/11 attacks. The FBI and the CIA did not readily share information or theories. The State Department and Department of Defense pursued their own leads but the lack of coordination, seen from the perspective of the post 9/11 world, is remarkably bad form.

Islamic Terrorist Groups operating on the Eve of 9/11

The United States Department of State published a report, *Patterns of Global Terrorism, 2000*, which has been updated yearly. The report, published on April 30, 2001, describes in detail what was known about existing terrorist organizations immediately prior to the 9/11 attacks. For the purposes of this project, only those groups having anti-Israel and anti-Western leanings are listed.¹¹⁹

ABU NIDAL ORGANIZATION (ANO)

a.k.a. Fatah Revolutionary Council, Arab Revolutionary Brigades, Black September, and Revolutionary Organization of Socialist Muslims

Description

International terrorist organization led by Sabri al-Banna. Split from PLO in 1974. Made up of various functional committees, including political, military, and financial.

Activities

Has carried out terrorist attacks in 20 countries, killing or injuring almost 900 persons. Targets include the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Israel, moderate

¹¹⁹ Department of State, Office of the Coordinator of Counterterrorism, *Patterns of Global Terrorism, 2000*, Appendix B: Background Information on Terrorist Groups, <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2000/2450.htm>

Palestinians, the PLO, and various Arab countries. Major attacks included the Rome and Vienna airports in December 1985, the Neve Shalom synagogue in Istanbul and the Pan Am flight 73 hijacking in Karachi in September 1986, and the City of Poros day-excursion ship attack in Greece in July 1988. Suspected of assassinating PLO deputy chief Abu Iyad and PLO security chief Abu Hul in Tunis in January 1991. ANO assassinated a Jordanian diplomat in Lebanon in January 1994 and has been linked to the killing of the PLO representative there. Has not attacked Western targets since the late 1980s.

Strength

A few hundred plus limited overseas support structure.

Location/Area of Operation

Al-Banna relocated to Iraq in December 1998, where the group maintains a presence. Has an operational presence in Lebanon, including in several Palestinian refugee camps. Financial problems and internal disorganization have reduced the group's activities and capabilities. Authorities shut down the ANO's operations in Libya and Egypt in 1999. Has demonstrated ability to operate over wide area, including the Middle East, Asia, and Europe.

External Aid

Has received considerable support, including safehaven, training, logistic assistance, and financial aid from Iraq, Libya, and Syria (until 1987), in addition to close support for selected operations.

**AL-GAMA'A AL-ISLAMIYYA
(Islamic Group, IG)**

Description

Egypt's largest militant group, active since the late 1970s; appears to be loosely organized. Has an external wing with a worldwide presence. The group issued a cease-fire in March 1999, but its spiritual leader, Shaykh Umar Abd al-Rahman, incarcerated in the United States, rescinded his support for the cease-fire in June 2000. The Gama'a has not conducted an attack inside Egypt since August 1998. Rifa'i Taha Musa-a hardline former senior member of the group-signed Usama Bin Ladin's February 1998 fatwa calling for attacks against US civilians. The IG since has publicly denied that it supports Bin Ladin and frequently differs with public statements made by Taha Musa. Taha Musa has in the last year sought to push the group toward a return to armed operations, but the group, which still is led by Mustafa Hamza, has yet to break the unilaterally declared cease-fire. In late 2000, Taha Musa appeared in an undated video with Bin Ladin and Ayman al-Zawahiri threatening retaliation against the United States for Abd al-Rahman's continued incarceration. The IG's primary goal is to overthrow the Egyptian Government and replace it with an Islamic state, but Taha Musa also may be interested in attacking US and Israeli interests.

Activities

Group specialized in armed attacks against Egyptian security and other government officials, Coptic Christians, and Egyptian opponents of Islamic extremism before the cease-fire. From 1993 until the cease-fire, al-Gama'a launched attacks on tourists in Egypt, most notably the attack in November 1997 at Luxor that killed 58 foreign tourists. Also claimed responsibility for the attempt in June 1995 to assassinate Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Gama'a has never specifically attacked a US citizen or facility but has threatened US interests.

Strength

Unknown. At its peak the IG probably commanded several thousand hard-core members and a like number of sympathizers. The 1998 cease-fire and security crackdowns following the attack in Luxor in 1997 probably have resulted in a substantial decrease in the group's numbers.

Location/Area of Operation

Operates mainly in the Al-Minya, Asyu't, Qina, and Sohaj Governorates of southern Egypt. Also appears to have support in Cairo, Alexandria, and other urban locations, particularly among unemployed graduates and students. Has a worldwide presence, including Sudan, the United Kingdom, Afghanistan, Austria, and Yemen.

External Aid

Unknown. The Egyptian Government believes that Iran, Bin Ladin, and Afghan militant groups support the organization. Also may obtain some funding through various Islamic non- governmental organizations.

HAMAS (Islamic Resistance Movement)

Description

Formed in late 1987 as an outgrowth of the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood. Various HAMAS elements have used both political and violent means, including terrorism, to pursue the goal of establishing an Islamic Palestinian state in place of Israel. Loosely structured, with some elements working clandestinely and others working openly through mosques and social service institutions to recruit members, raise money, organize activities, and distribute propaganda. HAMAS's strength is concentrated in the Gaza Strip and a few areas of the West Bank. Also has engaged in peaceful political activity, such as running candidates in West Bank Chamber of Commerce elections.

Activities

HAMAS activists, especially those in the Izz el-Din al-Qassam Brigades, have conducted many attacks--including large-scale suicide bombings--against Israeli civilian and military targets. In the early 1990s, they also targeted suspected Palestinian collaborators and Fatah rivals. Claimed several attacks during the unrest in late 2000.

Strength

Unknown number of hard-core members; tens of thousands of supporters and sympathizers.

Location/Area of Operation

Primarily the occupied territories, Israel. In August 1999, Jordanian authorities closed the group's Political Bureau offices in Amman, arrested its leaders, and prohibited the group from operating on Jordanian territory.

External Aid

Receives funding from Palestinian expatriates, Iran, and private benefactors in Saudi Arabia and other moderate Arab states. Some fundraising and propaganda activities take place in Western Europe and North America.

HARAKAT UL-MUJAHIDIN (HUM)***Description***

Formerly known as the Harakat al-Ansar, the HUM is an Islamic militant group based in Pakistan that operates primarily in Kashmir. Long-time leader of the group, Fazlur Rehman Khalil, in mid-February stepped down as HUM emir, turning the reins over to the popular Kashmiri commander and his second-in-command, Farooq Kashmiri. Khalil, who has been linked to Bin Ladin and signed his fatwa in February 1998 calling for attacks on US and Western interests, assumed the position of HUM Secretary General. Continued to operate terrorist training camps in eastern Afghanistan.

Activities

Has conducted a number of operations against Indian troops and civilian targets in Kashmir. Linked to the Kashmiri militant group al-Faran that kidnapped five Western tourists in Kashmir in July 1995; one was killed in August 1995 and the other four reportedly were killed in December of the same year. The new millennium brought significant developments for Pakistani militant groups, particularly the HUM. Most of these sprang from the hijacking of an Indian airliner on 24 December by militants believed to be associated with the HUM. The hijackers negotiated the release of Masood Azhar, an important leader in the former Harakat ul-Ansar imprisoned by the Indians in 1994. Azhar did not, however, return to the HUM, choosing instead to form the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JEM), a rival militant group expressing a more radical line than the HUM.

Strength

Has several thousand armed supporters located in Azad Kashmir, Pakistan, and India's southern Kashmir and Doda regions. Supporters are mostly Pakistanis and Kashmiris and also include Afghans and Arab veterans of the Afghan war. Uses light and heavy machineguns, assault rifles, mortars, explosives, and rockets. HUM lost some of its membership in defections to the JEM.

Location/Area of Operation

Based in Muzaffarabad, Rawalpindi, and several other towns in Pakistan and Afghanistan, but members conduct insurgent and terrorist activities primarily in Kashmir. The HUM trains its militants in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

External Aid

Collects donations from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf and Islamic states and from Pakistanis and Kashmiris. The sources and amount of HUM's military funding are unknown.

HIZBALLAH (PARTY OF GOD) [HEZBOLLAH]

a.k.a. Islamic Jihad, Revolutionary Justice Organization, Organization of the Oppressed on Earth, and Islamic Jihad for the Liberation of Palestine

Description

Radical Shia group formed in Lebanon; dedicated to increasing its political power in Lebanon and opposing Israel and the Middle East peace negotiations. Strongly anti-West and anti-Israel. Closely allied with, and often directed by, Iran but may have conducted operations that were not approved by Tehran.

Activities

Known or suspected to have been involved in numerous anti-US terrorist attacks, including the suicide truck bombing of the US Embassy and US Marine barracks in Beirut in October 1983 and the US Embassy annex in Beirut in September 1984. Elements of the group were responsible for the kidnapping and detention of US and other Western hostages in Lebanon. The group also attacked the Israeli Embassy in Argentina in 1992 and is a suspect in the 1994 bombing of the Israeli cultural center in Buenos Aires. In fall 2000, it captured three Israeli soldiers in the Shabaa Farms and kidnapped an Israeli noncombatant whom it may have lured to Lebanon under false pretenses.

Strength

Several thousand supporters and a few hundred terrorist operatives.

Location/Area of Operation

Operates in the Bekaa Valley, the southern suburbs of Beirut, and southern Lebanon. Has established cells in Europe, Africa, South America, North America, and Asia.

External Aid

Receives substantial amounts of financial, training, weapons, explosives, political, diplomatic, and organizational aid from Iran and Syria.

AL-JIHAD

a.k.a. Egyptian Islamic Jihad, Jihad Group, Islamic Jihad

Description

Egyptian Islamic extremist group active since the late 1970s. Close partner of Bin Ladin's al-Qaida organization. Suffered setbacks as a result of numerous arrests of operatives worldwide, most recently in Lebanon and Yemen. Primary goals are to overthrow the Egyptian Government and replace it with an Islamic state and attack US and Israeli interests in Egypt and abroad.

Activities

Specializes in armed attacks against high-level Egyptian Government personnel, including cabinet ministers, and car-bombings against official US and Egyptian facilities. The original Jihad was responsible for the assassination in 1981 of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat. Claimed responsibility for the attempted assassinations of Interior Minister Hassan al-Alfi in August 1993 and Prime Minister Atef Sedky in November 1993. Has not conducted an attack inside Egypt since 1993 and has never targeted foreign tourists there. Responsible for Egyptian Embassy bombing in Islamabad in 1995; in 1998, planned attack against US Embassy in Albania was thwarted.

Strength

Not known but probably has several hundred hard-core members.

Location/Area of Operation

Operates in the Cairo area. Has a network outside Egypt, including Yemen, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sudan, Lebanon, and the United Kingdom.

External Aid

Not known. The Egyptian Government claims that both Iran and Bin Ladin support the Jihad. Also may obtain some funding through various Islamic nongovernmental organizations, cover businesses, and criminal acts.

THE PALESTINE ISLAMIC JIHAD (PIJ)***Description***

Originated among militant Palestinians in the Gaza Strip during the 1970s. Committed to the creation of an Islamic Palestinian state and the destruction of Israel through holy war. Because of its strong support for Israel, the United States has been identified as an enemy of the PIJ, but the group has not specifically conducted attacks against US interests in the past. In July 2000, however, publicly threatened to attack US interests if the US Embassy is moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Also opposes moderate Arab governments that it believes have been tainted by Western secularism.

Activities

Conducted at least three attacks against Israeli interests in late 2000, including one to commemorate the anniversary of former PIJ leader Fathi Shaqaqi's murder in Malta on 26 October 1995. Conducted suicide bombings against Israeli targets in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and Israel.

Strength

Unknown.

Location/Area of Operation

Primarily Israel and the occupied territories and other parts of the Middle East, including Jordan and Lebanon. Headquartered in Syria.

External Aid

Receives financial assistance from Iran and limited logistic assistance from Syria.

PALESTINE LIBERATION FRONT (PLF)***Description***

Broke away from the PFLP-GC in mid-1970s. Later split again into pro-PLO, pro-Syrian, and pro-Libyan factions. Pro-PLO faction led by Muhammad Abbas (Abu Abbas), who became member of PLO Executive Committee in 1984 but left it in 1991.

Activities

The Abu Abbas-led faction is known for aerial attacks against Israel. Abbas's group also was responsible for the attack in 1985 on the cruise ship *Achille Lauro* and the murder of US citizen Leon Klinghoffer. A warrant for Abu Abbas's arrest is outstanding in Italy.

Strength

Unknown.

Location/Area of Operation

PLO faction based in Tunisia until *Achille Lauro* attack. Now based in Iraq.

External Aid

Receives support mainly from Iraq. Has received support from Libya in the past.

POPULAR FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE (PFLP)***Description***

Marxist-Leninist group founded in 1967 by George Habash as a member of the PLO. Joined the Alliance of Palestinian Forces (APF) to oppose the Declaration of Principles signed in 1993 and suspended participation in the PLO. Broke away from the APF, along with the DFLP, in 1996 over ideological differences. Took part in meetings with Arafat's Fatah party and PLO representatives in 1999 to discuss national unity and the reinvigoration of the PLO but continues to oppose current negotiations with Israel.

Activities

Committed numerous international terrorist attacks during the 1970s. Since 1978 has conducted attacks against Israeli or moderate Arab targets, including killing a settler and her son in December 1996.

Strength

Some 800.

Location/Area of Operation

Syria, Lebanon, Israel, and the occupied territories.

External Aid

Receives safe haven and some logistic assistance from Syria.

**POPULAR FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE-GENERAL
COMMAND (PFLP-GC)**

Description

Split from the PFLP in 1968, claiming it wanted to focus more on fighting and less on politics. Violently opposed to Arafat's PLO. Led by Ahmad Jabril, a former captain in the Syrian Army. Closely tied to both Syria and Iran.

Activities

Carried out dozens of attacks in Europe and the Middle East during 1970s-80s. Known for cross-border terrorist attacks into Israel using unusual means, such as hot-air balloons and motorized hang gliders. Primary focus now on guerrilla operations in southern Lebanon, small-scale attacks in Israel, West Bank, and Gaza Strip.

Strength

Several hundred.

Location/Area of Operation

Headquartered in Damascus with bases in Lebanon.

External Aid

Receives logistic and military support from Syria and financial support from Iran.

AL-QAIDA [AL-QAEDA]

Description

Established by Usama Bin Ladin in the late 1980s to bring together Arabs who fought in Afghanistan against the Soviet invasion. Helped finance, recruit, transport, and train Sunni Islamic extremists for the Afghan resistance. Current goal is to establish a pan-Islamic Caliphate throughout the world by working with allied Islamic extremist groups to overthrow regimes it deems "non-Islamic" and expelling Westerners and non-Muslims from Muslim countries. Issued statement under banner of "the World Islamic Front for Jihad Against the Jews and Crusaders" in February 1998, saying it was the duty of all Muslims to kill US citizens--civilian or military--and their allies everywhere.

Activities

Plotted to carry out terrorist operations against US and Israeli tourists visiting Jordan for millennial celebrations. (Jordanian authorities thwarted the planned attacks and put 28 suspects on trial.) Conducted the bombings in August 1998 of the US Embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, that killed at least 301 persons and injured more than 5,000 others. Claims to have shot down US helicopters and killed US servicemen in Somalia in 1993 and to have conducted three bombings that targeted US troops in Aden, Yemen, in December 1992. Linked to the following plans that were not carried out: to assassinate Pope John Paul II during his visit to Manila in late 1994, simultaneous bombings of the US and Israeli Embassies in Manila and other Asian capitals in late 1994, the midair bombing of a dozen US trans-Pacific flights in 1995, and to kill President Clinton during a visit to the Philippines in early 1995. Continues to train, finance, and provide logistic support to terrorist groups in support of these goals.

Strength

May have several hundred to several thousand members. Also serves as a focal point or umbrella organization for a worldwide network that includes many Sunni Islamic extremist groups such as Egyptian Islamic Jihad, some members of al-Gama'at al-Islamiyya, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, and the Harakat ul-Mujahidin.

Location/Area of Operation

Al-Qaida has a worldwide reach, has cells in a number of countries, and is reinforced by its ties to Sunni extremist networks. Bin Ladin and his key lieutenants reside in Afghanistan, and the group maintains terrorist training camps there.

External Aid

Bin Ladin, son of a billionaire Saudi family, is said to have inherited approximately \$300 million that he uses to finance the group. Al-Qaida also maintains moneymaking front organizations, solicits donations from like-minded supporters, and illicitly siphons funds from donations to Muslim charitable organizations.

REVOLUTIONARY PEOPLE'S LIBERATION PARTY/FRONT (DHKP/C)

a.k.a. Devrimci Sol (Revolutionary Left), Dev Sol

Description

Originally formed in 1978 as Devrimci Sol, or Dev Sol, a splinter faction of the Turkish People's Liberation Party/Front. Renamed in 1994 after factional infighting, it espouses a Marxist ideology and is virulently anti-US and anti-NATO. Finances its activities chiefly through armed robberies and extortion.

Activities

Since the late 1980s has concentrated attacks against current and retired Turkish security and military officials. Began a new campaign against foreign interests in 1990. Assassinated two US military contractors and wounded a US Air Force officer to protest the Gulf war. Launched rockets at US Consulate in Istanbul in 1992. Assassinated prominent Turkish businessman and two others in early 1996, its first significant

terrorist act as DHKP/C. Turkish authorities thwarted DHKP/C attempt in June 1999 to fire light antitank weapon at US Consulate in Istanbul. Series of safehouse raids, arrests by Turkish police over last two years has weakened group significantly. Turkish security forces stormed prison wards controlled by the DHKP/C in December 2000, transferring militants to cell-type penitentiaries and further undermining DHKP/C cohesion.

Strength

Unknown.

Location/Area of Operation

Conducts attacks in Turkey, primarily in Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, and Adana. Raises funds in Western Europe.

External Aid

Unknown

CHAPTER 3

THE JIHADISTS

“We acknowledge allegiance only to an Islamic leadership that strives to re-establish Islaam in practical life, dissociating ourselves from all other types of society and leadership.”
Sayyid Qutb quoting Fee Zhilaal Al-Quraan, 7/143

The perpetrators of the 9/11 attacks were agents of, and adherents of, a Sunni Muslim Fundamentalist group called al-Qaeda.¹²⁰ Its emir, or commander, was a wealthy Saudi citizen named Osama bin Laden.¹²¹ The origins of this group are so murky that it is difficult, even today, to establish agreement on the year of origin.¹²² Al-Qaeda’s date of beginning may be debated but its philosophical origin is not. Osama bin Laden’s philosophical mentor was an Egyptian professor named Sayyid Qutb.¹²³

Sayyid Qutb

Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966) was an Egyptian intellectual and religious philosopher that followed Salafi tradition. He was trained in both Western education and traditional Islamic education. He admired Western

¹²⁰ The authors use the most common English form al-Qaeda of the Arabic *al-qā‘idah*. The term is also translated as al-Qaida, al-Qæda and sometimes al-Qa’ida, among other variations.

¹²¹ The name Osama bin Laden, as used in this study, is the most common English translation from the Arabic. U.S. Government reports list the same as Usama bin Laden, which is proper. There is no letter “O” translated from Arabic. See for example, J.T. Caruso, Acting Assistant Director, Counterterrorism Division, before the Subcommittee on International Operations and Terrorism, Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, on December 8, 2001. The name is often abbreviated UBL in U.S. Government correspondence. Bin Laden’s full name was *Usāmah bin Muḥammad bin Awaḍ bin Lādin*. There are several variations on spelling. See *English–Arabic Almaany Dictionary*. 2011. <http://www.almaany.com/en/dict/ar-en/usama/?category=Names+Meanings>; Brian Whitaker, “Arabic words and the Roman alphabet.” <http://al-bab.com/arabic-language/arabic-language>

¹²² The FBI places the origins of al-Qaeda “in the early 1980’s” Testimony by J.T. Caruso, Acting Assistant Director, Counterterrorism Division, before the Subcommittee on International Operations and Terrorism, Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, December 8, 2001; The *9/11 Commission Final Report* tracks its origins to 1980, when Osama Bin Laden arrived to fight the Soviets in Afghanistan. United States Government, National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, *The 9/11 Commission Report: The Attack From Planning to Aftermath* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2011); author Peter Bergen sets the origins in 1988. Peter Bergen, *The Osama bin Laden I Know: An Oral History of al Qaeda’s Leader* (2nd ed.) (New York: Free Press. 2006), 75; *Foreign Policy.com* sets the beginning in August 1988. Ty McCormick, “Al Qaeda Core: A Short History,” <http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/03/17/al-Qaeda-core-a-short-history> ; Bill Moyers, author, essayist and journalist, sets the origins as early as 1979. Bill Moyers, *Bill Moyers Journal*, PBS. <http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/07272007/alqaeda.html>. The most specific date is August 11, 1988, in an organizational meeting in Peshawar, Pakistan. This is the date preferred by Lawrence Wright in *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11*, to date, by far the best work on Al-Qaeda. This volume won the Pulitzer Prize in 2007 for the best nonfiction book. Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11* (New York: Vintage Books, 2011), 150.

¹²³ Pronounced (*kuh*-Tub). Translated from the Arabic, Qutb means “Pole Star” or pivot, the spindle around which all other things rotates. See Trevor Stanley, “Sayyid Qutb: The Pole Star of Egyptian Salafism,” *Perspectives on World History and Current Events* (PWHCE). <http://www.pwhce.org/qutb.html>. The website for PWHCE ceased operation in January 2006, but articles and white papers remain available through browser search.

science, technology, and rational thought, but believed that Western decadence led people away from religion, particularly for Muslims.¹²⁴ He was a staunch anti-Communist, due to its atheistic doctrine, but he believed there were aspects that could be used. He believed the same to be true of Capitalism. This led to an attempt to synthesize these two economic theories into a modified form of Islam.¹²⁵ The result, over a several year period and a trip to the United States, became a self-radicalized concept to form a pan-Islamic state based on Sharia (Islamic) Law. He believed that ultimately, both Communism and Capitalism would fall under their own weight, and that Islam would prevail as it was destined to be.

The whole world today coalesces in large ideological formations predicated on doctrines and beliefs. Striving towards Islamic unity is, hence, much more in the spirit of the times we live in.¹²⁶

Qutb traveled to the United States in 1948 as a member of the Egyptian Education Department and remained there until 1951. This voyage was prompted by an arrest warrant issued by King Farouk for some of Qutb's anti-monarchist writings. Some of his friends procured a job for him and spirited him out of the country to study Western education systems.¹²⁷ He was, in essence, a rural intellectual dropped into New York City during the post-World War II world of prosperity and decadence. He was intrigued and appalled by what he saw. Qutb loved music but the dancing, in his eyes, was obscene. Clothing styles of women were scandalous. He moved to Greeley, Colorado to attend an education program and was further mystified by the attitudes of western girls who found freedom on a college campus for the first time. Qutb's intellectual journey moved him to the firm belief that Western ways were evil. Western decadence must be driven by Satan, and that only Islam, a changed, strident Islam, must be humanity's only salvation.¹²⁸

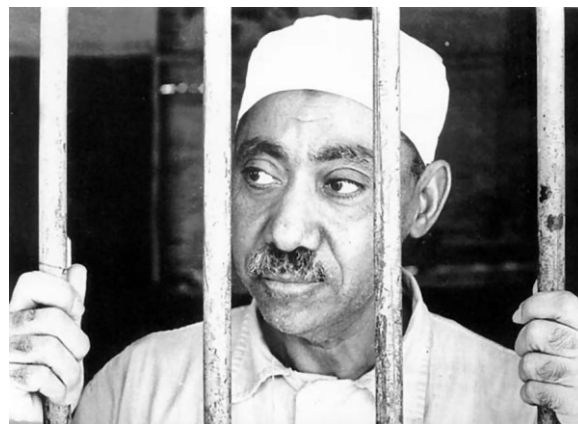


Figure 15. Sayyid Qutb during his time as a prisoner in Egypt.
(Image from LookLex Encyclopaedia www.l-ciaqs.com)

Qutb returned to Egypt in 1951, lost his job with the Egyptian government, and joined Hassan al-Banna's revolutionary society, the *Ikhwan al-Muslimin* (Muslim Brotherhood). He later said "I was born in

¹²⁴ Emmanuel Sirvan, *Radical Islam: Medieval Theology and Modern Politics* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), 25.

¹²⁵ Roxanne L. Euben, *Enemy in the Mirror: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Limits of Modern Rationalism, a work of Comparative Political Theory* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999). 96.

¹²⁶ Police interview with Sayyid Qutb quoted in Sirvan, *Radical Islam*, 32.

¹²⁷ Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 9.

¹²⁸ The best rendition of Qutb's time in America is found in Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 11-27; Gilles Kepel, *Muslim Extremism in Egypt: The Prophet and Pharaoh*, translated from the French by Jon Rothschild (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1985) 41-41; Sirvan, *Radical Islam*, 22.

1951.”¹²⁹ Qutb grafted his theories on to those of al-Banna. They became indistinguishable. An excellent example is:

...the civilization of the West, which was brilliant by virtue of its scientific perfection for a long time, and which subjugated the whole world with the products of this science to its states and nations, is now bankrupt and in decline.¹³⁰

Al-Banna was assassinated in 1949 and the organization waivered until Qutb arrived.¹³¹ The Muslim Brotherhood was caught up in the failed assassination attempt on Egypt’s President, Gamel Abdul Nasser in 1952 during the Free Officers Coup.¹³² This coup overthrew the monarchy in Egypt. The intent of the coup was to create a single party government based on pan-Arab nationalism with a future goal of creating a single Middle East-wide Arab-Muslim country.¹³³ Gamel Abdel Nasser became President of Egypt. The Muslim Brotherhood was exempted from a ban on political parties and Qutb led the Brotherhood’s propaganda department.¹³⁴

The Free Officers and the Muslim Brotherhood initially worked together. Qutb was appointed Cultural Advisor to the Revolutionary Command Council, but he resigned the same year when the government refused to immediately establish an Islamic State.¹³⁵ Although a few members of the Brotherhood still worked with the Free Officers’ government, tensions rose over whether the Islamic State should be instituted or if the government should remain secular. Nasser increased his power substantially with the help of the Egyptian Army and the government split with the Brotherhood and formally banned them in 1954. The Brotherhood attempted to assassinate Nasser the same year.¹³⁶

These events are the origin of the strife between the *jihadi Salafi* ideology and official secular governments in the Middle East. They are also the origin of the Muslim Brotherhood’s efforts to reject Western and Soviet aid to the secular governments and to create internal fundamentalist (extreme right wing) Sunni groups to overthrow the Muslim governments and establish a pan-Arab Sunni Caliphate in the style of the Prophet Mohammed. The leaders would be emirs (commanders). In effect, all true history began with the Prophet Mohammed and ended with the destruction of the Western European Crusader states. Everything subsequent was an aberration of Islamic ideals. Al-Qaeda and (in a later timeframe) ISIS track their ideological beginnings to this split.

The Egyptian government considered the Muslim Brotherhood to be a major threat to its existence and began to systematically imprison and torture the latter’s members. The Brotherhood failed to remain cohesive and fractured internally along philosophical lines.¹³⁷ Among those imprisoned was Sayyid Qutb.

Qutb, while in prison, authored his most influential works. He saw his persecution as a natural evolution toward the dominance of the Faith (Islam). Each succeeding book clarified Qutb’s vision of the future path of jihadi Islam. He composed *Fi Zhalil al-Quran* (In the Shadow of the Qur’an), a multiple volume commentary on the *Qur’an*, and his seminal work, *Ma’alim fi’l-Tariq* (*Milestones on the Road*).¹³⁸ *Milestones* is a manifesto, an analysis, and a call to arms.¹³⁹ Author Trevor Stanley states:

¹²⁹ Kepel, *Muslim Extremism in Egypt*, 37.

¹³⁰ Asaf Hussain, *Political Terrorism & the State in the Middle East*, (London: Mansell Publishing Limited, 1988), 78.

¹³¹ Youssef M Choueiri, *Islamic Fundamentalism*, revised edition, (London: Pinter (Cassell), 1997), 55.

¹³² Kepel, *Muslim Extremism in Egypt*, 37.

¹³³ Stanley, “Sayyid Qutb...”

¹³⁴ Choueiri, *Islamic Fundamentalism*, 42; Hussain, *Political Terrorism and the State in the Middle East*, 80.

¹³⁵ Euben, *Enemy in the Mirror*, 60.

¹³⁶ Kepel, *Muslim Extremism in Egypt*, 26-27.

¹³⁷ Choueiri, *Islamic Fundamentalism*, 43; Sirvan, *Radical Islam*, 40; Stanley, “Sayyid Qutb...”

¹³⁸ Stanley, “Sayyid Qutb...”

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

Qutb believes that the creative energy of the West is spent, with the systems of the West bankrupt and drawing on Marxist models which themselves have failed.... Qutb asserts that all contemporary societies have reverted to a state of *jahiliyya* or pre-Islamic ignorance, in which the authority and primacy of God has been replaced by other sources of authority. Qutb pointedly draws comparisons between the alleged state of the Arabian Peninsula at the time of Muhammad (ruled by dictators on behalf of foreign powers) and its state in the 20th Century.¹⁴⁰

Qutbism

Qutb's views became known as Qutbism. At its core was the belief that Mohammad and his companions endured a period of isolation and persecution that focused their beliefs, honing them into sharp focus. Only Allah granted authority for them to make their way along the true path of enlightenment. Secular governments of any style or creed were corrupt and would fall from their own weight, but only with the assistance of jihad (struggle or holy war). Qutb believed that all Muslims, individuals and governments, were in a state of pre-Islam and that they must morph into "True Islam" to be pure.¹⁴¹ The result has been termed "Puritan Islam," "Islamic Fascism," and "Islamic Extremism."¹⁴² Qutbism is not a product solely from the mind of Sayyid Qutb. It combines the thoughts and writings of Abul Ala Maududi and Hassan al Banna. It is a "fusion of puritanical and intolerant Islamic orientations that include elements from both the Sunni and Shia sects of Islam that have been combined with broader Islamist goals and methodologies."¹⁴³ Qutbism combines tenets of Salafi, Wahhabism, and Deobandi structures.¹⁴⁴ When synthesized, Qutbism yields the following core concepts:¹⁴⁵

- A belief that Muslims have deviated from true Islam and must re- turn to "pure Islam" as originally practiced during the time of the Prophet.
- The path to "pure Islam" is only through a literal and strict interpre- tation of the Quran and Hadith, along with implementation of the Prophet's commands.
- Muslims should individually interpret the original sources with- out being slavishly bound to the interpretations of Islamic scholars.
- That any interpretation of the Quran from a historical, contextual perspective is a corruption, and that the majority of Islamic history and the classical jurisprudential tradition is mere sophistry.

These pillars, and the description of them, made Sayyid Qutb the preeminent theorist of the new Jihadism.¹⁴⁶ Qutb's worldview placed all Muslim leaders on the same par with the Westerners, whom he

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*; Sayyid Qutb, *Milestones* (N.P.: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2005). Chapter 2.

¹⁴¹ Kepel, *Muslim Extremism in Egypt*, 44-46; Barry Rubin and Judith Colp Rubin (editors), *Anti-American Terrorism and the Middle East*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 14.

¹⁴² Dale C. Eikmeier, "Qutbism: An Ideology of Islamic-Fascism," (*Parameters*, Spring 2007), 85-97.

¹⁴³ Eikmeier, "Qutbism," 86.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁵ The concepts are provided verbatim from Eikmeier, "Qutbism," 87; Khaled Abou El Fadl, *Islam and the Theology of Power*, <http://www.islamfortoday.com/elfadl01.htm>; also, for a thorough examination of Sayyid Qutb and his influence on the jihadists, see John Calvert, *Sayyid Qutb and the Origins of Radical Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), *passim*.

¹⁴⁶ Fawaz A. Gerges, *The Far Enemy: Why Jihad Went Global* (Bronxville, NY: Sarah Lawrence College), <http://www.cambridge.org/us/catalogue/catalogue.asp>

termed “*jahili*” or “Crusaders.”¹⁴⁷ Qutb’s radical beliefs and his disdain for the Egyptian secular government led to his execution in 1966. President Nasser had Qutb and forty-two others tried by a three-judge court. The most important of the judges was a close Nasser confidant, Anwar al-Sadat.¹⁴⁸ He was found guilty and sentenced to life in prison.

Qutb had experienced poor health throughout his life. The prison environment made it worse. Photos of him from this time made appear gaunt. His health declined and the sentence was reduced to fifteen years.¹⁴⁹ He was released early and immediately began preaching his gospel. The security forces arrested Qutb and another trial re-imposed the death penalty. Nasser sent Sadat to the prison and he offered to commute the sentence of death by hanging if Qutb would refute Jihad. He refused.¹⁵⁰

Qutb was influential while in prison. His writings were smuggled out, copied, and passed around within the radical groups in Egypt. Nasser miscalculated by executing Qutb; not silencing the philosopher, but turning him into a martyr. His writings became popular in the Islamist fundamentalist population. Salafi professors in Egypt and Saudi Arabia taught Qutb’s thoughts and writings. His call for a true jihad with two enemies, those near (in the Middle East) and those far (in the West, particularly the United States) were heard by many like-minded professors and students. Among them was an Egyptian student who studied in Saudi Arabia, Ayman al-Zawahiri. Zawahiri formed his first jihadist cell at age fifteen, immediately following the death of Qutb.¹⁵¹ The martyr now had an intelligent, ruthless follower.

Sadat changed his mind from being pro-Soviet to pro-Western. He made peace with Israel after the disastrous 1973 Yom Kippur War. Sadat was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for the peace accord. These two moves angered the Muslim Brotherhood. He was assassinated at an armed forces day parade on October 6, 1981. Sadat was succeeded by Hosni Mubarak, a close confidant. The jihadist scheme to create an Islamist State (IS) failed.

Soon after the attacks on New York and Washington on September 11, 2001, some writers tried to establish links between Sayyid Qutb and Osama bin Laden.¹⁵² Today, there is little or no doubt of the links with Sayyid Qutb’s younger brother, Muhammad Qutb, as the common denominator.

Sayyid Qutb used parables from the Qur’an to make his points, particularly concerning violence brought to the true believers by unnamed or unknown assailants. This is a very ancient form of teaching and indoctrination. Osama Bin Laden later used the same tactic. Writing exclusively for Muslims, Qutb, and later, bin Laden, explained the difference between (in their eyes) true believers and those pretending to be believers. An example is the story of the “Pit of Fire” from Surat al-buruj 85:4-8 in the Qur’an:

Qur'an -

Consider ... Him who witnesses [all] and [of] that unto which witness is borne [by Him]! They destroy but themselves, they who would ready a pit of fire fiercely burning [for all who have attained to faith]! Lo! [with glee do] they contemplate that [fire], fully conscious of what they are doing to the believers, who they hate for no other reason than that they believe in God, the Almighty, the One to whom all praise is due, [and] to whom the dominion of the heavens and that earth belongs. But God is witness unto everything! Verily, as for those who persecute

¹⁴⁷ David Von Drehle, “A Lesson In Hate: How an Egyptian student came to study 1950s America and left to wage holy war,” *Smithsonian Magazine*: February 2006, <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/a-lesson-in-hate-109822568/?page=2> *Jahiliyya* is the term for all who are corrupted and stand in the way of Jihad.

¹⁴⁸ Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 34.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ Drehle, “A Lesson In Hate.”

¹⁵¹ Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 44.

¹⁵² See, for example, Robert Irwin, “Is this the man who inspired bin Laden?” *The Guardian*, November 1, 2001.

believing men and believing women and thereafter do not repent, hell's suffering awaits them: yea suffering through fire awaits them!¹⁵³

Qutb –

... arrogant, mischievous, criminal and degraded people ... sat by the pit of fire, watching how the Believers suffered and writhed in pain. They sat there to enjoy the sight of how fire consumes living beings and how the bodies of these noble souls were reduced to cinders and ashes ... shouts of mad joy would escape their lips at the sight of blood and pieces of flesh¹⁵⁴

bin Laden –

God mentioned the people of the trench and immortalized their memory by praising them for being resolute in their faith. They were given a choice between faith and being thrown into the fire. They refused not to believe in God, and so they were thrown into hell [he means "the fire" presumably]. At the end of the story of the boy, when the tyrant king ordered that the believers should be thrown in the pit, a poor mother came carrying her son.... as the Prophet relates, her son told her: 'be patient, mother, for you are in the right.'

No Muslim would ever possibly ask: what did they benefit? ... They were victorious, with the blessings of God Almighty, and with the immortal heavens that God promised them.¹⁵⁵

Sayyid Qutb's interpretations and analysis of the Qur'an blends cohesively with bin Laden's rhetoric. Some of the principal themes they shared were that usury is an evil tool created by the Jews,¹⁵⁶ all enemies are decadent,¹⁵⁷ the world exists in a state of pre-Islam,¹⁵⁸ democracy is un-Islamic,¹⁵⁹ obedience to human rulers is a form of slavery,¹⁶⁰ obedience is worship,¹⁶¹ Christians are polytheists (because they believe in the Trinity)¹⁶² and the Crusades were and are centuries-long struggles against true Islam.¹⁶³ The last tenet was the most common point pressed by bin Laden. All Western forces in the Middle East and all Soviet or Russian forces in the Middle East were Crusaders. Neither Qutb nor bin Laden saw any difference in the East-West struggles after the turn of the second millennium and struggles at the end of the second and opening years of the third millennium. The clearest comment on this subject is by Qutb:

Enemies of the Believers may wish to change this struggle into an economic or political ... struggle so that the Believers become confused concerning the true nature of the struggle and the flame of belief in their hearts becomes extinguished ... We see an example of this today in

¹⁵³ Surah al-Buruj 85:3-10 as translated by <<http://www.islamicity.com/QuranSearch/>>

¹⁵⁴ Qutb, *Milestones*, 150.

¹⁵⁵ Osama Bin Laden, *Messages to the World, the Statements of Osama bin Laden* (London: Verso, 2005), 153-4, from a video message given to Al-Jazeera in Dec. 2001.

¹⁵⁶ Qutb, *Milestones*, 110-11; bin laden, audio tape to Al-Jazeera, February, 14, 2003.

¹⁵⁷ Qutb, *Milestones*, 7; bin laden, *Messages*, 181; bin Laden, "To the People of Iraq," audio tape delivered to Al-Jazeera, Feb. 11, 2003.

¹⁵⁸ Qutb, *Milestones*, 20; bin Laden, *Messages*, 16.

¹⁵⁹ Qutb, *Milestones*, 81-2; bin Laden. Audio tape to Al-Jazeera, January 4, 2004.

¹⁶⁰ Qutb, *Milestones*, 58; bin Laden. Audio tape to Al-Jazeera, January 4, 2004.

¹⁶¹ Qutb, *Milestones*, 60; bin Laden. Audio tape to Al-Jazeera, January 4, 2004.

¹⁶² Qutb, *Milestones*, 159-60; bin Laden. Audio tape to Al-Jazeera, January 4, 2004.

¹⁶³ Qutb, *Milestones*, 159-60; bin Laden. *Messages*, xx.

the attempts of Christendom to try to deceive us by distorting history and saying t bin laden, audio tape to Al-Jazeera, February, 14, 2003. that the Crusades were a form of imperialism. The truth of the matter is that the latter-day imperialism is but a mask for the crusading spirit, since it is not possible for it to appear in its true form, as it was possible in the Middle Ages.¹⁶⁴

In Qutb's mind and in his writing, *Jahiliyya* or pre-Islamic ignorance, must give way to true Islam by jihadist methods.

Qutb was adamant that violence should be directed against anyone not devoted to the *jihadi Salafi* ideology. That includes all Westerners and those Muslims who were not strict adherents of Qutb's ideology. Women and children were not to be spared. "Soft targets" of civilian use, such as shopping malls, business buildings, public buildings, and open air crowded venues were all allowed and even encouraged. Operations against Muslims were to convince the survivors to join the movement. Qutb and his followers chose to focus on the 109 verses in the Qur'an that promote violence.¹⁶⁵ Most verses in the promoting violence in the Qur'an are open ended with no historical analysis offered or needed. They are the words of the Prophet and are not to be interpreted.¹⁶⁶ Some prime examples include the following. All parenthetical statements are by the translators.¹⁶⁷

And kill them wherever you find them, and turn them out from where they have turned you out. And Al-Fitnah [disbelief or unrest] is worse than killing... but if they desist, then lo! Allah is forgiving and merciful. And fight them until there is no more Fitnah [disbelief and worshipping of others along with Allah] and worship is for Allah alone. But if they cease, let there be no transgression except against Az-Zalimun (the polytheists, and wrong-doers, etc).¹⁶⁸

Soon shall We cast terror into the hearts of the Unbelievers, for that they joined companions with Allah, for which He had sent no authority.¹⁶⁹

They but wish that ye should reject Faith, as they do, and thus be on the same footing (as they): But take not friends from their ranks until they flee in the way of Allah (From what is forbidden). But if they turn renegades, seize them and slay them wherever ye find them; and (in any case) take no friends or helpers from their ranks.¹⁷⁰

I will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieve. Therefore strike off their heads and strike off every fingertip of them.¹⁷¹

Muhammad Qutb

Sayyid Qutb had a younger brother, Muhammad, who was an author and academic. Muhammad was a Sunni theorist. His most important book was *Islam: The Misunderstood Religion*.¹⁷² The Egyptian government

¹⁶⁴ Qutb, *Milestones*, 159-60.

¹⁶⁵ <http://www.thereligionofpeace.com/pages/quran/violence.aspx>; Calvert, Sayyid Qutb, 197-271.

¹⁶⁶ <http://www.thereligionofpeace.com/pages/quran/violence.aspx>; Calvert, Sayyid Qutb, 197-271.

¹⁶⁷ <http://www.thereligionofpeace.com/quran/noble/sura> (followed by Surah and verse.)

¹⁶⁸ Surah 2 Al-Baqarah (The Cow), from the "Noble" Qur'an, 2:191-193.

¹⁶⁹ Surah 3 Ale-Imran (The family of Man), from the "Noble" Qur'an, 3:151.

¹⁷⁰ Surah 4 An-Nisá (The Women), from the "Noble" Qur'an, 4-89.

¹⁷¹ Surah 8 Al-Anfal (The Spoils of War), from the "Noble" Qur'an, 8:12.

¹⁷² Muhammed Kutub (disambiguation), *Islam the Misunderstood Religion* (sic), <http://islambasics.com>

conducted a crackdown on known associates of Qutb in order to prevent his martyrdom from gaining widespread approval. Muhammad left Egypt voluntarily after being released from jail and went Saudi Arabia, which welcomed him. He taught at King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah. Muhammad was a strong advocate for Salafi jihadism and his brother's concepts of a new Islam. Muhammad Qutb purposefully served as a conduit between Sayyid's manuscripts and the profligation of his ideas to a new generation of jihadists.¹⁷³ He was a firm voice in the wake of his brother's death. He published most of his brother's writings which were smuggled out of prison. Muhammad edited the manuscripts and preached his brother's message.¹⁷⁴ He taught a compulsory course on Salafi thought and the textbook used was his brother's *Milestones*. Two of Muhammad Qutb's students and close followers were Ayman al-Zawahiri and Osama bin Laden. The editor of the jihadist website www.Islam21C.com summed up Muhammad Qutb's contributions:

It has to be said that his [Muhammad Qutb] ideas were nothing but going back to the purest form of Islām, which caused social, political and comprehensive change in the lives of individuals and societies. After the fall of the Othman [sic] Caliphate in 1924, many ideas came about that manifested a weak and miserable status of the Muslim Ummah¹⁷⁵ at that time. Hence, ideas such as those of Sayyid Qutb and then his brother, Muhammad Qutb, were not only considered novel but in fact they were seen as revolutionary....



Figure 16. Muhammad Qutb
(Image source: www.Islam21C.com)

The impact of Muhammad Qutb's legacy spoke louder than his name. This was because of his beautiful conduct in propagating Islām, his remarkable humility and his passion and optimism. Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan amazed his guards and Saudi officials when he requested a visit to Sheikh Muhammad Qutb during his visit to Makkah for 'Umrah a few

¹⁷³ Masami Nishino, "Muhammad Qutb's Islamist Thought: A Missing Link between Sayyid Qutb and al-Qaeda?" *NIDS Journal of Defense and Security*: December 16, 2015 113-145. [National Institute for Defense Studies, Tokyo Japan.

¹⁷⁴ See <http://www.islam21c.com/editorials/mohammad-qutb-death-of-an-icon/> for a jihadist view of Muhammad Qutb's obituary.

¹⁷⁵ Muslim community

years ago. Upon offering him permanent stay in Turkey, Muhammad Qutb said that he preferred to stay next to the house of Allāh. This story was narrated through many sources including through his son, Usāmah.¹⁷⁶

Muhammad Qutb's role in preserving his brother's concepts and spreading the radical manifesto are pivotal. Without him, Sayyid Qutb's voice may have been lost and al-Qaeda would never have absorbed both brothers' reinterpretation of history.¹⁷⁷ Muhammad Qutb died peacefully in a hospital in Mecca on April 4, 2014 at age 95.¹⁷⁸

Ayman al-Zawahiri

Muhammad Qutb's first major convert to Qutbism was Ayman Mohammed Rabie al-Zawahiri. He is a native of the Maadi suburb of Cairo, Egypt. He is from a family of physicians and scholars. He is a medical doctor trained at Cairo University.¹⁷⁹ Following the death of Osama bin Laden, Zawahiri assumed command and is currently the head of al-Qaeda. The FBI placed a \$25 million bounty for information leading to his capture.¹⁸⁰



Figure 17. Ayman al-Zawahiri
(Image source: *Daily Mail* (London) www.dailymail.co.uk)

Zawahiri created his first clandestine terrorist cell in Egypt at age of sixteen following the Arab-Israeli Six-Day War in 1967.¹⁸¹ He joined the Muslim Brotherhood at age fourteen.¹⁸² He believed that the

¹⁷⁶ <http://www.islam21c.com/editorials/mohammad-qutb-death-of-an-icon/>

¹⁷⁷ Nishino, "Muhammad Qutb's Islamist Thought," 142-43.

¹⁷⁸ "Muhammad Qutb, brother of Sayyid Qutb, pass away," *Madhyamam* [English version] <http://www.madhyamam.com/en/node/22234>

¹⁷⁹ Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 38-68.

¹⁸⁰ "Most Wanted Terrorists – Ayman Al-Zawahiri" Federal Bureau of Investigation, US Department of Justice, www.fbi.gov

¹⁸¹ Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 44-45.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 37.

only way to rescue Egypt from its problems was to return to the pure Islam espoused by the Prophet Muhammad. Secular ties to non-Islamic nations were tearing his country apart. During this formative period, Zawahiri came in contact with the writings of Sayyid Qutb.¹⁸³ Zawahiri's first goals were to topple the Egyptian government, then led by Sadat, and to create an Islamist state as the core of a Pan-Arab jihadist union.¹⁸⁴ He completed his medical studies in 1974, with an advanced degree in surgery. He spent the next three years as a medical officer in the Egyptian Army.¹⁸⁵ Zawahiri found that Egypt was not a practical place to conduct true jihadist war. He traveled to Peshawar, Pakistan in 1981, while working with the Red Crescent (an arm of the international Red Cross.) Peshawar is located on the eastern end of the Khyber Pass. From there, men and materiel could funnel into Afghanistan to fight the Soviets.¹⁸⁶

Zawahiri returned to Egypt and joined the terrorist group al-Jihaad al-Islami.¹⁸⁷ He quickly rose to leadership. The Muslim Brotherhood made a resurgence under Zawahiri. Many of its members were officers in the Egyptian army. Al-Jihad planned to assassinate Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, but the government discovered the plot and 1,500 people were arrested, including many members of Al-Jihad. The sweep missed a cell in the military that was commanded by Khalid Islambouli.¹⁸⁸ The plot to kill Sadat succeeded on October 6, 1981. The government roundup of radicals was widespread and Zawahiri was arrested and tortured in prison.¹⁸⁹ Upon his release, Zawahiri placed himself in self-exile in Saudi Arabia, where the Salafist Wahhabism movement was closer to his own thoughts. Zawahiri studied at King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah and became an ardent follower of Muhammad Qutb. He became the jihadi professor's principal ideologue. While working as a surgeon in Jeddah in 1986, Zawahiri met Osama bin Laden. He became bin Laden's personal physician and closest advisor.¹⁹⁰

Several Egyptian independent jihadist cells merged in a single network under Zawahiri and bin Laden during the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s. The group became known as the Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ).¹⁹¹ Another physician, Sayyed Imam Al-Sharif, also known as "Dr. Fadl," led the EIJ for some time while Zawahiri was away recruiting and building a larger terror network.¹⁹² Dr. Fadl took the EIJ to a new extreme level, promoted killing all apostates and even those registered to vote, since this violated God's sovereign rule.¹⁹³

Zawahiri and his brother traveled widely and often. Most of Zawahiri's time involved in coordinating operations with other organizations. He apparently sought help from Iran in the attempted assassination of the Egyptian prime minister and the interior minister in 1993.¹⁹⁴ While operating in Sudan in 1994, militant groups began executing each other over which cell would be in command. The Sudanese government kicked all of the militants out of the country.¹⁹⁵ The following year the EIJ attacked the Egyptian Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan. Bin Laden did not approve the operation because he was currying favor with the

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 38-68.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 42.

¹⁸⁶ John Pike, "Ayman al-Zawahiri", <www.Globalsecurity.org>

¹⁸⁷ <http://gemsofislamism.tripod.com/milestones_qutb.html#question_addendum>

¹⁸⁸ Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 50.

¹⁸⁹ Owen Bowcott, "Torture trail to September 11: A two-part investigation into state brutality opens with a look at how the violent interrogation of Islamist extremists hardened their views, helped to create al-Qaida and now, more than ever, is fueling fundamentalist hatred", *The Guardian* (London), January 24, 2003.

¹⁹⁰ Stephen E. Atkins, *The 9/11 Encyclopedia*. ABC-CLIO, 456.

¹⁹¹ "Osama Bin Laden tied to other fundamentalists" *Global Briefings*: Issue 27, September 1998

¹⁹² Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 122.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 124.

¹⁹⁴ Nimrod Raphaeli, "Ayman Muhammad Rabi' Al-Zawahiri: The Making of an Arch Terrorist," *Terrorism and Political Violence* (Winter 2002) 14 (4): 1-22.

¹⁹⁵ Marc Sagerman, *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 45.

Pakistanis.¹⁹⁶ During one of the periodic crackdowns by the Egyptian government, Zawahiri and many of his jihadist cohorts escaped to Afghanistan to save their lives and to fight the Soviets during the Soviet-Afghanistan War.¹⁹⁷ Zawahiri planned the attack on tourists at the Temple of Hatshepsut at Luxor in the Nile Valley in November 1997 to force the Egyptian government to foster support for the radicals.¹⁹⁸ This attack backfired in favor of the government. Zawahiri was sentenced to death in absentia in 1999 by an Egyptian military tribunal.¹⁹⁹ Zawahiri and his associates planned and carried out the bombings of the U.S. Embassies in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and Nairobi, Kenya on August 7, 1998. The U.S. Department of State and the FBI placed Zawahiri under indictment for the bombings.²⁰⁰ Both Zawahiri and bin Laden received extensive coverage in the international press. The USS *Cole* was attacked by al-Qaeda on October 12, 2000 while in port in Aden, Yemen. The strike killed seventeen sailors and injured thirty-nine others.²⁰¹ Although Yemini terrorists carried out the attack. The chief planners were al-Qaeda. This led the chief planners to scatter. Zawahiri and Bin Laden went to Kabul, Afghanistan. Another planner, Mohammed Atef, went to Kandahar, Pakistan. The United States made no reprisal attacks on the terrorist cell.

Zawahiri met with Osama bin Laden in Peshawar, Pakistan. At that time Bin Laden operated a base for then Afghan resistance fighters, the mujahedeen, through the *Maktab al-Khadamat* (MAK), which was co-founded by bin Laden's former professor and mentor, Abdullah Azzam. Bin Laden was the primary financial source.²⁰²

The attacks by Zawahiri and bin Laden escalated in frequency and violence throughout the 1990s and yet U.S. intelligence services, although they knew of the pair's existence, did very little to prepare for a major attack on the homeland. The carnage was still "over there."

The "Blind Sheikh" Omar Abdel-Rahman

Omar Ahmad Ali Abdel-Rahman is best known in the United States as the "Blind Sheik," He was born in al-Gamalia, Egypt in 1938.²⁰³ The future cleric was born with a severe case of juvenile diabetes and lost his sight when he was ten months old. Abdel-Rahman learned to read Braille and memorized the Qur'an in early childhood, completing the task when he was eleven years old.

While living in an Islamic boarding school, Abdel-Rahman turned his interests toward the writings of 13th Century Islamic theorist Ibn Taymiyyah, who was an early advocate of jihad and to the "careful and lengthy attention" he gave "to the questions of martyrdom" in jihad, such as benefits and blessings to be had for martyrs in the afterlife.²⁰⁴ Ibn Taymiyyah also believed that martyrdom earned heavenly rewards: "It is in jihad that one can live and die in ultimate happiness, both in this world and in the Hereafter. Abandoning it means losing entirely or partially both kinds of happiness."²⁰⁵ The second great influence on the young Abdel-Rahman was the writings of Sayyid Qutb.

¹⁹⁶ Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 217.

¹⁹⁷ Stephen E. Atkins, *The 9/11 Encyclopedia*. ABC-CLIO, 456.

¹⁹⁸ Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 256-7.

¹⁹⁹ Al Jazeera English, "Profile: Ayman al-Zawahiri" Archived December 21, 2007.

²⁰⁰ *USA v. Osama bin Laden, et al*, Center for Nonproliferation Studies, Copy of Indictment, Monterey Institute for International Studies.

²⁰¹ "Casualties, U.S Navy and Marine Corps Personnel Killed and Wounded in Wars, Conflicts, and Terrorist Acts and other Hostile Incidents," Naval History & Heritage Command, Washington, D.C.

²⁰² Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 103.

²⁰³ <http://www.nndb.com/people/923/000099626/>

²⁰⁴ Natana DeLong-Bas, *Wahhabi Islam: From Revival and Reform to Global Jihad* (New York: *Oxford University Press*, 2004), 252-3.

²⁰⁵ Rudolph Peters, *Jihad in Classical and Modern Islam: A Reader* (Princeton, NJ: Marcus Wiener, 1998), 48.



Figure 18. Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman
(Image source: www.usofam.com)

Together, these two writers and philosophers shaped the young man's core values. He studied at Cairo University's School of Theology and, upon graduation, earned a doctorate at the Al-Azhar University in Cairo. Abdel-Rahman's emphasis was on *Tafsir*, or interpretation of the Qur'an.²⁰⁶ A Quranic Tafsir confidently explains the content, context, time frame, and geographic locations not contained in the Qur'an's verses and provides the historiographic background and opinions of scholars who have studied a particular Surah or verse. This knowledge comes primarily from the Hadith riwayat Sunni tafsirs.²⁰⁷

Abdel-Rahman was an outspoken critic of The Free Officers movement and particularly of President Gamal Abdel Nasser.²⁰⁸ He became closely affiliated with Ayman al-Zawahiri's Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ), but developed his own rival network, the *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* (the GIA or The Islamic Group). He was still held in high esteem by the EIJ. He would become one of the three principals, with Zawahiri and bin Laden, of Al Qaeda.

Following Nasser's death in 1970, Abdel-Rahman became increasingly bitter over Anwar Sadat's peace accord with Israel. He issued a *fatwa*²⁰⁹ in 1981 calling for Sadat's death.²¹⁰ Following Sadat's assassination, the cleric was jailed for three years in an Egyptian prison although he was not convicted of being a conspirator the assassination.²¹¹ At the end of his jail term, Abdel-Rahman was expelled from Egypt. He went to Afghanistan to work under his former professor, Abdullah Azzam. There, the cleric met Osama bin Laden and became a close friend of the Saudi financier. MAK managed the mujahedeen in their fight against the Soviets. Azzam was murdered November 24, 1989 in a car bomb explosion.²¹² Abdel-Rahman took over the management of the military section of MAK/al-Qaeda.

²⁰⁶ Translated into the Greek as exegesis or a critical explanation or interpretation of a religious text.

²⁰⁷ Badmas 'Lanre, Yusuf, *Sayyid Qutb: A Study of His Tafsir* (New York: The Other Press) 2009), 28.

²⁰⁸ Atkins, *The 9/11 Encyclopedia*, 3.

²⁰⁹ Shaykh Muhammad Hisham Kabbani, A fatwa "What is a Fatwa" The Islamic Supreme Council of America, <http://www.islamicsupremecouncil.org/understanding-islam/legal-rulings/44-what-is-a-fatwa.html> "A fatwa is not by definition a pronouncement of death or a declaration of war. A fatwā is an Islamic legal pronouncement, issued by an expert in religious law (mufti), pertaining to a specific issue, usually at the request of an individual or judge to resolve an issue where Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh), is unclear. Typically, such uncertainty arises as Muslim society works to address new issues."

²¹⁰ J. Tyler Dickovick, *Africa 2012* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2012), 41.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*

²¹² Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 164.

Abdel-Rahman came to the United States in July 1990 to set up a terror network in New York City. He led MAK's operations in the entire United States.

The story of how he legally came to America defines a total lack operational awareness on the part of the U.S. Department of State, the Department of Justice, the FBI and the CIA. The blind cleric went to Khartoum, Sudan and applied for a tourist visa at the U.S. Embassy. He was on the U.S. State Departments terrorist watch list, yet was granted the visa. The visa was revoked on November 17, 1990, but by then it was too late.²¹³ While authorities were looking for him to board a plane in Khartoum, Abdel-Rahman flew from Khartoum to Peshawar, Pakistan, then to Saudi Arabia, and then on to New York.²¹⁴ Typical government bureaucracy took its time to discover what was happening. Abdel-Rahman played the system beautifully. Instead of New York, the clerk went to Newark, New Jersey and obtained a green card from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). Shortly afterward, he left the U.S. and returned in August 1991. Immigration officials recognized him as being listed on Terrorist Watch List and revoked his residency status. However, the government allowed Abel-Rahman to enter the country because he had the right to appeal the loss of his status. He was given a date for his hearing, March 6, 1992, but he did not appear. The government revoked his green card. He then requested political asylum and a new hearing was set for January 20, 1993.²¹⁵

The cleric preached at three mosques in and near New York City. Some of his followers became the team that bombed the World Trade Center in 1993.²¹⁶ Mohammed Salameh and Ibrahim Elgabrownny, two of the perpetrators of the first World Trade Center bombing, were members of the El Salaam Mosque in Jersey City, New Jersey. This mosque was Abdul-Rahman's headquarters, as was the El Farouq Mosque in Brooklyn.²¹⁷

The FBI used an informant, Mamdouh Zaki Zakhary, in this mosque. Zakhary was a Coptic Christian from Egypt, but he fit in perfectly. He reported on the activities of this cell for eighteen months beginning January 10, 1990. He was not part of the inner circle and did not have specific data on Abdel-Rahman's plans. He did, however, report to his FBI handler, Special Agent Kenneth Strange.²¹⁸

The Blind Sheikh planned terrorist attacks from the beginning of his tenure in New York and New Jersey.

They were talking all the time about targeting American symbols, the Empire State Building, the Statue of Liberty. A few of the guys came to the mosque to pray and go home. But others gathered to conspire in small groups, talking in deep, low voices. They see the U.S. as an imperialist power, the Big Satan, the root of all the evil in the world.²¹⁹

The only thing they want is to establish an Islamic world. They will do anything to achieve it. You have to understand their desire to strike out, to avenge anything that hurts Islam. I asked Elgabrownny, 'Why do you stay here [in Brooklyn]?' And he told me, I want to earn their dollars so that I can stab them in the back.²²⁰

²¹³ James McKinley, "Islamic Leader on U.S. terrorist List in Brooklyn," *The New York Times*, December 16, 1990.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*

²¹⁵ Douglas Jehl, "Rahman Errors Admitted," *The New York Times*, March 7, 1993.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*

²¹⁷ Robert L. Friedman, "The CIA and the Sheik," *The Village Voice* (New York), March 30, 1993.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.* All direct quotes from Mamdouh Zaki Zakhary, come from an interview with Zakhary by the *Village Voice* from his home in Alexandria, Egypt.

²¹⁹ Zakhary

²²⁰ *Ibid.*

The first terror attack by the cell was carried out on November 5, 1990. This was the assassination of the Zionist leader and founder of the Jewish Defense League, Rabbi Meir Kahane at the Halloran House hotel in midtown Manhattan.²²¹ The assassin was El Sayyid Nosair, a 34-year-old, a member of the inner circle at the El Salaam Mosque, and an Egyptian American.²²² Nosair tried to escape. During the chase he was wounded and then captured by the New York Police Department (NYPD).²²³

At first, no one knew who Nosair was so when I heard about it I called the FBI and identified him, I told them he was a member of the mosque and that he was very close with the sheikh [Abdel Rahman]. I told them that, four days before, I saw with my own eyes the sheikh meeting with Nosair at a Lebanese restaurant on Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn. It was 7 p.m. There was Nosair, the sheikh, a person escorting the sheikh, and another person I don't know. They were deep in conversation.²²⁴

When the NYPD raided Nosair's home, quoting the *Village Voice*:

Shortly after police arrested Nosair they found startling evidence that the Kahane killing was just the first in a planned spree. Scrawled on a bank calendar in Nosair's home was a "hit list" that included the names of a U.S. representative, two federal judges, and a former assistant U.S. Attorney. Local police searching Nosair's Cliffside Park, New Jersey, home discovered a trove of terrorist paraphernalia: bomb making manuals, AK-47 cartridges, a stolen New York State license plate, and a bullet-riddled target board. There were also a number of passports and driver's licenses under various names, as well as articles about the assassination of Anwar Sadat.²²⁵

The NYPD did not treat the case as terrorist. Instead, homicide detectives ran the case. The capture of Nosair closed the case. The NYPD's lead in the case made any FBI involvement negligible.²²⁶ An FBI counterterrorism agent told an undercover operative in Los Angeles that the FBI could not go after the Sheikh:

"It was no accident that the sheikh got a visa and that he's still in the Country. He's here under the banner of national security, the State Department, the NSA [National Security Agency], and the CIA." The agent pointed out that the sheikh had been granted a tourist visa, and later a green card, despite the fact that he was on a State Department terrorist watch-list that should have barred him from the country. He's an untouchable, concluded the agent. "I haven't seen the lone-gunman theory advocated [so forcefully] since John F. Kennedy."²²⁷

... According to a very high-ranking Egyptian official, when the sheikh moved to Brooklyn in May 1990, he worked closely with the CIA, helping to channel a steady flow of money, men,

²²¹ John Kifner, "Meir Kahane, 58, Israeli Militant and Founder of the Jewish Defense League," *The New York Times*, November 6, 1990.

²²² Friedman, "The CIA and the Sheikh".

²²³ Richard A. Serrano, "Early terrorist in U.S. condemns today's jihad," *Los Angeles Times*, May 16, 2013.

²²⁴ Zakhary

²²⁵ Friedman, "The CIA and the Sheikh".

²²⁶ *Ibid.*

²²⁷ *Ibid.*

and guns to mujahedeen bases in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The camps became a mecca for disaffected youth from across the Muslim world.²²⁸

The money funneled by the CIA to the mujahedeen would have been funneled through a supposedly legitimate regional source, MAK, run by Osama bin Laden.

The Egyptian Intelligence Service (Mukhabarat) warned their U.S. counterparts (the FBI) in July 1990 that "the sheikh's principal mosques in America, the El Salaam Mosque and the El Farouq Masjid Mosque in Brooklyn, were "hotbeds of terrorist activity," and that the fiery blind Muslim preacher was plotting a new round of terrorist attacks in Egypt. "There were many, many contacts between Cairo and Washington."²²⁹ Although noted, nothing was done and the information was not shared with the CIA.²³⁰

The Sheik's Islamic Group cell in Egypt attacked a tour bus of primarily German citizens at the town of Qena on November 11, 1992.²³¹ Abdul-Rahman ran the operation from New York.²³² This began a terror campaign that increased in frequency throughout the next two decades in an effort to destroy the Egyptian tourism industry.

Three months later, on February 26, 1993, Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman's New York/new Jersey cell struck again. This time the target was a major symbol of American economic power, the World Trade Center (WTC) in lower Manhattan. A rental van was parked into the subbasement parking garage of the WTC. Inside it was packed containers of sulfuric acid, nitric acid, and urea, with enough explosives to initiate the blast. The explosion killed six people and injured at least 100 more.²³³ The blast created a crater one hundred feet wide and several stories deep and an equal number above the site.²³⁴ According to an explosives expert interviewed by the *Village Voice*:

If they had found the exact architectural Achilles' heel [of the World Trade Center]," says an explosives expert who works for the FBI, "on if the bomb had been a little bit bigger, not much more, 500 pounds more, I think it would have brought her down. It's really scary."²³⁵

²²⁸ *Ibid.*

²²⁹ *Ibid.*

²³⁰ Richard A. Clarke, *Against All Enemies: Inside America's War on Terror* (New York: Free Press, 2004), 91, 93, 95-6, 99; Richard A. Clarke, *Your Government Failed You: Breaking the Cycle of National Security Disasters* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), 157.

²³¹ <http://www.usdivetravel.com/T-EgyptTerrorism.html>

²³² Richard J. Leitner and Peter M. Leitner, editors, *Unheeded Warnings: The Lost Reports of the Congressional Task Force on Terrorism and Unconventional Warfare* (Washington, D.C.: Crossbow Books, 2007), 181.

²³³ https://archives.fbi.gov/archives/news/stories/2008/february/tradebom_022608

²³⁴ *Ibid.*

²³⁵ Friedman, "The CIA and the Sheik"



Figure 19. FBI investigators examining the crater and rubble at the World Trade Center following the 1993 bombing
(Photo Source: FBI.gov)

The tactical leader of the mission, Ramzi Yousef, was the primary link between the bombing and Abdel Rahman. He got away, but the FBI learned that he was planning more attacks “including the simultaneous bombing of a dozen U.S. international flights. Yousef was captured in Pakistan in February 1995, returned to America, and convicted along with the van driver, Eyad Ismoil.

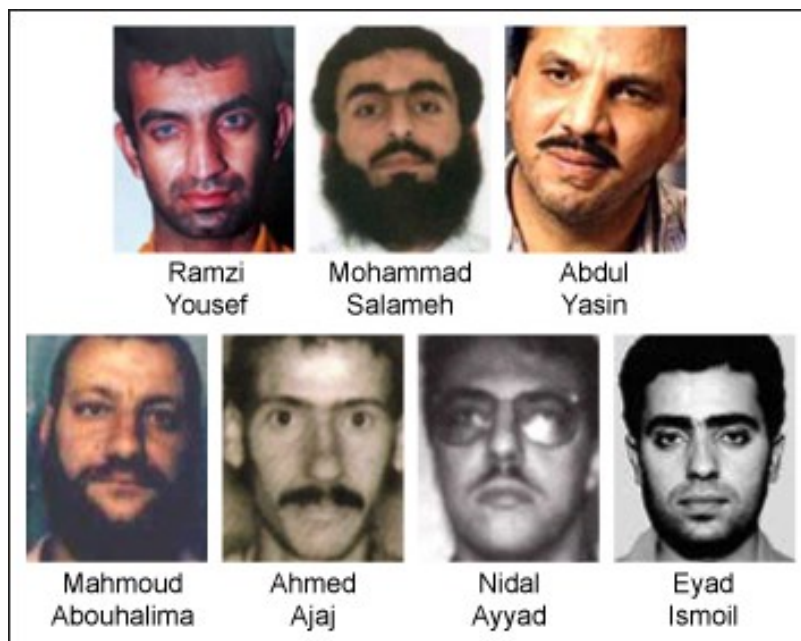


Figure 20. The terrorist team that conducted the 1993 attack on the World Trade Center (Image Source: FBI.gov)

With the world press fixated on the New York bombing, little attention was paid to an almost simultaneous act in Egypt. Abdel-Rahman's Egyptian cell conducted an attack in a fashionable area of Cairo. It killed two tourists and wounded sixteen. The bomb was a fragmentation device filled with rusty nails to complicate medical procedures for those caring for the wounded.²³⁶

Mamdouh Zaki Zakhary, the FBI informant that infiltrated Abdel-Rahman's El Salaam Mosque in Jersey City, New Jersey, was able to identify Sultan Ibrahim El Gawli, the founder of the El Salaam Mosque, an Egyptian born travel agent who had been convicted in 1986 on a Federal charge of conspiracy to send explosives to Israel.²³⁷ According to Zakhary, El Gawli was the brains behind the cell.²³⁸ That would make him the Sheikh's tactical leader. Zakhary testified before a grand jury in Camden, New Jersey and then went into hiding. To protect Zakhary's life, he and his family were placed in the Federal Witness Protection Program. He was relocated to New Orleans and then in other locations in the southwest. He then returned to New Jersey and went undercover for the FBI. He reported that the cell was plotting to assassinate the two U.S. senators from New York, Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Alfonse D'Amato. He failed a lie detector test and the FBI ended his employment.²³⁹ He blamed his failure on taking a prescription medication after being in an automobile accident.²⁴⁰ The FBI then discounted all of Zakhary's information and did not share it with the CIA or the Department of State.

The World Trade Center bombing forced the FBI to look at the Blind Sheikh again. They placed an Egyptian, named Emad Salem, into the Mosque as a member and had wear a wire recorder.²⁴¹ He recorded that the Sheikh and his followers discussed blowing up the United Nations or the American army. Abdul-Rahman also told them not to worry about inflicting damage upon civilians. They also discussed conducting a coordinated plan to set off five bombs within ten minutes – attempting to destroy the United Nations, both the Lincoln and Holland tunnels, the George Washington Bridge and a federal building housing the FBI prosecutors and their evidence against the cell.²⁴²

The evidence was damning and Abdul-Rahman and nine of his followers were arrested on multiple counts of sedition²⁴³ on June 24, 1993. The ten defendants were found guilty on 48 of 50 charges of “plotting assassinations and bombings as part of a Jihad, or Holy War, to undermine United States support for Egypt, whose secular government is anathema to Mr. Abdel Rahman and his followers, and for Israel, a sworn enemy of many Islamic radicals.”²⁴⁴ Salem was immediately placed in the Witness Protection Program after testifying for more than a month.²⁴⁵ Abdul-Rahman did not testify. Two years later, some of the attorneys on Abdul-Rahman's defense counsel were indicted and convicted of facilitating communications between the

²³⁶ CNN, “1993 World Trade Center Bombing Fast Facts,” <http://www.cnn.com/2013/11/05/us/1993-world-trade-center-bombing-fast-facts/>

²³⁷ Friedman, “The CIA and the Sheikh”; John Kifner, “Kahane Suspect is a Muslim With a Series of Addresses,” *The New York Times*, November 7, 1990.

²³⁸ Friedman, “The CIA and the Sheikh.”

²³⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁴¹ Joseph P. Fried, “The Terror Conspiracy: The Overview; Sheikh and 9 Followers Guilty of a Conspiracy of Terrorism,” *The New York Times*, October 2, 1995.

²⁴² *Ibid.*

²⁴³ <http://law.jrank.org/pages/10113/Sedition.html> “Sedition is the crime of revolting or inciting revolt against government. However, because of the broad protection of free speech under the First Amendment, prosecutions for sedition are rare. Nevertheless, sedition remains a crime in the United States under 18 U.S.C.A. § 2384 (2000), a federal statute that punishes seditious conspiracy, and 18 U.S.C.A. § 2385 (2000), which outlaws advocating the overthrow of the federal government by force. Generally, a person may be punished for sedition only when he or she makes statements that create a “Clear and Present Danger” to rights that the government may lawfully protect (*SCHENCK V. UNITED STATES*, 249 U.S. 47, 39 S. Ct. 247, 63 L. Ed. 470 [1919]).”

²⁴⁴ Fried, “The Terror Conspiracy.”

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

Sheik and members of his terror cell, *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* in Egypt. Lynne Stewart, the most prominent of the group, and her now-coconspirators, received lengthy federal prison sentences. The charges were conspiracy and providing material support to terrorists.²⁴⁶ Abdul-Rahman is serving a life sentence at the Federal Correctional Complex, Butner Medical Center in Durham County, North Carolina.

Osama bin Laden

Another of Muhammad Qutb's students was from a powerful Saudi family with close ties to the monarchy. He was Osama bin Mohammed bin Awad bin Laden.²⁴⁷ Bin Laden had also moved to Afghanistan to fight the Soviets. Zawahiri became bin Laden's mentor. Soon after this, Zawahiri merged his al-Jihaad al-Islami with bin Laden's incipient group which became Al-Qaeda. The majority of the ruling council (shura) of Al Qaeda was composed of al-Jihaad al-Islami members.²⁴⁸

Mohammed bin Laden, father of Osama bin Laden, was of Yemeni stock. He came to Saudi Arabia in 1931, during the Great Depression, just as oil was discovered. He began as a dock worker in Jeddah and then joined the Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO) as a bricklayer.²⁴⁹ He worked his way up to being a small project contractor that did not interfere with major European and American companies. He did excellent work and became a trusted contractor to ARAMCO, gaining larger and larger projects. The result was the formation of the Mohammed bin Laden Company.²⁵⁰ He gained the favor of Sheikh Abdullah bin Suleiman and, through him, to King Abdul Aziz.²⁵¹

The elder bin Laden became a close ally of the Saudi Royal family and his company became their proffered contractor for constructing buildings and, particularly, roads. The company grew to a multi-billion-dollar industry called the Saudi Binladin Group. Mohammed bin Laden became the wealthiest man in Saudi Arabia, excluding the royal family. He fathered 56 children by 22 wives. Hamida al-Attas, his eleventh wife, was the mother of Osama bin Laden, his seventeenth child.²⁵² Mohammed divorced Hamida shortly after Osama was born but he recommended a new husband for her, his friend, Mohammed al-Attas.²⁵³ Bin Laden attended college at King Abdulaziz University. He studied civil engineering and completed his degree in 1979.²⁵⁴ While he attended the university he met one of his professors, Mohammad Qutb, the brother of Sayyid Qutb. The professor radicalized Osama bin Laden and introduced him to Ayman al-Zawahiri, who became his mentor.

²⁴⁶ Mary Reinholtz, "[Lynne Stewart still combative after terror verdict](http://www.thevillager.com)," *The Villager*, February 16-22, 2005. www.thevillager.com

²⁴⁷ Osama, son of Mohammed, son of Awad, son of Laden. "Mohammed" refers to his father Mohammed bin Laden; "Awad" refers to his grandfather, bin Laden refers to a distance patriarch in the family.

²⁴⁸ Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 38-68.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 73-4.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁵¹ David Johnson, "Osama bin Laden," www.infoplease.com

²⁵² Carmen bin Laden, *Inside the Kingdom: My Life in Saudi Arabia* (Paris: Hachette Book Group, 2005), 65-66; Steve Coll, *The Bin Ladens* (London: Penguin, 2008), 118-120; Jason Burke, "Rags to Riches the story of the bin Laden family is woven with tragedy," *The Guardian* [London], August 1, 2015.

²⁵³ Steve Coll, "Letter from Jedda: Young Osama-How he learned radicalism and may have seen America," *The New Yorker*: December 12, 2005.

²⁵⁴ *Encyclopedia of World Biography Supplement*, Vol. 22, Gale Group, 2002. www.Gale.com



Figure 21. Osama bin Laden
(Image Source: The Wall Street Journal)

Bin Laden took a literalist approach to reading the Qur'an. Following the writing of Sayyid Qutb and the teaching of Muhammad Qutb, he believed that the killing of innocent enemy civilians, regardless of age or gender, were legitimate targets.²⁵⁵

The goals of complete submission to Sharia law, the method of jihad as a tool to enforce Sharia law, the ultimate creation of a single Pan-Arabism state, and the destruction of secular governments were all tenets of Sayyid Qutb and his brother Mohammad.²⁵⁶ Ultimately, bin Laden believed that the only true Muslim country in the world in the 1980s was Afghanistan under the rule of Mullah Omar's Taliban.²⁵⁷ His battle plan was to lure the Soviet Union and the United States into wars within Muslim countries and to force long wars of attrition. He believed that millions of Muslims would come to the defense of the Faith and to force a situation of "bleeding America to the point of bankruptcy."²⁵⁸

The Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1978. Bin Laden graduated from his university studies the next year and moved to Pakistan, joining a former professor and mentor, Abdullah Yusuf Azzam, and offered help to the mujahedeen. Azzam was a Palestinian Sunni scholar, a graduate of King Abdul Aziz University, and became a founding member of al-Qaeda, together with bin Laden, and Ayman al-Zawahiri.²⁵⁹

The United States saw an opportunity to draw the Soviet Union into a Vietnam-like war and, through the CIA, conducted Operation *Cyclone* from 1979 to 1989.²⁶⁰ The US and Saudi Arabia contributed \$40 Billion of advanced weapons and financial aid to the mujahedeen over the decade.²⁶¹ One hundred thousand so-called "Afghan Arabs from forty Muslim nations came to fight in Afghanistan."²⁶² The Pakistani

²⁵⁵ bin Laden, *Messages to the World*, 70; Tavsir Alluni, "Interview with Osama bin Laden," Al-Jazeera.

²⁵⁶ bin Laden, *Messages to the World*, 218; bin Laden, "Resist the New Rome," audiotope delivered to Al-Jazeera and broadcast January 4, 2004; Matthias Gardell, *Gods of the Blood: The Pagan Revival and White Separatism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 325.

²⁵⁷ bin Laden, *Messages to the World*, 142; bin Laden interview published in *Al-Quds Al-Arabi* in London, November 12, 2001 (originally published in Pakistani daily, *Ausaf*, Nov. 7, 2001).

²⁵⁸ CNN, "Bin Laden: Goal is to Bankrupt U.S.," broadcast November 2, 2004; "Full transcript of bin Laden's speech", Al-Jazeera, broadcast November 1, 2004.

²⁵⁹ Bill Moyers, "Bill Moyers Journal: A Brief History of Al Qaeda." PBS July 27, 2007, www.PBS.com

²⁶⁰ Peter Bergen, *Holy War, Inc.* (New York: Free Press, 2001), 68.

²⁶¹ Michael Parenti, "The Story of US, CIA and Taliban," *The Brunei Times*, December 17, 2008.

²⁶² *Ibid.*

Intelligence Agency (ISI) played host to the operation. Although money and arms came from the US and Saudi Arabia, the ISI conducted the training along with the Pakistani Armed Services.²⁶³ That began the long, convoluted relationship between bin Laden, the ISI, the Taliban and the western most area of Pakistan known as Waziristan.

Bin Laden used his huge personal wealth to become the financier of the mujahedeen. He and Azzam established an organization, *Maktab al-Khadamat* (MAK), which added the foreign aid from the United States and Saudi Arabia, to create a legitimate entity to conduct the war from Pakistan.²⁶⁴ Money poured into the MAK accounts and bin Laden and his partners used the funds to pay for materiel, to fund the jihadi fighters, to establish training camps along with the ISI, and to pay the Pakistanis for their services. He established training camps on the east side of the Khyber Pass, the, Khyber *Pakhtunkhwa*.²⁶⁵ The only battle against the Soviets in which bin Laden participated was at Jaji.²⁶⁶

It was at Jaji that bin Laden came into his own as a leader and began to drift away from Azzam's guidance.²⁶⁷ During 1988 bin Laden asserted a more direct role in planning jihadist attacks and long range plans. The Soviets, now confronted with advanced weapons, particularly American stinger missiles, lost control of the skies over Afghanistan and ability to move troops with ease. They began a staged withdrawal.

Bin Laden split from MAK when Azzam wanted the Arab fighters to be integrated into Afghan units.²⁶⁸ Bin Laden's move was to create a separate entity, "Basically an organized Islamic faction, its goal is to lift the word of God, to make his religion victorious."²⁶⁹ Disgusted with the manner in which the Afghans behaved and the fact that their loyalties were to various mujahedeen warlords, he required all members to be able to listen intently, possess proper manners, to be obedient to commands, and to pledge an oath to the recruit's leaders.²⁷⁰ Although many start dates have been offered for the beginning of what would become Al-Qaeda, the authors agree with Lawrence Wright. Wright asserts that a formal meeting was held on August 11, 1988 with bin Laden, Abdullah Azzam, Dr. Fadl, and some of the upper leaders of the EIJ were present.²⁷¹

The attendees agreed to use bin Laden's financial resources and the EIJ's organizational capabilities and expand the jihadist agenda in other areas. This was set in place prior to the Soviet Union's announced pullout from Afghanistan in February 1989.²⁷² The partners, now conspirators, decided that the new organization must be held tightly and secretly. Bin Laden later said, "We used to call the training camp al Qaeda [meaning "the base" in English]. And the name stayed."²⁷³

The Soviet withdrawal made Osama bin Laden and his Arab fighters heroes and bin Laden was seen as the man who "brought down the mighty superpower" of the Soviet Union.²⁷⁴ The United States made an understandable but deeply flawed tactical error by abandoning the mujahedeen when the Soviets left. Tens of thousands of now well trained but unemployed guerilla fighters were now left to fend for themselves.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁴ Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 103.

²⁶⁵ "Khyber side of the land of Pakhtuns." U.S. Department of State, *Background Notes: South Asia, May, 2011* <www.InfoStrategist.com>

²⁶⁶ Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 148-49.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁸ Bergen, *The Osama Bin Laden I Know*, 74-88.

²⁶⁹ Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 133-34.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 150-151.

²⁷² *Ibid.*

²⁷³ From an interview between Al-Jazeera television correspondent Tayseer Alouni and Osama Bin Laden in October 2001. "The following transcript of the interview, which was done in Arabic, is by a translator hired by CNN." CNN, "Transcript of Bin Laden's October [2001] Interview," CNN.com, February 5, 2002.

<<http://archives.cnn.com/2002/WORLD/asiapcf/south/02/05/binladen.transcript/index.html>>

²⁷⁴ Wright, *The Looming Tower* 146.

Saddam Hussein and his Iraqi army invaded Kuwait on August 2, 1990 and this placed the Royal Saudi family in danger and the Saudi Arabian oil fields in jeopardy. Saddam's hopes for a Pan-Arab push against the West evaporated with the invasion.

King Fahd of Saudi Arabia panicked and sought immediate help from the United States. Simultaneously, bin Laden was granted an audience with the King. The recently returned hero of Afghanistan told his king that he could employ all of his "Afghan Arabs" to defeat the Iraqis. He also implored the king not to bring in non-Muslim assistance.²⁷⁵ King Fahd refused bin Laden outright. American and allied forces would be allowed to be based in the Kingdom.

Bin Laden was so outspoken over non-Muslims defending the Kingdom that the government decided to silence his objections and keep him from exerting any influence within the Royal family. Bin Laden kept up his tirade and King Fahd banished him from the Kingdom in 1992.²⁷⁶ He moved with his fighters and his money to Khartoum, Sudan and set up a compound at Soba upstream on the Blue Nile.²⁷⁷ He entered the Sudan with the agreement to build roads and infrastructure. His workers and equipment were the same he used in Afghanistan.²⁷⁸ Bin Laden continued to criticize the Saudi royal family and the government of Saudi Arabia so intensely that the Kingdom stripped him of his citizenship and convinced his brothers (who now ran the Binladin Group) to cut off his funds, equaling to more than \$7million per year. He did not need it, through shrewd investments, he all but monopolized the entire agricultural output of Sudan.²⁷⁹ International intelligence agencies realized that bin Laden was an integral part of the EIJ when they attempted to assassinate Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak while he was on a diplomatic trip to Ethiopia.²⁸⁰ The Sudanese government realized that the EIJ (and al-Qaeda) were dangerous to its very existence and expelled the EIJ and, therefore, bin Laden. The Clinton Administration refused to discuss any actions with the Sudan and considered the nation to be a "sponsor of international terrorism." The United States closed its Embassy.²⁸¹

The Saudis refused to admit bin Laden. He was effectively nationless. He did not wish to go to a non-Muslim country, nor would any take him. He had no outstanding warrants against him. Mullah Mohammed Omar, the head of the Afghani Taliban agreed to take him. He flew to Jalalabad, Afghanistan on a chartered jet on May 18, 1996. He took three hundred of his fighters with him, but the Sudanese government seized all of his possessions and wealth they could find.²⁸²

Bin Laden railed against King Fahd allowing the Americans to remain in the Kingdom. He stated that "the 'evils' of the Middle East arose from America's attempt to take over the region and from its support for Israel. Saudi Arabia had been turned into 'an American colony.'"²⁸³ Without being a national religious leader or a Mullah, bin Laden issued a fatwa against the United States entitled "Declaration of War against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places [Mecca and Medina, Saudi Arabia]."²⁸⁴ He began building up his terror network by occupying his former training camps in Pakistan, garnering favor with the

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 170-71.

²⁷⁶ Steve Emerson, "Abdullah Assam [Azzam]: The Man Before Osama Bin Laden," <<http://www.iacsp.com/itobli3.html>> Khartoum sits at the confluence of the two major tributaries of the Nile River, the White Nile and the Blue Nile.

²⁷⁷ Simon Reeve, *The New Jackals: Ramzi Yousef, Osama bin Laden and the Future of Terrorism* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2002), 172.

²⁷⁸ Abdullah A. Gallab, *The first Islamist Republic: Development and Disintegration of Islamism in Sudan* (London: Ashgate Publishing, 2008), 127.

²⁷⁹ Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 190-91.

²⁸⁰ Craig Turner, "Egypt's Leader Survives Assassination Attempt: Africa: Muslim extremists suspected in attack on Mubarak's motorcade in Ethiopia. President is unharmed," *Los Angeles Times*, June 27, 1995; Youssef M. Ibrahim, "Egyptian Group Says It Tried to Kill Mubarak," *The New York Times*, July 5, 1995.

²⁸¹ Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 250.

²⁸² Megan K. Stack, "Fighters Hunt Former Ally," *Los Angeles Times*, December 6, 2001.

²⁸³ Robert Fisk, *The Great War for Civilisation* (New York: Random House, 2005), 22.

²⁸⁴ PBS, "Bin Laden's Fatwa," Aired August 20, 1998.

ISI, funds from his old contributors and taking over Ariana Airlines, which became a shuttle service for terrorists and guerilla fighters.²⁸⁵ Al-Qaeda, now flush with cash, either participated in or financed bombing the Gold Mihor Hotel in Aden in 1992,²⁸⁶ in operations in Algeria and Afghanistan, and financed the Luxor Massacre on November 17, 1997.²⁸⁷

Bin Laden and his old mentor Ayman al-Zawahiri issued a joint fatwa in the name of the “World Islamic Front for Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders,” which called for the “killing of North Americans and their allies an ‘individual duty for every Muslim’ to ‘liberate the al-Aqsa Mosque (in Jerusalem) and the holy mosque (in Mecca) from their grip.’”²⁸⁸ In the public announcement, he told the audience and the attending journalists that all North Americans were very easy targets.²⁸⁹


FBI TEN MOST WANTED FUGITIVE	
MURDER OF U.S. NATIONALS OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES; CONSPIRACY TO MURDER U.S. NATIONALS OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES; ATTACK ON A FEDERAL FACILITY RESULTING IN DEATH	
USAMA BIN LADEN	
	
Date of Photograph Unknown	
Aliases: Usama Bin Muhammad Bin Ladin, Shaykh Usama Bin Ladin, the Prince, the Emir, Abu Abdullah, Mujahid Shaykh, Hajj, the Director	
DESCRIPTION	
Date of Birth:	1957
Place of Birth:	Saudi Arabia
Height:	6' 4" to 6' 6"
Weight:	Approximately 160 pounds
Build:	Thin
Occupation:	Unknown
Remarks:	Bin Laden is the leader of a terrorist organization known as Al-Qaeda, "The Base." He is left-handed and walks with a cane.
Hair:	Brown
Eyes:	Brown
Complexion:	Olive
Sex:	Male
Nationality:	Saudi Arabian
CAUTION	
USAMA BIN LADEN IS WANTED IN CONNECTION WITH THE AUGUST 7, 1998, BOMBINGS OF THE UNITED STATES EMBASSIES IN DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA, AND NAIROBI, KENYA. THESE ATTACKS KILLED OVER 200 PEOPLE. IN ADDITION, BIN LADEN IS A SUSPECT IN OTHER TERRORIST ATTACKS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.	
CONSIDERED ARMED AND EXTREMELY DANGEROUS	
IF YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION CONCERNING THIS PERSON, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LOCAL FBI OFFICE OR THE NEAREST U.S. EMBASSY OR CONSULATE.	
REWARD	
The Rewards For Justice Program, United States Department of State, is offering a reward of up to \$25 million for information leading directly to the apprehension or conviction of Usama Bin Ladin. An additional \$2 million is being offered through a program developed and funded by the Airline Pilots Association and the Air Transport Association.	
www.fbi.gov	
June 1999 Poster Revised November 2001	

Figure 22. FBI wanted poster of Osama bin Laden
(Source: www.FBI.gov)

²⁸⁵ Stephen Braun and Judy Pasternak, “Long Before Sept. 11, Bind Laden Aircraft Flew Under the Radar,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 18, 2001.

²⁸⁶ PBS, “Who is bin Laden?: Chronology,” Aired may 28, 2010.

²⁸⁷ Jailan Halawi, “bin Laden behind Luxor Massacre?”, *Al-Ahram Weekly* [Cairo, Egypt], May 20–26, 1999.

²⁸⁸ *Shaykh Usamah Bin-Muhammad Bin-Ladin; al-Zawahiri, Ayman; Abu-Yasir Rifa'i Ahmad Taha; Shaykh Mir Hamzah; Rahman, Fazlur* (February 23, 1998). “World Islamic Front for Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders: Initial “Fatwa” Statement.” *al-Quds al-Arabi* (in Arabic). English-language version of the fatwa translated by the Federation of American Scientists of the original Arabic document published in the newspaper *al-Quds al-Arabi* (London, UK) on February 23, 1998, 3.

²⁸⁹ Dale Van Atta, “Car bombs & cameras: the need for responsible media coverage of terrorism”. *Harvard International Review* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard International Relations Council) 20 [1998] (4): 66.

Al-Zawahiri and bin Laden planned and executed attacks on the U.S. Embassies in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and Nairobi, Kenya on August 7, 1998.²⁹⁰

The embassy bombings were quickly linked to the EIJ. Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri were linked to the terrorist group and the national press in the United States ran photos and stories about them. The FBI placed bin Laden on the Ten Most Wanted List.²⁹¹

Richard Clarke, the Clinton Administration director of the Central Intelligence Counterterrorist Center told the President in December 1998 that al-Qaeda was preparing several attacks against America which included hijacking aircraft, that attacks were being planned by bin Laden and al-Zawahiri, and that the estimated date for the attacks would begin at the Millennium or as late as January 3, 2000. The bombings were to take place at the Radisson SAS Hotel in Amman, Jordan, the tourist center on Mount Nebo, and a Christian site on the Jordan River. Also the USS *The Sullivan's* (DDG-68) was to be suicide bombed by boat while it was in port in Aden, Yemen.²⁹² The attacks did not take place due to logistical errors and the arrest of an operative.²⁹³

Bin Laden did not confine his terrorist activities to the Middle East. During the 1990s he financed and helped train the Bosnian mujahedeen. The twin states of Bosnia and Herzegovina were traditionally Muslim since Ottoman rule and the breakup of the former Yugoslavia left them at odds with their Slavic neighbors, primarily Serbia and Croatia. Several news organizations reported that Sarajevo had become a haven for Islamic terrorists.²⁹⁴ Bin Laden sent many of his "Afghan Arabs" into the war-torn region to train and conduct attacks. Among them was Karim Said Atmani, a Moroccan and an Algerian cell member and a document forger.²⁹⁵ His commander was Abdelkader Mokhtari, a veteran commander of the GIA.²⁹⁶ Atmani's roommate had been Ahmed Ressam, the man who attempted bring nitroglycerine and bomb-making materials across the U.S.-Canadian border near Niagara Falls in order to blow up targets in the United States in 1999.²⁹⁷ Atmani was convicted of conspiracy and collusion with Osama bin Laden by a French court.²⁹⁸ *The New York Times* in its report on the bombing of the Al Khobar Towers in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, that the captured terrorists had been in Bosnia and served with the Muslim forces there. They also admitted ties with al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden.²⁹⁹

Almost eleven months to the day of the 9/11 attacks, the USS *Cole* (DDG-67) was attacked while refueling in the port of Aden, Yemen. The Yemini cell of al-Qaeda carried out the attack, killing seventeen crew members and wounding thirty-nine others. The shape-charge blast blew a large hole in the port side of the *Cole*, but did not sink the warship.³⁰⁰ Ten years after the attack, declassified documents showed that White House counterterrorism officials, including Richard A. Clarke, were frustrated that no retaliation was made under either the Bill Clinton or George W. Bush administrations.³⁰¹ The reason given for not

²⁹⁰ Clarke, *Against All Enemies*, 181-86.

²⁹¹ <https://vault.fbi.gov/osama-bin-laden/osama-bin-laden-part-1-of-1/view;nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB410/docs/UBLDocument2.pdf>

²⁹² Clarke, *Against All Enemies*, 205, 211-115, 237, 242.

²⁹³ Vernon Loeb, "Terrorists Plotted Jan. 2000 Attacks," *The Washington Post*, December 24, 2000.

²⁹⁴ Craig Pyes, Jack Meyer, and William C. Rempel, "Bosnia – Base for terrorism," *The Seattle Times*, October 15, 2001.

²⁹⁵ Jeffrey Smith, "A Bosnian Village's Terrorist Ties," *The Washington Post*, March 11, 2000.

²⁹⁶ Roland Jacquard, *In the Name of Osama Bin Laden* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 66-70.

²⁹⁷ Canadian Security Intelligence Service, "Summary of the Security Intelligence Report concerning Hassan Almrei", February 22, 2008.

²⁹⁸ Sherrie Gossett, "Jihadists find convenient base in Bosnia", Assyrian International News Agency [Chicago, IL]. August 17, 2005.

²⁹⁹ "Al Qaeda Is Now Suspected in 1996 Bombing of Barracks," *The New York Times*. May 14, 2003.

³⁰⁰ U.S. 9/11 Memorial. <http://www.911memorial.org/uss-cole-bombing>

³⁰¹ Michael Isikoff, "U.S. failure to retaliate for USS Cole attack rankled then – and now: Declassified docs show U.S. Officials urged Clinton, Bush to strike al-Qaida," NBCNEWS.com http://www.nbcnews.com/id/39622062/ns/us_news-security/t/us-failure-retaliate-uss-cole-attack-rankled-then-now/#.V6DGD4-cGcw

conducting reprisals was that the State Department told President Clinton that attacking bin Laden would “inflamm[e] the Islamic World.”³⁰² A surviving planner in the Yemini cell who committed the attack, Mashur Abdallah Ahmed al Sabri, was released in 2016 from the U.S. detention center in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba without much fanfare under orders from President Barak Obama. The reason offered was to reduce the number of detainees, although Sabri was still considered to be a high-risk threat.³⁰³

Osama bin Laden appeared in an eighteen-minute video message given to an Arabic language TV station in the fourth week of October 2004.³⁰⁴ It was published in *The Guardian* newspaper in London on October 30, 2004, firmly stated why he conducted his largest attack, this time on New York and Washington, D.C., on September 11, 2001.

God knows it did not cross our minds to attack the Towers, but after the situation became unbearable—and we witnessed the injustice and tyranny of the American-Israeli alliance against our people in Palestine and Lebanon—I thought about it. And the events that affected me directly were that of 1982 and the events that followed—when America allowed the Israelis to invade Lebanon, helped by the U.S. Sixth Fleet. As I watched the destroyed towers in Lebanon, it occurred to me punish the unjust the same way: to destroy towers in America so it could taste some of what we are tasting and to stop killing our children and women.³⁰⁵



Figure 23. Waterline damage from the bomb blast on the USS *Cole*
(Image Source: U.S. Navy).

³⁰² Daniel Greenfield, “Obama Frees USS Cole Bombing Terrorist: American lives don’t matter,” <http://www.frontpagemag.com/fpm/262696/obama-frees-uss-cole-bombing-terrorist-daniel-greenfield>, May 2, 2016.

³⁰³ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁴ CBC News, “Bin Laden claims responsibility for 9/11,” <http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/bin-laden-claims-responsibility-for-9-11-1.513654>

³⁰⁵ “Bin Laden claims responsibility for 9/11,” *The Guardian* [London], October 30, 2004
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2004/oct/30/september11.uselections2004>



Figure 24. The USS *Cole* under tow away from the port of Aden, Yemen, on October 29, 2000.
(Photo Source: Department of Defense, Sgt. Don L. Maes, U.S. Marine Corps, photographer).

Modern jihadist philosophy was reimagined under Sayyid Qutb, all but codified under his brother Muhammad Qutb, and spread through him to a willing, eager, violent set of students at King Abdulaziz University in Saudi Arabia. Ayman al-Zawahiri, Omar Abdel-Rahman, and Osama bin Laden all refined Sayyid Qutb's model of jihad, leading to over six decades of death and destruction by a group that desires most of all to turn back the clock a full millennium to the era of the Prophet Mohammed.

Beginning with the founding of Israel and its constant problems with the regional Arab population, animosities have continued to grow and fester. The United States, firmly allied with Israel, kept a blind eye toward the Arab states until the early 1990s. This allowed the Soviet Union to gain a political foothold in the region, to curry favor with the Arabs and disrupt U.S. foreign policy. The radical fundamentalist Arab response to perceived Western decadence, was the Salafi jihadist movement which still exists today.

Intelligence failures by American agencies, particularly the FBI and CIA were brought to light following the 9/11 attacks. The two great bastions of protection did not share information with each other, or, when they did, that intelligence was discounted. The Jihadist model, especially that refined and operated by Osama bin Laden, thrived under the eyes of the Western intelligence agencies were even supported by the CIA in an effort to dislodge the Soviets from Afghanistan.

The American response to increasingly violent and deadly acts of terrorism during the 1990s, was that it was some to be concerned about elsewhere, not here in the homeland. The first bombing of the World Trade Center in 1993 taught us nothing. Al-Qaeda could have been stopped and should have been stopped before it could carry out the attacks on New York and Washington in 2001. The failure of four American presidential administrations to halt the march of jihadism is damning.

CHAPTER 4

THE HIJACKERS AND THE PLANES

*“We have some planes. Just stay quiet, and you’ll be Okay.”*³⁰⁶

Mohamed Atta transmission aboard
American Airlines Flight 11 on 9/11.

The nineteen hijackers who commandeered four commercial airliners on September 11, 2001 were all al-Qaeda operatives. The four planes they hijacked were all regularly scheduled flights chosen for the size of aircraft and a distant destination so that the plane carried a large amount of fuel to increase the explosive capacity of the crash.

American Airlines Flight 11 was a Boeing 767-223ER, registration number N334AA.³⁰⁷ It was scheduled to depart Logan International Airport in Boston Massachusetts enroute to Los Angeles International Airport in Los Angeles, California. It carried eighty-one passengers and eleven crew members on the flight.³⁰⁸ Captain John Ogonowski and First Officer Thomas McGuinness piloted the plane. It carried its full capacity of nine flight attendants:³⁰⁹

- Karen Martin (Position 1), assigned to the forward left jumpseat (1L), located between the first-class cabin and the cockpit entrance;
- Kathleen Nicosia (Position 2), assigned to the left aft jumpseat (3L) at the back of the aircraft;
- Betty Ong (Position 3), assigned to the right aft jumpseat (3R) at the back of the aircraft behind the coach section;
- Dianne Snyder (Position 4), assigned to the mid-galley jumpseat (2R);
- Barbara "Bobbi" Arestegui (Position 5), assigned to the forward right jumpseat (1R Center), which was in the forward galley between the cockpit and the first class cabin;
- Jeffrey Collman (Position 6), assigned to the middle left jumpseat (2L) located in the middle galley within the main cabin;
- Sara Low (Position 7), assigned to the middle right jumpseat (2R) in the middle galley within the main cabin;
- Jean Roger (Position 8), assigned to the forward left jumpseat (1L Center) in the forward galley; and

³⁰⁶ Open air transmission from American Airlines Flight 11, transmitted at 8:24 and 8:33 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time on September 11, 2001. *The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2004), 1; <https://fas.org/irp/offdocs/911comm-sec1.pdf>.

³⁰⁷ Federal Aviation Administration Registry.

³⁰⁸ “Staff Report – “We Have Some Planes”: A Chronology,” National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (Keane Commission), released September 2005.

<<https://web.archive.org/web/20121024095423/http://www.archives.gov/research/9-11/staff-report-sept2005.pdf>>

³⁰⁹ The level of detail known about American Airlines Flight 11 is greater than the other three aircraft. The reason for this is that during the flight, Attendant Betty Ong was in contact with the ground and proved very helpful to understanding what was happening. The authors decided to provide this greater detail to assist in the following chapters.

- Madeline "Amy" Sweeney (Position 9), assigned to the left aft jumpseat (3L) at the back of the aircraft behind the coach section.³¹⁰

United Airlines Flight 175 was a Boeing 767-200, registration number N612UA.³¹¹ It was scheduled to depart Logan International Airport in Boston Massachusetts enroute to Los Angeles International Airport in Los Angeles, California. The plane carried fifty-six passengers and nine crew members. The nine crew members included Captain Victor Saracini, First Officer Michael Horrocks, and flight attendants:

- Robert Fangman,
- Amy Jarret,
- Amy King,
- Kathryn Laborie,
- Alfred Marchand,
- Michael Tarrou, and
- Alicia Titus.³¹²

American Airlines Flight 77 was a Boeing 757-223 registration number N644AA.³¹³ It was scheduled to depart Washington Dulles International Airport in Dulles, Virginia enroute to Los Angeles International Airport in Los Angeles, California. The plane carried fifty-eight passengers and a flight crew consisting of Captain Charles Burlingame, First Officer David Charlebois, and flight attendants:

- Michele Heidenberger,
- Jennifer Lewis,
- Kenneth Lewis, and
- Renee May.³¹⁴

United Airlines Flight 93 was a Boeing 757-222 registration number N591UA.³¹⁵ It was scheduled to leave Newark International Airport enroute for San Francisco International Airport in San Francisco, California. The plane carried thirty-seven passengers and seven crew members, consisting of Captain Jason Dahl and First Officer LeRoy Homer, Jr., and flight attendants:

- Lorraine Bay,
- Sandra Bradshaw,
- Wanda Green,
- CeeCee Lyles and
- Deborah Welsh.³¹⁶

³¹⁰ American Airlines Report, "Flight Attendant Jump Seat Locations During Takeoff and Flight Attendant Typical Cabin Positions During Start of Cabin Service," undated. Note 34 in "Staff Report – "We Have Some Planes""

³¹¹ Federal Aviation Administration Registry.

³¹² CNN, "United Airlines Flight 175," CNN, 2001.

³¹³ Federal Aviation Administration Registry.

³¹⁴ CNN, "American Airlines 77," CNN, 2001.

³¹⁵ Federal Aviation Administration Registry.

³¹⁶ "People killed in plane attacks," *USA Today*, September 25, 2001.

The hijacking plan's roots extend back to several meetings in the Philippines in 1994, with a plan to execute the mission in 1995. The chief planners were Ramzi Yousef and his uncle, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed (both close confidants of Osama bin Laden.) The original concept was to explode, via onboard bombs, a dozen commercial aircraft crossing the Pacific Ocean to the United States.³¹⁷ The refined version was an over ambitious al-Qaeda plot to strike several major targets during a forty-eight-hour period. The planners intended to assassinate Pope John Paul II, destroy eleven commercial airliners, all of which were scheduled to travel from Asian airports to the United States, crash a plane into the CIA headquarters in Fairfax County, Virginia, and, in the process, kill at least four thousand people.³¹⁸ None of the attacks were carried out due to an accident. A chemical fire at the planner's headquarters tipped off the Philippine National Police (PNP) in early January 1995. The conspirators conducted a practice test on Philippine Airlines Flight 434 which killed one person and injured ten others.³¹⁹ The plot was financed by bin Laden and his al-Qaeda group while they were based in Khartoum, Sudan.



Figure 25. Ramzi Yousef after his capture and awaiting trial for his part of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing (Image Source: Daily Mail [London] <www.dailymail.co.uk>)

³¹⁷ Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 266-68.

³¹⁸ Mark Mazzetti, "Portrait of 9/11 'Jackal' Emerges as he Awaits Trial," *The New York Times*, November 14, 2009; John J. Lumpkin, "Global Security," www.GlobalSecurity.org

³¹⁹ CNN, "'Proud Terrorist' [Ramzi Yousef] gets life for Trade Center Bombing," CNN.com January 8, 1998. "Yousef bombs Philippines Airlines Flight 434," www.GlobalSecurity.org



Figure 26. Khalid Sheikh Mohammed following his capture.
(Image Source: <www.thedailybeast.com>)

Another aviation themed attack was to take place at the Los Angeles International Airport via car bomb driven in by Ahmed Ressam. He was confirmed to be in the Montreal cell of al-Qaeda and a member of the Algerian Armed Islamic Group (GIA).³²⁰ Ressam was arrested while entering the United States at the Port Angeles, Washington ferry by U.S. INS agents.³²¹ The bomb in his car was a near replica of the Oklahoma City bomb without the ammonium nitrate.³²²

Khalid Sheikh Mohammed did not give up on his multiple aircraft scenario. He created a scaled-down plan that would get the attention of America and the world.³²³ This time he would use four large commercial airliners. They would strike his original target in New York, the World Trade Center, which he saw as the ultimate example of Western imperial economic power. Two planes would be used, one each for the twin towers. Two more planes would attack Washington, D.C. One was designated to fly into the Pentagon and the other was destined for either the U.S. Capitol Building or the White House.³²⁴

Khalid Sheikh Mohammed met with Osama bin Laden in his recently relocated headquarters in Tora Bora on the Afghanistan/Pakistan border in mid-1996.³²⁵ Later meetings with bin Laden and his operations chief, Mohammed Atef, led to bin Laden's financial support.³²⁶ Khalid Sheikh Mohammed acted as the chief planner and Mohammed Atef served as the chief tactical trainer.³²⁷ Khalid Sheikh Mohammed was integral to the selection of the hijackers and chose Mohamed Atta as the leader of the group.³²⁸ Although some

³²⁰ PBS, "Ahmed Ressam's Millennium Plot," *Frontline* <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/trail/inside/cron.html>

³²¹ *Ibid.* INS is the abbreviation for the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service.

³²² Wright, *The Looming Tower*, 266-68.

³²³ *The 9/11 Commission Report*, 174-214, 215-244.

³²⁴ Authorities remain unsure whether the final target was to be the Capitol building or the White House. The plan designated for that attack, United Airlines Flight 93, crashed in Pennsylvania before it could complete its mission.

³²⁵ BBC, "Suspect 'reveals 9/11 planning,'" BBC News, September 22, 2003.

³²⁶ *The 9/11 Commission Report*, see Chapter 5.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*

³²⁸ Bergen, *The Osama bin Laden I Know*, 283.

candidates trained for the mission they were not selected for various reasons. The final cadre is listed in Table 1.

Osama bin Laden personally chose the pilots. They were all members of the Hamburg Germany cell and were conversant in western languages and culture.³²⁹ This was important, far bin Laden did not want to repeat issues that arose when Sayyid Qutb came to America in the late 1940s. The designated pilots were Mohammed Atta, Marwan al-Shehhi, and Ramzi bin-al-Shibh. Ramzi bin-al-Shibh was denied a visa to enter the United States. His place was taken by Hani Hanjour.³³⁰ Khalid al-Mihdhar and Nawaf al-Hazmi were both selected as potential pilots. Both were veterans of al-Qaeda operations in Bosnia, both were ideologically respected. Their piloting skills were all but abysmal during flight training in San Diego, California.³³¹ They were allowed to continue as members of the operation due to their ideology and faithfulness to bin Laden.

The final group was composed of fifteen Saudis, two from the United Arab Emirates, one from Lebanon, and one, the leader, from Egypt. Ranging in age from 20 to 33, they individuals. trained in al-Qaeda camps located in Afghanistan. Most of the group had extensive operations in al-Qaeda cells, only two, Fayez Banihammad and Ahmed al-Nami, were not members of a tactical cell.³³² All of the hijackers entered the United States at different times and far flung places. Each of the four units kept together, but were not necessarily housed together. When they were ready for the mission, they flew to airports that connected with their flights or they arrived at scattered times. Each unit had at least one very adept English-speaker. The additional “muscle” hijackers had varying, but typically rudimentary foreign language skills. All were ideologues. All had been asked by Osama bin Laden whether they were prepared to conduct a suicide mission and give their lives for Allah. All believed that martyrs had a place reserved for them in the highest level of Paradise.³³³

Hijacker	Age	Nationality	Flight	Arrived US	A-Q Cell	Based	Pilot
Mohamed Atta	33	Saudi Arabia	AA 11	June 2000	Hamburg	South FL	X
Abdulaziz al-Omari	22	Saudi Arabia	AA 11	June 2001	Kandahar	New Jersey	
Wail al-Shehri	28	Saudi Arabia	AA 11	June 2001	Afghanistan	South FL	
Waleed al-Shehri	22	Saudi Arabia	AA 11	June 2001	Afghanistan	South FL	
Satam al-Suqami	25	UAE	AA 11	April 2001	Afghanistan	South FL	
Marwan al-Shehhi	23	UAE	UA 175	mid 2000	Hamburg	South FL	X
Fayez Banihammad	24	Saudi Arabia	UA 175	June 2001		South FL	
Mohand al-Shehri	22	Saudi Arabia	UA 175	May 2001	Afghanistan	South FL	
Hamza al-Ghamdi	20	Saudi Arabia	UA 175	May 2001	Kandahar	South FL	
Ahmed al-Ghamdi	22	Saudi Arabia	UA 175	May 2001	Kandahar	South FL	
Hani Hanjour	29	Saudi Arabia	AA 77	Dec 2000	Afghanistan	San Diego CA	X
Khalid al-Mihdhar	26	Saudi Arabia	AA 77	July 2001	Afghanistan	San Diego CA	
Majed Moqed	24	Saudi Arabia	AA 77	May 2001	Kabul	Totowa NJ?	

³²⁹ BBC, “The Hamburg Connection,” BBC News, August 19, 2005.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*

³³¹ *The 9/11 Commission Final Report*, see Chapter 5.

³³² See Table 1.

³³³ Terry McDermott, *Perfect Soldiers: The 9/11 Hijackers: Who They Were, Why They Did It* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005), 178-79.

Nawaf al-Hazmi	25	Saudi Arabia	AA 77	Jan 2000	Afghanistan	San Diego CA	
Salem al-Hazmi	20	Saudi Arabia	AA 77	June 2001	Afghanistan	Patterson NJ	
Ziad Jarrah	26	Lebanon	UA 93	mid 2000	Hamburg	South FL	X
Ahmed al-Haznawi	20	Saudi Arabia	UA 93	June 2001	Afghanistan	South FL	
Ahmed al-Nami	24	Saudi Arabia	UA 93	May 2001		South FL	
Saeed al-Ghamdi	21	Saudi Arabia	UA 93	June 2001	Afghanistan	South FL	

Table 1. The hijackers of the four commercial airliners on 9/11. Notes – UAE is the abbreviation for the United Arab Emirates. AA is American Airlines; UA is United Airlines. Totowa, New Jersey was one of the locations frequented by Majed Moqed. It was not a base of operations. Neither Fayez Banihammad nor Ahmed al-Nami has been known to be a member of an al-Qaeda cell. The hijackers based in southern Florida stayed in numerous locations to deflect suspicion.

The hijackers supposedly carried identical letters. Due to the extreme devastation of the wreckage of the four planes, only four survived in some condition. The only intact copy was in Mohammed Atta's luggage, which did not make it to American Airlines Flight 11. It was found after the attacks.³³⁴ They were all handwritten in Arabic. Atta's is a basic checklist of what to do the night before, what to take, including "Knives, your will, IDs, your passport," and to make sure nobody is following you."³³⁵ The following is the English language translation of the letter.³³⁶

PAGE ONE

One of the companions said "the prophet has commanded us to recite it before engaging in a raid. So we recited it so we became victorious and we were saved.

The Last Night

1. To give allegiance or agree on going forth to death and the renewal of the intention.
2. Knowing the plan very well. All the directions and expectation of the outcome of the action or the resistance from the enemy. To shave the excess hair from the body and to put perfume.
3. The recitation of chapter of Altawba (repentance) and Alnfal. To reflect upon their meanings and that which God had prepared to the believers from the everlasting bounty that are designated for the martyrs.

³³⁴ Bob Woodward, "Chilling advice for hijackers," *Washington Post*, September 28, 2001.

³³⁵ *Ibid.*

³³⁶ The letter's text is translated verbatim from Hatem Bazian, professor of Islamic Studies at University of California, Berkeley. It is found at: <http://www.mindfully.org/Reform/Photos-Hijackers-DOJ27sep01.htm>

4. Reminding the self of listening and obeying particularly during that night because you are going to face a serious situation where it is very necessary for listening and obeying 100 percent. Train yourself and make it understand and be content and encourage it on that. (listening and obeying)

5. Praying during the late night and insisting in supplication and asking for victory and gaining control and a clear conquest and making all things easy for us and conceal our activities.

6. Much remembrance and know that the best of remembrance is the recitation of the noble Koran and this is in accordance with the consensus of the people of knowledge from that which I know and this is sufficient for us that it is the speech of the creator of the heavens and earth the one which you are going to meet him.

7. Clear your heart and purify it from the impurities and make yourself forget a thing named world. For the time of play has passed. And the time of truth has come. And how much of our lives we have wasted so shouldn't we invest these hours to offer offerings of closeness and obedience.

8. Let your breast be at ease between you and your marriage except a few light moments. In it you will start your happy content life with the everlasting bounty with the prophets and the confirmers of prophets the martyrs and the righteous and those are the best of companions.

We seek forgiveness from his bounty. And be optimistic for peace be upon him ("meaning the prophet used to like optimism in all the matters.")

9. Then let it be in front of your eyes that if a tribulation had befallen you how '!'. you stand firm and you recall and you know "that which inflicted you would not have missed you. And that which had missed you would not have inflicted you or hit you."

Verily this tribulation upon you is from God the exalted in order to raise your station and to expiate your sins. Then know that it is few moments then things will become clear by the permission of Allah.

10. (Lengthy Koran scripture).

11. (Lengthy Koran scripture).

12. To prepare yourself, your luggage, your clothing, your knife, your tools, your identity cards, your passport.

13. Prepare or examine your weapon before traveling and before travel (which means before death). Let each one sharpen his razor, his slaughter.

14. Tighten your clothes on you very well and this is the path or the example of the early righteous community. May Allah be pleased with all of them for they used to tighten their

clothing on themselves very well before the battle. Then tighten your shoes very well and wear a sock that is firmly holding onto the shoe and do not come out from it.

And all of these are causes we are commanded to take by it and Allah is sufficient for us and he is the best whom to depend upon.

15. Pray the morning prayer in a group. Reflect upon its reward. Come with the regular supplications after it and do not leave your apartment except with ablution.

PAGE TWO

The Second Stage

If the taxi transports you to the airport, remember to do much remembrance, the remembrance of the place '!'.

Once you arrive to the airport and you can see it and get out of taxi do another supplication of the place.

Smile and be calm and content. Another supplication.

The benefits of these supplications are:

1. They are transformed with bounty of Allah and his generosity
2. No harm will be falling them
3. They are following the contentment of Allah. "To authenticate his analysis" - a quote from Koran.

Lots of Koranic verses and statements of the Prophet follows.

Do not fear the enemy. Do not fear them rather fear me verily if you are believers. Fear is a grave statement and those who are friends of Allah and believers do not fear except Allah the one, the only, who in his hand is all things.

Do not make apparent on you the appearance of confusion and tightness of nerves and be happy smiling with your chest expanding and content because you are doing an act that Allah loves and is content with. Because there will be a day by the permission of Allah that you will spend it with pure women in paradise.

Smile in the face of adversity all young men for you are going forth to the everlasting paradise.

Any place that you go to or any action that you undertake maintain supplication and turning to Allah and verily god is with his servants the believers providing them protection and ease and success and victory and all things.

PAGE THREE

Third Stage - When you Ride the Plane

When you put your foot in it that you begin with supplication and bring awareness to yourself that this is a raid in the path of Allah. As the prophets of Allah going forth to a battle or coming forth from it in the path of Allah is better than the world and all what it contains.

When you put your foot in the plane and you sit in your chair, then bring forth the supplications that we mentioned and the ones that are known which we have already stated earlier. Then keep busy with the remembrance of God and do much of what Allah the exalted said. "Oh you who believe if you come upon a group then stand firm and remember Allah much that you may be successful."

Then if the plane moves slightly in the direction to take off then recite the supplication for the traveler for verily you are traveling to God the exalted. (and be joyful with this travel)

Then you will see the plane after it stops then it will take off. This is the hour of the meeting of the characteristics. Then do remembrance of Allah as Allah had mentioned in his book "Oh Allah, pour upon us patience and make firm our feats and make us victorious upon the people of unbelief."

"Oh Our Lord forgive to us our sins and our wastefulness in all our matters and make firm our feet and make us victorious upon the people of unbelief."

Do supplication for yourself and to all your brothers that they will be able to conquer and be victorious and in hitting the targets .!'. do not be fearful.

Ask of Allah to reward you with martyrdom coming forth and not turning away patient and aware of the accounting that you'll face with God.

Then let each one of you get prepared to undertake or to perform his role in a way that Allah is content with. Let him tighten his teeth as the early community used to do, may Allah be merciful upon them before engaging in the battle.

When the engagement begins then the hitting of heroes the ones that do not want to go back to this world and say God is Great!, for saying this makes fear enter the hearts of the unbelievers.

Know that the paradises have been ornamented for you with the most beautiful of its ornaments and the women of paradise are calling upon you to come forth oh you friend of Allah and she has worn the best of its ornaments.

Don't differ from one another.

PAGE FOUR

Put the benefit of the group above the self. Do not seek revenge for yourself, rather make everything for your group and everything is to Allah the exalted.

.. writer narrates a story of one of the Prophets battles where he was about to kill an enemy he had just beaten up, with a sword and the person spit in his face. When he spit, he left, and responded, "First I was fighting you in path of Allah and when you spit my self got angry and I feared I would be fighting you to seek retribution for myself and that's why I stopped."

When the hour of zero comes, breathe deeply and open your chest welcoming death in the way of Allah. Always remember that you end your life with prayer and that you begin with it before the target and let the last part of your speech be, "There is No God but Allah and Muhammad is his messenger."

And after it, if God is willing, the meeting in the high paradise.

.. writer reminds them the battle of the confederates had 10,000 soldiers and God gave victory to his servants the believers.

"When the believers saw the confederates they said this is what God promised us. Allah and his messenger are truthful. This has increased their belief and surrendering to Allah."

Following the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the FBI conducted an investigation called Penttbom. It identified the hijackers and much of the core information about them. It was culled from passenger lists and (belatedly) shared intelligence information. The following information is derived from that investigation. The information was released on September 29, 2001.

AMERICAN AIRLINES #11³³⁷

Boeing 767

7:45 a.m. Departed Boston for Los Angeles

8:45 a.m. Crashed into North Tower of World Trade Center



Satam M. A. Al
Suqami



Waleed
Alshehri



M. Wail
Alshehri



M. Mohamed Atta



Abdulaziz
Alomari

³³⁷ <http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/pressrel01/092701hpic.htm> <http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/pressrel01/092701hpic.htm>
<http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/penttbom/aa11/11.htm>

1) Satam M.A. Al Suqami

- Possible Saudi national
- Dates of birth used: June 28, 1976; Last known address: United Arab Emirates

2) Waleed M. Alshehri

- Possible Saudi national
- Dates of birth used: September 13, 1974; January 1, 1976; March 3, 1976; July 8, 1977; December 20, 1978; May 11, 1979; November 5, 1979
- Possible residence(s): Hollywood, Florida; Orlando, Florida; Daytona Beach, Florida
- Believed to be a pilot

3) Wail M. Alshehri

- Date of birth used: September 1, 1968
- Possible residence(s): Hollywood, Florida; Newton, Massachusetts
- Believed to be a pilot

4) Mohamed Atta

- Possible Egyptian national
- Date of birth used: September 1, 1968
- Possible residence(s): Hollywood, Florida; Coral Springs, Florida; Hamburg, Germany
- Believed to be a pilot
- Alias: Mehan Atta; Mohammad El Amir; Muhammad Atta; Mohamed El Sayed; Mohamed Elsayed; Muhammad Muhammad Al Amir Awag Al Sayyid Atta; Muhammad Muhammad Al-Amir Awad Al Sayad

5) Abdulaziz Alomari

- Possible Saudi national
- Dates of birth used: December 24, 1972 and May 28, 1979
- Possible residence(s): Hollywood, Florida
- Believed to be a pilot

AMERICAN AIRLINES #77³³⁸

³³⁸ <http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/pressrel01/092701hpic.htm> <http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/pressrel01/092701hpic.htm>

Boeing 757
8:10 a.m. Departed Dulles for Los Angeles
9:39 a.m. Crashed into Pentagon



Khalid
Almihdhar

Majed Moqed

Nawaf Alhazmi

Salem Alhazmi

Hani Hanjour

1) Khalid Almihdhar

- Possible Saudi national
- Possible resident of San Diego, California, and New York
- Alias: Sannan Al-Makki; Khalid Bin Muhammad; 'Addallah Al-Mihdhar; Khalid Mohammad Al-Saqaf

2) Majed Moqed

- Possible Saudi national
- Alias: Majed M.GH Moqed; Majed Moqed, Majed Mashaan Moqed

3) Nawaf Alhazmi

- Possible Saudi national
- Possible resident of Fort Lee, New Jersey; Wayne, New Jersey; San Diego, California
- Alias: Nawaf Al-Hazmi; Nawaf Al Hazmi; Nawaf M.S. Al Hazmi

4) Salem Alhazmi

- Possible Saudi national
- Possible resident of Fort Lee, New Jersey; Wayne, New Jersey

5) Hani Hanjour -

-Possible resident of Phoenix, Arizona, and San Diego, California

-Alias: Hani Saleh Hanjour; Hani Saleh; Hani Hanjour, Hani Saleh H. Hanjour

UNITED AIRLINES #93³³⁹

Boeing 757

8:42 a.m. Departed Newark for San Francisco

10:03 a.m. Crashed in Stony Creek Township [Shanksville]



Saeed Alghamdi

Ahmad Ibrahim
A. Al Haznawi

Ahmed Alnami

Ziad Samir
Jarrah

1) Saeed Alghamdi

-Possible residence: Delray Beach, Florida

-Alias: Abdul Rahman Saed Alghamdi; Ali S Alghamdi; Al- Gamdi; Saad M.S. Al Ghamdi; Sadda Al Ghamdi; Saheed Al-Ghamdi; Seed Al Ghamdi

2) Ahmed Ibrahim A. Al Haznawi

- Possible Saudi national

- Date of birth used: October 11, 1980

-Possible residence: Delray Beach, Florida

-Alias: Ahmed Alhaznawi

3) Ahmed Alnami

-Possible residence: Delray Beach, Florida

³³⁹ <http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/pressrel01/092701hpic.htm> <http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/pressrel01/092701hpic.htm>
<http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/penttbom/ua93/93.htm>

-Alias: Ali Ahmed Alnami; Ahmed A. Al-Nami; Ahmed Al- Nawi

4) Ziad Samir Jarrah

-Believed to be a pilot

-Alias: Zaid Jarrahi; Zaid Samr Jarrah; Ziad S. Jarrah; Ziad Jarrah Jarrat, Ziad Samir Jarrahi

UNITED AIRLINES #175³⁴⁰

Boeing 767

7:58 a.m. Departed Boston for Los Angeles

9:05 a.m. Crashed into South Tower of World Trade Center



Marwan Al-
Shehhi

Fayeze Rashid
Ahmed Hassan
Al Qadi
Banihammad

Ahmed
Alghamdi

Hamza
Alghamdi

Mohand Alshehri

1) Marwan Al-Shehhi

- Date of birth used: May 9, 1978

- Possible residence(s): Hollywood, Florida

- Believed to be a pilot

- Alias: Marwan Yusif Muhammad Rashid Al-Shehi; Marwan Yusif Muhammad Rashid Lakrab Al-Shihhi; Abu Abdullah

2) Fayeze Rashid Ahmed Hassan Al Qadi Banihammad

- Possible residence(s): Delray Beach, Florida

³⁴⁰ <http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/pressrel01/092701hpic.htm> <http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/pressrel01/092701hpic.htm>
<http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/penttbom/ua175/175.htm>

- Alias: Fayez Ahmad; Banihammad Fayez Abu Dhabi Banihammad; Fayez Rashid Ahmed; Banihammad Fayez; Rasid Ahmed Hassen Alqadi; Abu Dhabi Banihammad Ahmed Fayez; Faez Ahmed

3) Ahmed Alghamdi

- Alias: Ahmed Salah Alghamdi

4) Hamza Alghamdi

- Possible residence(s): Delray Beach, Florida
- Alias: Hamza Al-Ghamdi; Hamza Ghamdi; Hamzah Alghamdi; Hamza Alghamdi Saleh

5) Mohand Alshehri

- Possible residence(s): Delray Beach, Florida
- Alias: Mohammed Alshehhi; Mohamd Alshehri; Mohald Alshehri

Concerning the entry into the United States, the various guardians of the nation's borders, did not share information. The CIA maintained a watch list. The FBI maintained a watch list. The Immigration and Naturalization Service was not informed. Embassies across the world had access to the Department of State watch list. The political climate among the various agencies and departments at the time reflected distrust, rancor, and, in some cases, bordered on ineptitude.³⁴¹

³⁴¹ *The 9/11 Commission Final Report*, see Chapter 13.

CHAPTER 5

THE SYSTEM WAS BLINKING RED

THE SUMMER OF THREAT³⁴²

As 2001 began, counterterrorism officials were receiving frequent but fragmentary reports about threats. Indeed, there appeared to be possible threats almost everywhere the United States had interests-including at home.

To understand how the escalation in threat reporting was handled in the summer of 2001, it is useful to understand how threat information in general is collected and conveyed. Information is collected through several methods, including signals intelligence and interviews of human sources, and gathered into intelligence reports. Depending on the source and nature of the reporting, these reports may be highly classified-and therefore tightly held-or less sensitive and widely disseminated to state and local law enforcement agencies. Threat reporting must be disseminated, either through individual reports or through threat advisories. Such advisories, intended to alert their recipients, may address a specific threat or be a general warning.

Because the amount of reporting is so voluminous, only a select fraction can be chosen for briefing the president and senior officials. During 2001, Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) George Tenet was briefed regularly regarding threats and other operational information relating to Usama Bin Ladin.³⁴³ He in turn met daily with President Bush, who was briefed by the CIA through what is known as the President's Daily Brief (PDB). Each PDB consists of a series of six to eight relatively short articles or briefs covering a broad array of topics; CIA staff decides which subjects are the most important on any given day. There were more than 40 intelligence articles in the PDBs from January 20 to September 10, 2001, that related to Bin Ladin. The PDB is considered highly sensitive and is distributed to only a handful of high-level officials.³⁴⁴

The Senior Executive Intelligence Brief (SEIB), distributed to a broader group of officials, has a similar format and generally covers the same subjects as the PDB. It usually contains less information so as to protect sources and methods. Like their predecessors, the Attorney General, the FBI Director, and Richard Clarke, the National Security Council (NSC) counterterrorism coordinator, all received the SEIB, not the

³⁴² This chapter is quoted verbatim from *9/11 Commission Final Report*, Chapter 8. Please note that all references in this chapter such as "as noted or referenced" in a particular chapter, refer to the *9/11 Commission Final Report* and not this White Paper. http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/911/report/911Report_Ch8.htm

³⁴³ Beginning in December 1999, these briefings were conducted based on slides created by the CIA's Bin Ladin unit. See Richard interview (Dec. 11, 2003). We were able to review the slides to identify the subjects of the respective briefings.

³⁴⁴ The exact number of persons who receive the PDB varies by administration. In the Clinton administration, up to 25 people received the PDB. In the Bush administration, distribution in the pre-9/11 time period was limited to six people. The Commission received access to about four years of articles from the PDB related to bin Ladin, al Qaeda, the Taliban, and key countries such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia, including all the Commission requested. The White House declined to permit all commissioners to review these sensitive documents. The Commission selected four representatives-the Chair, the Vice Chair, Commissioner Gorelick, and the Executive Director-as its review team. All four reviewed all of the more than 300 relevant articles. Commissioner Gorelick and the Executive Director prepared a detailed summary, reviewed by the White House for constitutional and especially sensitive classification concerns that was then made available to all Commissioners and designated staff. Except for the August 6, 2001, PDB article, the summary could not include verbatim quotations, for example the titles of the articles, but could paraphrase the substance. Two of the articles-the December 4, 1998, hijacking article (in chapter 4) and the August 6, 2001, article discussing Bin Ladin's plans to attack in the United States (in this chapter)-were eventually declassified.

PDB.³⁴⁵ Clarke and his staff had extensive access to terrorism reporting, but they did not have access to internal, nondisseminated information at the National Security Agency (NSA), CIA, or FBI.

The Drumbeat Begins

In the spring of 2001, the level of reporting on terrorist threats and planned attacks increased dramatically to its highest level since the millennium alert. At the end of March, the intelligence community disseminated a terrorist threat advisory, indicating a heightened threat of Sunni extremist terrorist attacks against U.S. facilities, personnel, and other interests.³⁴⁶

On March 23, in connection with discussions about possibly reopening Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House, Clarke warned National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice that domestic or foreign terrorists might use a truck bomb-their “weapon of choice”-on Pennsylvania Avenue. That would result, he said, in the destruction of the West Wing and parts of the residence.³⁴⁷ He also told her that he thought there were terrorist cells within the United States, including al Qaeda.

The next week, Rice was briefed on the activities of Abu Zubaydah and on CIA efforts to locate him. As pointed out in chapter 6, Abu Zubaydah had been a major figure in the millennium plots. Over the next few weeks, the CIA repeatedly issued warnings-including calls from DCI Tenet to Clarke-that Abu Zubaydah was planning an operation in the near future. One report cited a source indicating that Abu Zubaydah was planning an attack in a country that CIA analysts thought might be Israel, or perhaps Saudi Arabia or India. Clarke relayed these reports to Rice.³⁴⁸

In response to these threats, the FBI sent a message to all its field offices on April 13, summarizing reporting to date. It asked the offices to task all resources, including human sources and electronic databases, for any information pertaining to “current operational activities relating to Sunni extremism.” It did not suggest that there was a domestic threat.³⁴⁹

The interagency Counterterrorism Security Group (CSG) that Clarke chaired discussed the Abu Zubaydah reports on April 19. The next day, a briefing to top officials reported “Bin Ladin planning multiple operations.” When the deputies discussed al Qaeda policy on April 30, they began with a briefing on the threat.³⁵⁰

In May 2001, the drumbeat of reporting grew louder with reports to top officials that “Bin Ladin public profile may presage attack” and “Bin Ladin network's plans advancing.” In early May, a walk-in to the FBI claimed there was a plan to launch attacks on London, Boston, and New York. Attorney General John Ashcroft was briefed by the CIA on May 15 regarding al Qaeda generally and the current threat reporting specifically. The next day brought a report that a phone call to a U.S. embassy had warned that Bin Ladin supporters were planning an attack in the United States using “high explosives.” On May 17, based on

³⁴⁵ The CIA produced to the Commission all SEIB articles relating to al Qaeda, Bin Ladin, and other subjects identified by the Commission as being relevant to its mission from January 1998 through September 20, 2001.

³⁴⁶ See CIA, SEIB, “Sunni Terrorist Threat Growing,” Feb. 6, 2001; CIA cable, “Intelligence Community Terrorist Threat Advisory,” Mar. 30, 2001.

³⁴⁷ See NSC email, Clarke to Rice, Briefing on Pennsylvania Avenue, Mar. 23, 2001.

³⁴⁸ See NSC email, Clarke to Rice and Hadley, Terrorism Update, Mar. 30, 2001; NSC email, Clarke to Rice, Terrorist Threat Warning, Apr. 10, 2001.

³⁴⁹ See FBI electronic communication, heightened threat advisory, Apr. 13, 2001.

³⁵⁰ See NSC email, Cressey to Rice and Hadley, Threat Update, Apr. 19, 2001; CIA, SEIB, “Bin Ladin Planning Multiple Operations,” Apr. 20, 2001; NSC memo, Clarke for Hadley, “Briefing Notes for al Qida Meeting,” undated (appears to be from April 2001).

the previous day's report, the first item on the CSG's agenda was "UBL: Operation Planned in U.S."³⁵¹ The anonymous caller's tip could not be corroborated.

Late May brought reports of a possible hostage plot against Americans abroad to force the release of prisoners, including Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman, the "Blind Sheikh," who was serving a life sentence for his role in the 1993 plot to blow up sites in New York City. The reporting noted that operatives might opt to hijack an aircraft or storm a U.S. embassy. This report led to a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) information circular to airlines noting the potential for "an airline hijacking to free terrorists incarcerated in the United States." Other reporting mentioned that Abu Zubaydah was planning an attack, possibly against Israel, and expected to carry out several more if things went well. On May 24 alone, counterterrorism officials grappled with reports alleging plots in Yemen and Italy, as well as a report about a cell in Canada that an anonymous caller had claimed might be planning an attack against the United States.³⁵²

Reports similar to many of these were made available to President Bush in morning intelligence briefings with DCI Tenet, usually attended by Vice President Dick Cheney and National Security Advisor Rice. While these briefings discussed general threats to attack America and American interests, the specific threats mentioned in these briefings were all overseas.

On May 29, Clarke suggested that Rice ask DCI Tenet what more the United States could do to stop Abu Zubaydah from launching "a series of major terrorist attacks," probably on Israeli targets, but possibly on U.S. facilities. Clarke wrote to Rice and her deputy, Stephen Hadley, "When these attacks occur, as they likely will, we will wonder what more we could have done to stop them." In May, CIA Counterterrorist Center (CTC) Chief Cofer Black told Rice that the current threat level was a 7 on a scale of 1 to 10, as compared to an 8 during the millennium.³⁵³

High Probability of Near-Term "Spectacular" Attacks

Threat reports surged in June and July, reaching an even higher peak of urgency. The summer threats seemed to be focused on Saudi Arabia, Israel, Bahrain, Kuwait, Yemen, and possibly Rome, but the danger could be anywhere- including a possible attack on the G-8 summit in Genoa. A June 12 CIA report passing along biographical background information on several terrorists mentioned, in commenting on Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, that he was recruiting people to travel to the United States to meet with colleagues already there so that they might conduct terrorist attacks on Bin Ladin's behalf. On June 22, the CIA notified all its station chiefs about intelligence suggesting a possible al Qaeda suicide attack on a U.S. target over the next few days. DCI Tenet asked that all U.S. ambassadors be briefed.³⁵⁴

³⁵¹ For threats, see CIA, SEIB, "Bin Ladin Public Profile May Presage Attack," May 3, 2001; CIA, SEIB, "Bin Ladin Network's Plans Advancing," May 26, 2001; FBI report, Daily UBL/Radical Fundamentalist Threat Update, ITOS Threat Update Webpage, May 7, 2001 (the walk-in's claim was later discredited). For Attorney General briefing, see CIA briefing materials, "Briefing for the Attorney General, 15 May 2001, Al-Qa'ida," undated. For more threats and CSG discussion, see Intelligence report, Threat Report, May 16, 2001; NSC memo, CSG agenda, May 17, 2001.

³⁵² See CIA, SEIB, "Terrorist Groups Said Cooperating on US Hostage Plot," May 23, 2001; FAA information circular, "Possible Terrorist Threat Against American Citizens," IC-2001-08, June 22, 2001 (this IC expired on August 22, 2001); CIA, SEIB, "Bin Ladin Network's Plans Advancing," May 26, 2001; NSC email, Clarke to Rice and Hadley, "A day in the life of Terrorism intelligence," May 24, 2001.

³⁵³ See NSC email, Clarke to Rice and Hadley, Stopping Abu Zubaydah's attacks, May 29, 2001. For threat level, see White House document, "Selected Summer 2001 Threat Response Activities," undated, pp. 1-2 (provided to the Commission by President Bush on Apr. 29, 2004).

³⁵⁴ The information regarding KSM was not captioned as a threat. It was part of a longer cable whose subject line was "Terrorism: Biographical Information on Bin Ladin Associates in Afghanistan." The cable reported further that KSM himself was regularly traveling to the United States. See Intelligence report, June 12, 2001. This was doubted by the CIA's Renditions Branch, which had been looking for KSM since 1997. It noted, however, that if the source was talking about the "real" KSM, the CIA had both "a significant threat and opportunity to pick him up." See CIA cable, request additional information on KSM, June 26, 2001. A month

That same day, the State Department notified all embassies of the terrorist threat and updated its worldwide public warning. In June, the State Department initiated the Visa Express program in Saudi Arabia as a security measure, in order to keep long lines of foreigners away from vulnerable embassy spaces. The program permitted visa applications to be made through travel agencies, instead of directly at the embassy or consulate.³⁵⁵

A terrorist threat advisory distributed in late June indicated a high probability of near-term “spectacular” terrorist attacks resulting in numerous casualties. Other reports' titles warned, “Bin Ladin Attacks May be Imminent” and “Bin Ladin and Associates Making Near-Term Threats.” The latter reported multiple attacks planned over the coming days, including a “severe blow” against U.S. and Israeli “interests” during the next two weeks.³⁵⁶

On June 21, near the height of the threat reporting, U.S. Central Command raised the force protection condition level for U.S. troops in six countries to the highest possible level, Delta. The U.S. Fifth Fleet moved out of its port in Bahrain, and a U.S. Marine Corps exercise in Jordan was halted. U.S. embassies in the Persian Gulf conducted an emergency security review, and the embassy in Yemen was closed. The CSG had foreign emergency response teams, known as FESTs, ready to move on four hours' notice and kept up the terrorism alert posture on a “rolling 24 hour basis.”³⁵⁷

On June 25, Clarke warned Rice and Hadley that six separate intelligence reports showed al Qaeda personnel warning of a pending attack. An Arabic television station reported Bin Ladin's pleasure with al Qaeda leaders who were saying that the next weeks “will witness important surprises” and that U.S. and Israeli interests will be targeted. Al Qaeda also released a new recruitment and fund-raising tape. Clarke wrote that this was all too sophisticated to be merely a psychological operation to keep the United States on edge, and the CIA agreed. The intelligence reporting consistently described the upcoming attacks as occurring on a calamitous level, indicating that they would cause the world to be in turmoil and that they would consist of possible multiple-but not necessarily simultaneous-attacks.³⁵⁸

On June 28, Clarke wrote Rice that the pattern of al Qaeda activity indicating attack planning over the past six weeks “had reached a crescendo.” “A series of new reports continue to convince me and analysts at State, CIA, DIA [Defense Intelligence Agency], and NSA that a major terrorist attack or series of attacks is likely in July,” he noted. One al Qaeda intelligence report warned that something “very, very, very, very” big was about to happen, and most of Bin Ladin's network was reportedly anticipating the attack. In late

later, a report from the source indicated that the information regarding KSM's travel to the United States was current as of the summer of 1998. It noted further, however, that KSM continued his old activities but not specifically the travel to the United States. Significantly, it confirmed that the source was talking about the “real” KSM. See CIA cable, follow-up source on KSM, July 11, 2001. As noted in chapter 7, KSM has said that it was generally well known by the summer of 2001 that he was planning an operation in the United States. Roger Cressey told us he did not recall seeing this reporting, although he would have had access to it. Roger Cressey interview (June 23, 2004).

For the summer threat reporting and actions taken in response, see NSC memo, Clarke/Cressey agenda for June 22 CSG meeting, June 20, 2001; CIA, SEIB, “Bin Ladin and Associates Making Near-Term Threats,” June 25, 2001; CIA, SEIB, “Bin Ladin Planning High-Profile Attacks,” June 30, 2001; CIA cable, “Threat UBL Attack Against US Interests Next 24-48 Hours,” June 22, 2001; FBI report, Daily UBL/Radical Fundamentalist Threat Update, ITOS Threat Update Webpage, June 22, 2001.

³⁵⁵ DOS cable, Riyadh 02326, “U.S. Visa Express Program Transforms NIV Scene in Saudi Arabia,” Aug. 19, 2001; NSC memo, Current US Terrorism Alert, July 3, 2001.

³⁵⁶ See CIA cable, “Possible Threat of Imminent Attack from Sunni Extremists,” June 23, 2001; CIA, SEIB, “Bin Ladin Attacks May be Imminent,” June 23, 2001; CIA, SEIB, “Bin Ladin and Associates Making Near-Term Threats,” June 25, 2001.

³⁵⁷ See NSC memo, Clarke to CSG regarding that day's CSG meeting, June 22, 2001; NSC memo, Current U.S. Terrorism Alert, July 3, 2001. For the readiness of FESTs, see NSC email, Clarke to Rice and Hadley, Terror-ism Threat Update, June 25, 2001.

³⁵⁸ See NSC email, Clarke to Rice and Hadley, Possibility of an al Qaeda Attack, June 25, 2001; CIA report, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, “MBC TV Carries Video Report on Bin Ladin, Followers in Training,” June 24, 2001; CIA, SEIB, “Bin Ladin Threats Are Real,” June 30, 2001; John McLaughlin interview (Jan. 21, 2004); CIA cable, “Continued Threat/Potential Attack by UBL,” June 29, 2001.

June, the CIA ordered all its station chiefs to share information on al Qaeda with their host governments and to push for immediate disruptions of cells.³⁵⁹

The headline of a June 30 briefing to top officials was stark: “Bin Ladin Planning High-Profile Attacks.” The report stated that Bin Ladin operatives expected near-term attacks to have dramatic consequences of catastrophic proportions. That same day, Saudi Arabia declared its highest level of terror alert. Despite evidence of delays possibly caused by heightened U.S. security, the planning for attacks was continuing.³⁶⁰

On July 2, the FBI Counterterrorism Division sent a message to federal agencies and state and local law enforcement agencies summarizing information regarding threats from Bin Ladin. It warned that there was an increased volume of threat reporting, indicating a potential for attacks against U.S. targets abroad from groups “aligned with or sympathetic to Usama Bin Ladin.” Despite the general warnings, the message further stated, “The FBI has no information indicating a credible threat of terrorist attack in the United States.” However, it went on to emphasize that the possibility of attack in the United States could not be discounted. It also noted that the July 4 holiday might heighten the threats. The report asked recipients to “exercise extreme vigilance” and “report suspicious activities” to the FBI. It did not suggest specific actions that they should take to prevent attacks.³⁶¹

Disruption operations against al Qaeda-affiliated cells were launched involving 20 countries. Several terrorist operatives were detained by foreign governments, possibly disrupting operations in the Gulf and Italy and perhaps averting attacks against two or three U.S. embassies. Clarke and others told us of a particular concern about possible attacks on the Fourth of July. After it passed uneventfully, the CSG decided to maintain the alert.³⁶²

To enlist more international help, Vice President Cheney contacted Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah on July 5. Hadley apparently called European counterparts, while Clarke worked with senior officials in the Gulf. In late July, because of threats, Italy closed the airspace over Genoa and mounted anti-aircraft batteries at the Genoa airport during the G-8 summit, which President Bush attended.³⁶³

At home, the CSG arranged for the CIA to brief intelligence and security officials from several domestic agencies. On July 5, representatives from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), the FAA, the Coast Guard, the Secret Service, Customs, the CIA, and the FBI met with Clarke to discuss the current threat. Attendees report that they were told not to disseminate the threat information they received at the meeting. They interpreted this direction to mean that although they could brief their superiors, they could not send out advisories to the field. An NSC official recalls a somewhat different emphasis, saying that attendees were asked to take the information back to their home agencies and “do what you can” with it,

³⁵⁹ See NSC email, Clarke to Rice and Hadley, Possibility of an al Qaeda Attack, June 28, 2001; NSC email, Clarke for Rice and others, Terrorist Alert, June 30, 2001.

³⁶⁰ See NSC email, Clarke to Rice and others, Terrorist Alert, June 30, 2001; CIA, SEIB, “Bin Ladin Planning High-Profile Attacks,” June 30, 2001; CIA, SEIB, “Planning for Bin Ladin Attacks Continues, Despite Delays,” July 2, 2001.

³⁶¹ FBI report, National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (NLETS) message, “National Threat Warning System-Potential Anti-U.S. Terrorist Attacks,” July 2, 2001.

³⁶² By July 3, DCI Tenet had asked about 20 of his counterparts in friendly foreign intelligence services to detain specific al Qaeda members and to generally harass al Qaeda-affiliated cells. NSC memo, Current U.S. Terrorism Alert, July 3, 2001. For specific disruption activities and maintaining alert, see NSC email, Clarke to Rice and Hadley, Threat Updates, July 6, 2001; Richard Clarke interview (Jan. 12, 2004).

³⁶³ For the Cheney call see President Bush and Vice President Cheney meeting (Apr. 29, 2004). For the Hadley call see NSC email, Clarke to Rice and Edelman, Terrorism Alert, July 2, 2001. For the G-8 summit see Associated Press Online, “Bush Faced Threat at G-8 Summit,” Sept. 26, 2001.

subject to classification and distribution restrictions. A representative from the INS asked for a summary of the information that she could share with field offices. She never received one.³⁶⁴

That same day, the CIA briefed Attorney General Ashcroft on the al Qaeda threat, warning that a significant terrorist attack was imminent. Ashcroft was told that preparations for multiple attacks were in late stages or already complete and that little additional warning could be expected. The briefing addressed only threats outside the United States.³⁶⁵

The next day, the CIA representative told the CSG that al Qaeda members believed the upcoming attack would be “spectacular,” qualitatively different from anything they had done to date.³⁶⁶

Apparently as a result of the July 5 meeting with Clarke, the interagency committee on federal building security was tasked to examine security measures. This committee met on July 9, when 37 officials from 27 agencies and organizations were briefed on the “current threat level” in the United States. They were told that not only the threat reports from abroad but also the recent convictions in the East Africa bombings trial, the conviction of Ahmed Ressam, and the just-returned Khobar Towers indictments reinforced the need to “exercise extreme vigilance.” Attendees were expected to determine whether their respective agencies needed enhanced security measures.³⁶⁷

On July 18, 2001, the State Department provided a warning to the public regarding possible terrorist attacks in the Arabian Peninsula.³⁶⁸

Acting FBI Director Thomas Pickard told us he had one of his periodic conference calls with all special agents in charge on July 19. He said one of the items he mentioned was the need, in light of increased threat reporting, to have evidence response teams ready to move at a moment's notice, in case of an attack.³⁶⁹ He did not task field offices to try to determine whether any plots were being considered within the United States or to take any action to disrupt any such plots.

In mid-July, reporting started to indicate that Bin Ladin's plans had been delayed, maybe for as long as two months, but not abandoned. On July 23, the lead item for CSG discussion was still the al Qaeda threat, and it included mention of suspected terrorist travel to the United States.³⁷⁰

On July 31, an FAA circular appeared alerting the aviation community to “reports of possible near-term terrorist operations . . . particularly on the Arabian Peninsula and/or Israel.” It stated that the FAA had no credible evidence of specific plans to attack U.S. civil aviation, though it noted that some of the “currently active” terrorist groups were known to “plan and train for hijackings” and were able to build and conceal sophisticated explosive devices in luggage and consumer products.³⁷¹

Tenet told us that in his world “the system was blinking red.” By late July, Tenet said, it could not “get any worse.”³⁷² Not everyone was convinced. Some asked whether all these threats might just be deception. On June 30, the SEIB contained an article titled “Bin Ladin Threats Are Real.” Yet Hadley told Tenet in July that Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz questioned the reporting. Perhaps Bin Ladin

³⁶⁴ Veronica C. interview (May 25, 2004); INS memo, Veronica C. to Cadman, “Briefing at the NSC,” July 9, 2001; Roger Cressey interview (June 23, 2004). The Customs representative, Ricardo C., did send out a general advisory that was based solely on historical facts, such as the Ressam case, to suggest there was a threat. Ricardo C. interview (June 12, 2004).

³⁶⁵ See CIA memo, “CTC Briefing for the Attorney General on the Usama Bin Ladin Terrorist Threat,” July 5, 2001, and the accompanying CIA briefing materials, “DCI Update Terrorist Threat Review,” July 3, 2001.

³⁶⁶ See NSC email, Clarke to Rice and Hadley, Threat Updates, July 6, 2001.

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.* see also FBI memo, Kevin G. to Watson, “Protective Services Working Group (PSWG) Meeting Held at FBIHQ 7/9/01,” July 16, 2001, and accompanying attendance sheets.

³⁶⁸ FBI report, Daily UBL/Radical Fundamentalist Threat Update, ITOS Threat Update Webpage, July 20, 2001.

³⁶⁹ Thomas Pickard interview (Apr. 8, 2004).

³⁷⁰ See CIA, SEIB, “Bin Ladin Plans Delayed but Not Abandoned,” July 13, 2001; CIA, SEIB, “One Bin Ladin Operation Delayed, Others Ongoing,” July 25, 2001; NSC memo, Cressey to CSG, Threat SVTS, July 23, 2001.

³⁷¹ FAA information circular, “Continued Middle Eastern Threats to Civil Aviation,” IC-2001-04A, July 31, 2001.

³⁷² George Tenet interview (Jan. 28, 2004).

was trying to study U.S. reactions. Tenet replied that he had already addressed the Defense Department's questions on this point; the reporting was convincing. To give a sense of his anxiety at the time, one senior official in the Counterterrorist Center told us that he and a colleague were considering resigning in order to go public with their concerns.³⁷³

The Calm Before the Storm

On July 27, Clarke informed Rice and Hadley that the spike in intelligence about a near-term al Qaeda attack had stopped. He urged keeping readiness high during the August vacation period, warning that another report suggested an attack had just been postponed for a few months “but will still happen.”³⁷⁴

On August 1, the FBI issued an advisory that in light of the increased volume of threat reporting and the upcoming anniversary of the East Africa embassy bombings, increased attention should be paid to security planning. It noted that although most of the reporting indicated a potential for attacks on U.S. interests abroad, the possibility of an attack in the United States could not be discounted.³⁷⁵

On August 3, the intelligence community issued an advisory concluding that the threat of impending al Qaeda attacks would likely continue indefinitely. Citing threats in the Arabian Peninsula, Jordan, Israel, and Europe, the advisory suggested that al Qaeda was lying in wait and searching for gaps in security before moving forward with the planned attacks.³⁷⁶

During the spring and summer of 2001, President Bush had on several occasions asked his briefers whether any of the threats pointed to the United States. Reflecting on these questions, the CIA decided to write a briefing article summarizing its understanding of this danger. Two CIA analysts involved in preparing this briefing article believed it represented an opportunity to communicate their view that the threat of a Bin Ladin attack in the United States remained both current and serious.³⁷⁷ The result was an article in the August 6 Presidential Daily Brief titled “Bin Ladin Determined to Strike in US.” It was the 36th PDB item briefed so far that year that related to Bin Ladin or al Qaeda, and the first devoted to the possibility of an attack in the United States.

The President told us the August 6 report was historical in nature. President Bush said the article told him that al Qaeda was dangerous, which he said he had known since he had become President. The President said Bin Ladin had long been talking about his desire to attack America. He recalled some operational data on the FBI, and remembered thinking it was heartening that 70 investigations were under way. As best he could recollect, Rice had mentioned that the Yemenis' surveillance of a federal building in New York had been looked into in May and June, but there was no actionable intelligence.

He did not recall discussing the August 6 report with the Attorney General or whether Rice had done so. He said that if his advisers had told him there was a cell in the United States, they would have moved to take care of it. That never happened.³⁷⁸

Although the following day's SEIB repeated the title of this PDB, it did not contain the reference to hijackings, the alert in New York, the alleged casing of buildings in New York, the threat phoned in to the

³⁷³ See CIA, SEIB, “Bin Ladin Threats Are Real,” June 30, 2001. For Tenet's response to DOD's concerns about possible deception, see CIA memo, weekly meeting between Rice and Tenet, July 17, 2001; John McLaughlin interview (Jan. 21, 2004); Richard interview (Dec. 11, 2003).

³⁷⁴ NSC email, Clarke to Rice and Hadley, Threats Update, July 27, 2001.

³⁷⁵ FBI report, NLETS message, “Third Anniversary of the 1998 U.S. Embassy Bombings in East Africa Approaches; Threats to U.S. Interests Continue,” Aug. 1, 2001.

³⁷⁶ CIA cable, “Threat of Impending al Qaeda Attack to Continue Indefinitely,” Aug. 3, 2001.

³⁷⁷ CIA letter, Tenet to the Commission, Mar. 26, 2004; Barbara S. interview (July 13, 2004); Dwayne D. interview (July 13, 2004).

³⁷⁸ President Bush and Vice President Cheney meeting (Apr. 29, 2004). For Rice's reaction to the August 6 PDB article, see Condoleezza Rice testimony, Apr. 8, 2004.

embassy, or the fact that the FBI had approximately 70 ongoing bin Ladin-related investigations.³⁷⁹ No CSG or other NSC meeting was held to discuss the possible threat of a strike in the United States as a result of this report.

The following is the text of an item from the Presidential Daily Brief received by President George W. Bush on August 6, 2001.³⁸⁰ Redacted material is indicated by brackets.

“Bin Ladin Determined To Strike in US”

Clandestine, foreign government, and media reports indicate Bin Ladin since 1997 has wanted to conduct terrorist attacks in the US. Bin Ladin implied in US television interviews in 1997 and 1998 that his followers would follow the example of World Trade Center bomber Ramzi Yousef and “bring the fighting to America.”

After US missile strikes on his base in Afghanistan in 1998, Bin Ladin told followers he wanted to retaliate in Washington, according to a [-] service.

An Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ) operative told an [-] service at the same time that Bin Ladin was planning to exploit the operative's access to the US to mount a terrorist strike.

The millennium plotting in Canada in 1999 may have been part of Bin Ladin's first serious attempt to implement a terrorist strike in the US. Convicted plotter Ahmed Ressam has told the FBI that he

³⁷⁹ See CIA, SEIB, “Bin Ladin Determined to Strike in US,” Aug. 7, 2001; see also Roger Cressey interview (June 23, 2004). The Deputy Director of Central Intelligence testified that the FBI information in the PDB was omitted from the SEIB because of concerns about protecting ongoing investigations, because the information had been received from the FBI only orally, and because there were no clear, established ground rules regarding SEIB contents. John McLaughlin testimony, Apr. 14, 2004.

³⁸⁰ The CTC analyst who drafted the briefing drew on reports over the previous four years. She also spoke with an FBI analyst to obtain additional information. The FBI material was written up by the CIA analyst and included in the PDB. A draft of the report was sent to the FBI analyst to review. The FBI analyst did not, however, see the final version, which added the reference to the 70 investigations. Barbara S. interviews (Apr. 12, 2004); Joint Inquiry interview of Jen M., Nov. 20, 2002. Because of the attention that has been given to the PDB, we have investigated each of the assertions mentioned in it.

The only information that actually referred to a hijacking in this period was a walk-in at an FBI office in the United States who mentioned hijackings among other possible attacks. The source was judged to be a fabricator. FBI report, Daily UBL/Radical Fundamentalist Threat Update, ITOS Threat Update Webpage, Aug. 1, 2001.

The FBI conducted an extensive investigation of the two individuals who were stopped after being observed taking photographs of two adjacent buildings that contained FBI offices. The person taking the photographs told the FBI that he was taking them for a co-worker in Indiana who had never been to New York and wanted to see what it looked like. The picture taker was in New York to obtain further information regarding his pending citizenship application. He had an appointment at 26 Federal Plaza, where the relevant INS offices were located. This same building houses portions of the FBI's New York Field Office. Before going into the building the individual pulled out the camera and took four photographs. When the FBI attempted to contact the co-worker (and roommate) who had requested some photographs, it was determined that he had fled without receiving his last paycheck after learning that the FBI had asked his employer some questions about him. Further investigation determined that he was an illegal alien using forged identity documents. Despite two years of investigation, the FBI was unable to find the co-worker or determine his true identity. The FBI closed the investigation on June 9, 2003, when it concluded that it was unable to connect the men's activities to terrorism. Matthew interview (June 18, 2004); FBI case file, no. 266A-NY-279198.

The 70 full-field investigations number was a generous calculation that included fund-raising investigations. It also counted each individual connected to an investigation as a separate full-field investigation. Many of these investigations should not have been included, such as the one that related to a dead person, four that concerned people who had been in long-term custody, and eight that had been closed well before August 6, 2001. Joint Inquiry interview of Elizabeth and Laura, Nov. 20, 2002; FBI report, “70 UBL Cases,” undated (produced to the Joint Inquiry on Aug. 12, 2002).

The call to the UAE was originally reported by the CIA on May 16. It came from an anonymous caller. Neither the CIA nor the FBI was able to corroborate the information in the call. FBI report, Daily UBL/Radical Fundamentalist Threat Update, ITOS Threat Update Webpage, May 16, 2001.

conceived the idea to attack Los Angeles International Airport himself, but that Bin Ladin lieutenant Abu Zubaydah encouraged him and helped facilitate the operation. Ressay also said that in 1998 Abu Zubaydah was planning his own US attack.

Ressay says Bin Ladin was aware of the Los Angeles operation.

Although Bin Ladin has not succeeded, his attacks against the US Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998 demonstrate that he prepares operations years in advance and is not deterred by setbacks. Bin Ladin associates surveilled our Embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam as early as 1993, and some members of the Nairobi cell planning the bombings were arrested and deported in 1997.

Al-Qa'ida members-including some who are US citizens-have resided in or traveled to the US for years, and the group apparently maintains a support structure that could aid attacks. Two al-Qa' da members found guilty in the conspiracy to bomb our embassies in East Africa were US citizens, and a senior EIJ member lived in California in the mid-1990s.

A clandestine source said in 1998 that a Bin Ladin cell in New York was recruiting Muslim-American youth for attacks.

We have not been able to corroborate some of the more sensational threat reporting, such as that from a [-] service in 1998 saying that Bin Ladin wanted to hijack a US aircraft to gain the release of "Blind Shaykh" 'Umar 'Abd al-Rahman and other US-held extremists.

Nevertheless, FBI information since that time indicates patterns of suspicious activity in this country consistent with preparations for hijackings or other types of attacks, including recent surveillance of federal buildings in New York.

The FBI is conducting approximately 70 full field investigations throughout the US that it considers Bin Ladin-related. CIA and the FBI are investigating a call to our Embassy in the UAE in May saying that a group of Bin Ladin supporters was in the US planning attacks with explosives.

Late in the month, a foreign service reported that Abu Zubaydah was considering mounting terrorist attacks in the United States, after postponing possible operations in Europe. No targets, timing, or method of attack were provided.³⁸¹

We have found no indication of any further discussion before September 11 among the President and his top advisers of the possibility of a threat of an al Qaeda attack in the United States. DCI Tenet visited President Bush in Crawford, Texas, on August 17 and participated in PDB briefings of the President between August 31 (after the President had returned to Washington) and September 10. But Tenet does not recall any discussions with the President of the domestic threat during this period.³⁸²

Most of the intelligence community recognized in the summer of 2001 that the number and severity of threat reports were unprecedented. Many officials told us that they knew something terrible was planned, and they were desperate to stop it. Despite their large number, the threats received contained few specifics regarding time, place, method, or target. Most suggested that attacks were planned against targets overseas; others indicated threats against unspecified "U.S. interests." We cannot say for certain whether these reports, as dramatic as they were, related to the 9/11 attacks.

Government Response to the Threats

National Security Advisor Rice told us that the CSG was the "nerve center" for running the crisis, although other senior officials were involved over the course of the summer. In addition to his daily meetings

³⁸¹ Intelligence report, Consideration by Abu Zubaydah to Attack Targets in the United States, Aug. 24, 2001.

³⁸² George Tenet interview (July 2, 2004).

with President Bush, and weekly meetings to go over other issues with Rice, Tenet was speaking regularly with Secretary of State Colin Powell and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. The foreign policy principals routinely talked on the telephone every day on a variety of topics.³⁸³

Hadley told us that before 9/11, he and Rice did not feel they had the job of coordinating domestic agencies. They felt that Clarke and the CSG (part of the NSC) were the NSC's bridge between foreign and domestic threats.³⁸⁴

There was a clear disparity in the levels of response to foreign versus domestic threats. Numerous actions were taken overseas to disrupt possible attacks- enlisting foreign partners to upset terrorist plans, closing embassies, moving military assets out of the way of possible harm. Far less was done domestically- in part, surely, because to the extent that specifics did exist, they pertained to threats overseas. As noted earlier, a threat against the embassy in Yemen quickly resulted in its closing. Possible domestic threats were more vague. When reports did not specify where the attacks were to take place, officials presumed that they would again be overseas, though they did not rule out a target in the United States. Each of the FBI threat advisories made this point.³⁸⁵

Clarke mentioned to National Security Advisor Rice at least twice that al Qaeda sleeper cells were likely in the United States. In January 2001, Clarke forwarded a strategy paper to Rice warning that al Qaeda had a presence in the United States. He noted that two key al Qaeda members in the Jordanian cell involved in the millennium plot were naturalized U.S. citizens and that one jihadist suspected in the East Africa bombings had “informed the FBI that an extensive network of al Qida 'sleeper agents' currently exists in the US.” He added that Ressaam's abortive December 1999 attack revealed al Qaeda supporters in the United States.³⁸⁶ His analysis, however, was based not on new threat reporting but on past experience.

The September 11 attacks fell into the void between the foreign and domestic threats. The foreign intelligence agencies were watching overseas, alert to foreign threats to U.S. interests there. The domestic agencies were waiting for evidence of a domestic threat from sleeper cells within the United States. No one was looking for a foreign threat to domestic targets. The threat that was coming was not from sleeper cells. It was foreign-but from foreigners who had infiltrated into the United States.

A second cause of this disparity in response is that domestic agencies did not know what to do, and no one gave them direction. Cressey told us that the CSG did not tell the agencies how to respond to the threats. He noted that the agencies that were operating overseas did not need direction on how to respond; they had experience with such threats and had a “playbook.” In contrast, the domestic agencies did not have a game plan. Neither the NSC (including the CSG) nor anyone else instructed them to create one.³⁸⁷

This lack of direction was evident in the July 5 meeting with representatives from the domestic agencies. The briefing focused on overseas threats. The domestic agencies were not questioned about how they planned to address the threat and were not told what was expected of them. Indeed, as noted earlier, they were specifically told they could not issue advisories based on the briefing.³⁸⁸ The domestic agencies' limited response indicates that they did not perceive a call to action.

³⁸³ Condoleezza Rice testimony, Apr. 8, 2004; Condoleezza Rice meeting (Feb. 7, 2004).

³⁸⁴ Stephen Hadley meeting (Jan. 31, 2004).

³⁸⁵ It is also notable that virtually all the information regarding possible domestic threats came from human sources. The information on overseas threats came mainly from signals intelligence. Officials believed that signals intelligence was more reliable than human intelligence. Roger Cressey interview (June 23, 2004).

³⁸⁶ NSC memo, Clarke to Rice, al Qaeda review, Jan. 25, 2001 (attaching NSC memo, “Strategy for Eliminating the Threat from the Jihadists Networks of al Qida: Status and Prospects,” Dec. 2000). Clarke had also mentioned domestic terrorist cells in connection with the possibility of reopening Pennsylvania Avenue. See NSC email, Clarke to Rice, Briefing on Pennsylvania Avenue, Mar. 23, 2001.

³⁸⁷ Roger Cressey interview (June 23, 2004).

³⁸⁸ This approach was consistent with how this same issue was addressed almost exactly a year earlier, despite the fact that by 2001 the threat level was higher than it had ever been previously. On June 30, 2000, NSC counterterrorism staffers met with INS,

Clarke reflected a different perspective in an email to Rice on September 15, 2001. He summarized the steps taken by the CSG to alert domestic agencies to the possibility of an attack in the United States. Clarke concluded that domestic agencies, including the FAA, knew that the CSG believed a major al Qaeda attack was coming and could be in the United States.

Although the FAA had authority to issue security directives mandating new security procedures, none of the few that were released during the summer of 2001 increased security at checkpoints or on board aircraft. The information circulars mostly urged air carriers to “exercise prudence” and be alert. Prior to 9/11, the FAA did present a CD-ROM to air carriers and airport authorities describing the increased threat to civil aviation. The presentation mentioned the possibility of suicide hijackings but said that “fortunately, we have no indication that any group is currently thinking in that direction.”³⁸⁹ The FAA conducted 27 special security briefings for specific air carriers between May 1, 2001, and September 11, 2001. Two of these briefings discussed the hijacking threat overseas. None discussed the possibility of suicide hijackings or the use of aircraft as weapons. No new security measures were instituted.³⁹⁰

Rice told us she understood that the FBI had tasked its 56 U.S. field offices to increase surveillance of suspected terrorists and to reach out to informants who might have information about terrorist plots. An NSC staff document at the time describes such a tasking as having occurred in late June but does not indicate whether it was generated by the NSC or the FBI. Other than the previously described April 13 communication sent to all FBI field offices, however, the FBI could not find any record of having received such a directive. The April 13 document asking field offices to gather information on Sunni extremism did not mention any possible threat within the United States and did not order surveillance of suspected operatives. The NSC did not specify what the FBI's directives should contain and did not review what had been issued earlier.³⁹¹

Acting FBI Director Pickard told us that in addition to his July 19 conference call, he mentioned the heightened terrorist threat in individual calls with the special agents in charge of field offices during their annual performance review discussions. In speaking with agents around the country, we found little evidence that any such concerns had reached FBI personnel beyond the New York Field Office.³⁹²

Customs, and FBI officials to review border and port security measures. The NSC staff's Paul Kurtz wrote to then national security adviser Samuel Berger, “We noted while there was no information regarding potential attacks in the U.S. they should inform their officers to remain vigilant.” NSC email, Kurtz to Berger, Steinberg, and Rudman, warning re: UBL threat reporting, June 30, 2000.

³⁸⁹ FAA briefing materials, Office of Civil Aviation Security, “The Transnational Threat to Civil Aviation,” undated (slide 24). The presentation did indicate, however, that if a hijacker was intending to commit suicide in a spectacular explosion, the terrorist would be likely to prefer a domestic hijacking. Between July 27 and September 11, 2001, the FAA did issue five new Security Directives to air carriers requiring them to take some specific security measures. Two continued certain measures that had been in place for at least a year. Others related only to carrying specific passengers. See FAA security directives, SD 108-98, July 27, 2001; SD 108-00, July 27, 2001; SD 10800, July 27, 2001; SD 108-01, Aug. 21, 2001; SD 108-01, Aug. 31, 2001. In order to issue more general warnings without directing carriers to take specific action, the FAA issued Information Circulars. Of the eight such circulars issued between July 2 and September 11, 2001, five highlighted possible threats overseas. See FAA information circulars, “Possible Terrorist Threat-Arabian Peninsula,” IC-2001-11, July 18, 2001; “Recent Terrorist Activity in the Middle East,” IC-2001-03B, July 26, 2001; “Continued Middle Eastern Threats to Civil Aviation,” IC-2001-04A, July 31, 2001; “Violence Increases in Israel,” IC-2001-07A, Aug. 28, 2001; “ETA Bombs Airports in Spain,” IC-2001-13, Aug. 29, 2001. One, issued on August 16, warned about the potential use of disguised weapons. FAA information circular, “Disguised Weapons,” IC-2001-12, Aug. 16, 2001.

³⁹⁰ FAA report, “Record of Air Carrier Briefings-4/18/01 to 9/10/01,” undated.

³⁹¹ See Condoleezza Rice testimony, Apr. 8, 2004; NSC memo, U.S. Terrorism Alert, July 3, 2001; FBI electronic communication, Heightened Threat Advisory, Apr. 13, 2001. For the lack of NSC direction, see Roger Cressey interview (June 23, 2004).

³⁹² Thomas Pickard interview (Apr. 8, 2004). For example, an international terrorism squad supervisor in the Washington Field Office told us he was not aware of an increased threat in the summer of 2001, and his squad did not take any special actions to respond to it. The special agent in charge of the Miami Field Office told us he did not learn of the high level of threat until after September 11. See Washington Field Office agent interview (Apr. 1, 2004); Hector Pesquera interview (Oct. 3, 2003).

The head of counterterrorism at the FBI, Dale Watson, said he had many discussions about possible attacks with Cofer Black at the CIA. They had expected an attack on July 4. Watson said he felt deeply that something was going to happen. But he told us the threat information was “nebulous.” He wished he had known more. He wished he had had “500 analysts looking at Usama Bin Ladin threat information instead of two.”³⁹³

Attorney General Ashcroft was briefed by the CIA in May and by Pickard in early July about the danger. Pickard said he met with Ashcroft once a week in late June, through July, and twice in August. There is a dispute regarding Ashcroft's interest in Pickard's briefings about the terrorist threat situation. Pickard told us that after two such briefings Ashcroft told him that he did not want to hear about the threats anymore. Ashcroft denies Pickard's charge. Pickard says he continued to present terrorism information during further briefings that summer, but nothing further on the “chatter” the U.S. government was receiving.³⁹⁴

The Attorney General told us he asked Pickard whether there was intelligence about attacks in the United States and that Pickard said no. Pickard said he replied that he could not assure Ashcroft that there would be no attacks in the United States, although the reports of threats were related to overseas targets. Ashcroft said he therefore assumed the FBI was doing what it needed to do. He acknowledged that in retrospect, this was a dangerous assumption. He did not ask the FBI what it was doing in response to the threats and did not task it to take any specific action. He also did not direct the INS, then still part of the Department of Justice, to take any specific action.³⁹⁵

In sum, the domestic agencies never mobilized in response to the threat. They did not have direction, and did not have a plan to institute. The borders were not hardened. Transportation systems were not fortified. Electronic surveillance was not targeted against a domestic threat.³⁹⁶ State and local law enforcement were not marshaled to augment the FBI's efforts. The public was not warned.

The terrorists exploited deep institutional failings within our government. The question is whether extra vigilance might have turned up an opportunity to disrupt the plot. As seen in chapter 7, al Qaeda's operatives made mistakes. At least two such mistakes created opportunities during 2001, especially in late August.

Late Leads-Midhar, Moussaoui, and KSM

In chapter 6 we discussed how intelligence agencies successfully detected some of the early travel in the planes operation, picking up the movements of Khalid al Mihdhar and identifying him, and seeing his

³⁹³ Dale Watson interview (Jan. 6, 2004).

³⁹⁴ See Thomas Pickard interviews (Jan. 21, 2004; Apr. 8, 2004); Thomas Pickard testimony, Apr. 13, 2004; Thomas Pickard letter to the Commission, June 24, 2004; John Ashcroft testimony, Apr. 13, 2004. We cannot resolve this dispute. Pickard recalls the alleged statement being made at a briefing on July 12. The Department of Justice has informed us that the only people present at that briefing were Pickard, Ashcroft, Deputy Attorney General Larry Thompson, and Ashcroft's chief of staff, David Ayres. There are no records of the discussions at these briefings. Thompson and Ayres deny Ashcroft made any such statement. Dale Watson, who did not attend any of the briefings, told us that Pickard complained after one of the briefings that Ashcroft did not want to be briefed on the threats because “nothing ever happened.” Ruben Garcia, head of the FBI's Criminal Division, who attended some of Pickard's briefings of the Attorney General but not the one at which Pickard alleges Ashcroft made the statement, recalls that Ashcroft was “not enthusiastic” about the classified portions of the briefings that related to counterterrorism. We have been told that Pickard and Ashcroft did not have a good relationship. This may have influenced their views on the facts surrounding their meetings. Larry Thompson interview (Jan. 29, 2004); Dale Watson interview (June 3, 2004); Ruben Garcia interview (Apr. 29, 2004); Thompson and Ayres letter to the Commission, July 12, 2004.

³⁹⁵ See Thomas Pickard interviews (Jan. 21, 2004; Apr. 8, 2004); John Ashcroft meeting (Dec. 17, 2003); John Ashcroft testimony, Apr. 13, 2004.

³⁹⁶ Indeed, the number of FISA warrants in effect in the summer of 2001 may well have been less than it was at the beginning of the year. Because of problems with inaccuracies in the applications, FISAs were allowed to lapse rather than be renewed with continuing inaccuracies. Michael Rolince interview (Apr. 12, 2004); Marion Bowman interview (Mar. 6, 2004).

travel converge with someone they perhaps could have identified but did not-Nawaf al Hazmi-as well as with less easily identifiable people such as Khallad and Abu Bara. These observations occurred in December 1999 and January 2000. The trail had been lost in January 2000 without a clear realization that it had been lost, and without much effort to pick it up again. Nor had the CIA placed Mihdhar on the State Department's watchlist for suspected terrorists, so that either an embassy or a port of entry might take note if Mihdhar showed up again.

On four occasions in 2001, the CIA, the FBI, or both had apparent opportunities to refocus on the significance of Hazmi and Mihdhar and reinvigorate the search for them. After reviewing those episodes we will turn to the handling of the Moussaoui case and some late leads regarding Khalid Sheikh Mohammed.

January 2001: Identification of Khallad

Almost one year after the original trail had been lost in Bangkok, the FBI and the CIA were working on the investigation of the *Cole* bombing. They learned of the link between a captured conspirator and a person called "Khallad." They also learned that Khallad was a senior security official for Bin Ladin who had helped direct the bombing (we introduced Khallad in chapter 5, and returned to his role in the *Cole* bombing in chapter 6).³⁹⁷

One of the members of the FBI's investigative team in Yemen realized that he had heard of Khallad before, from a joint FBI/CIA source four months earlier. The FBI agent obtained from a foreign government a photo of the person believed to have directed the *Cole* bombing. It was shown to the source, and he confirmed that the man in that photograph was the same Khallad he had described.³⁹⁸

In December 2000, on the basis of some links associated with Khalid al Mihdhar, the CIA's Bin Ladin unit speculated that Khallad and Khalid al Mihdhar might be one and the same.³⁹⁹

The CIA asked that a Kuala Lumpur surveillance photo of Mihdhar be shown to the joint source who had identified Khallad. In early January 2001, two photographs from the Kuala Lumpur meeting were shown to the source. One was a known photograph of Mihdhar, the other a photograph of a then unknown subject. The source did not recognize Mihdhar. But he indicated he was 90 percent certain that the other individual was Khallad.⁴⁰⁰

This meant that Khallad and Mihdhar were two different people. It also meant that there was a link between Khallad and Mihdhar, making Mihdhar seem even more suspicious.⁴⁰¹ Yet we found no effort by the CIA to renew the long-abandoned search for Mihdhar or his travel companions.

In addition, we found that the CIA did not notify the FBI of this identification. DCI Tenet and Cofer Black testified before Congress's Joint Inquiry into 9/11 that the FBI had access to this identification from the beginning. But drawing on an extensive record, including documents that were not available to the CIA

³⁹⁷ See CIA cable, Base/FBI comments on draft cable, Nov. 27, 2000; FBI electronic communication, USS *Cole* investigation, Nov. 21, 2000; FBI electronic communication, USS *Cole* investigation, Jan. 10, 2001 (draft).

³⁹⁸ For the recollection of the FBI agent, see Al S. interviews (Aug. 26, 2003; Sept. 15, 2003). See also FBI report of investigation, interview of source, July 18, 2000; attachment to FBI electronic communication, USS *Cole* investigation, Jan. 10, 2001 (draft); FBI electronic communication, UBL investigation, Jan. 16, 2001.

³⁹⁹ For speculation regarding identities, see CIA cable, "Photo of UBL Associate," Dec. 27, 2000. Retrospective analysis of available information would have answered that question, but that analysis was not done until after 9/11. For analysis, see Intelligence report, Retrospective review of 11 September 2001 hijackers' activities, Sept. 23, 2002.

⁴⁰⁰ CIA cable, "Request for January 2000 Malaysian Surveillance Photos," Dec. 12, 2000; CIA cable, "Photo of UBL Associate," Dec. 27, 2000; CIA cable, "Review of Malaysia 'Khaled' Photos," Jan. 5, 2001.

⁴⁰¹ The CIA knew that Mihdhar and Khallad had both been to Bangkok in January 2000. They had not yet discovered that Khallad, traveling under an alias, had actually flown to Bangkok with Mihdhar. Still, as Director Tenet conceded in his testimony before the Joint Inquiry, the Kuala Lumpur meeting took on additional significance once Khallad was identified as having attended the meeting. See Joint Inquiry report, p. 149.

personnel who drafted that testimony, we conclude this was not the case. The FBI's primary *Cole* investigators had no knowledge that Khallad had been in Kuala Lumpur with Mihdhar and others until after the September 11 attacks. Because the FBI had not been informed in January 2000 about Mihdhar's possession of a U.S. visa, it had not then started looking for him in the United States. Because it did not know of the links between Khallad and Mihdhar, it did not start looking for him in January 2001.⁴⁰²

This incident is an example of how day-to-day gaps in information sharing can emerge even when there is mutual goodwill. The information was from a joint FBI/CIA source who spoke essentially no English and whose languages were not understood by the FBI agent on the scene overseas. Issues of travel and security necessarily kept short the amount of time spent with the source. As a result, the CIA officer usually did not translate either questions or answers for his FBI colleague and friend.⁴⁰³

For interviews without simultaneous translation, the FBI agent on the scene received copies of the reports that the CIA disseminated to other agencies regarding the interviews. But he was not given access to the CIA's internal operational reports, which contained more detail. It was there-in reporting to which FBI investigators did not have access-that information regarding the January 2001 identification of Khallad appeared. The CIA officer does not recall this particular identification and thus cannot say why it was not shared with his FBI colleague. He might not have understood the possible significance of the new identification.⁴⁰⁴

In June 2000, Mihdhar left California and returned to Yemen. It is possible that if, in January 2001, the CIA had resumed its search for him, placed him on the State Department's TIPOFF watch list, or provided the FBI with the information, he might have been found-either before or at the time he applied for a new visa in June 2001, or when he returned to the United States on July 4.

Spring 2001: Looking Again at Kuala Lumpur

By mid-May 2001, as the threat reports were surging, a CIA official detailed to the International Terrorism Operations Section at the FBI wondered where the attacks might occur. We will call him "John." Recalling the episode about the Kuala Lumpur travel of Mihdhar and his associates, "John" searched the CIA's databases for information regarding the travel. On May 15, he and an official at the CIA reexamined

⁴⁰² For Tenet and Black testimony, see Joint Inquiry testimony of George Tenet, Oct. 17, 2002; Joint Inquiry testimony of Cofer Black, Sept. 26, 2002. For documents not available to CIA personnel who drafted the testimony, see, e.g., FBI electronic communication, UBL investigation, Jan. 16, 2001; FBI emails between Al S. and Michael D., re: source, Jan. 9-11, 2001; FBI electronic communication, USS *Cole* investigation, Jan. 4, 2001; DOJ Inspector General interview of Jennifer M., Dec. 9, 2002. For the views of the FBI investigators, see DOJ Inspector General interviews of Steve B., Sept. 16, 2002; Nov. 14, 2002; Al S. interviews (Aug. 26, 2003; Sept. 15, 2003). The DOJ Inspector General came to the same conclusion. See DOJ Inspector General report, "A Review of the FBI's Handling of Intelligence Information Related to the September 11 Attacks" (hereinafter "DOJ IG 9/11 Report"), July 2, 2004, pp. 308-310.

⁴⁰³ DOJ Inspector General interview of Michael D., Nov. 6, 2002; Michael D. interview (May 4, 2004); DOJ Inspector General interview of Chris, Nov. 27, 2002.

⁴⁰⁴ For the internal CIA reports to which the FBI did not have access, see CIA cable, "UBL Operative Khallad," Jan. 3, 2001; CIA cable, source debriefing, Jan. 5, 2001. The FBI agent informed us that he was unaware how such internal CIA communications worked, or that the operational cables even existed, and so did not know to ask for them. Such messages are routinely not shared in order to protect intelligence sources and methods. In this case, application of the routine procedure did not serve that purpose because the FBI agent was aware of the source's identity as well as the methods used to obtain the information. Moreover, the FBI agent also may have been absent from the room when the identification was made. The source had brought a sheaf of documents with him that the FBI agent left the room to copy while the interview of the witness continued. Because of the circumstances of the interview site, the agent would have been absent for a significant period of time. In addition, the case officer was frequently given photographs from a broad range of CIA stations to show to this particular witness. He did not focus on the purpose of showing the photographs; he was only concerned with whether the source recognized the individuals. DOJ Inspector General interview of Michael D., Nov. 6, 2002; Michael D. interview (May 4, 2004); DOJ Inspector General interview of Chris, Nov. 27, 2002.

many of the old cables from early 2000, including the information that Mihdhar had a U.S. visa, and that Hazmi had come to Los Angeles on January 15, 2000.⁴⁰⁵

The CIA official who reviewed the cables took no action regarding them. “John,” however, began a lengthy exchange with a CIA analyst, whom we will call “Dave,” to figure out what these cables meant. “John” was aware of how dangerous Khallad was—at one point calling him a “major league killer.” He concluded that “something bad was definitely up.” Despite the U.S. links evident in this traffic, “John” made no effort to determine whether any of these individuals was in the United States. He did not raise that possibility with his FBI counterpart. He was focused on Malaysia.⁴⁰⁶

“John” described the CIA as an agency that tended to play a “zone defense.” He was worrying solely about Southeast Asia, not the United States. In contrast, he told us, the FBI tends to play “man-to-man.”⁴⁰⁷

Desk officers at the CIA's Bin Ladin unit did not have “cases” in the same sense as an FBI agent who works an investigation from beginning to end. Thus, when the trail went cold after the Kuala Lumpur meeting in January 2000, the desk officer moved on to different things. By the time the March 2000 cable arrived with information that one of the travelers had flown to Los Angeles, the case officer was no longer responsible for follow-up. While several individuals at the Bin Ladin unit opened the cable when it arrived in March 2000, no action was taken.⁴⁰⁸

The CIA's zone defense concentrated on “where,” not “who.” Had its information been shared with the FBI, a combination of the CIA's zone defense and the FBI's man-to-man approach might have been productive.

June 2001: The Meeting in New York

“John's” review of the Kuala Lumpur meeting did set off some more sharing of information, getting the attention of an FBI analyst whom we will call “Jane.” “Jane” was assigned to the FBI's *Cole* investigation. She knew that another terrorist involved in that operation, Fahd al Quso, had traveled to Bangkok in January 2000 to give money to Khallad.⁴⁰⁹

“Jane” and the CIA analyst, “Dave,” had been working together on *Cole*-related issues. Chasing Quso's trail, “Dave” suggested showing some photographs to FBI agents in New York who were working on the *Cole* case and had interviewed Quso.⁴¹⁰

“John” gave three Kuala Lumpur surveillance pictures to “Jane” to show to the New York agents. She was told that one of the individuals in the photographs was someone named Khalid al Mihdhar. She did not know why the photographs had been taken or why the Kuala Lumpur travel might be significant, and she was not told that someone had identified Khallad in the photographs. When “Jane” did some research in a database for intelligence reports, Intelink, she found the original NSA reports on the planning for the

⁴⁰⁵ John interview (Apr. 2, 2004). See also CIA email, Dave to John, “Re: Liaison Response,” May 18, 2001. The old reporting from early 2000 that was reexamined included CIA cable, “Transit of UBL Associate Khalid Through Dubai,” Jan. 4, 2000; CIA cable, “Recent Influx of Suspected UBL Associates to Malaysia,” Jan. 5, 2000; CIA cable, “UBL Associates: Flight Manifest for MH072,” Jan. 9, 2000; CIA cable, “UBL Associates: Identification of Possible UBL Associates,” Mar. 5, 2000. For cable information, see CIA records, audit of cable databases.

⁴⁰⁶ For a record of the exchange between John and Dave, see CIA emails, Dave to John, May 17, 18, 24, 2001; CIA email, Richard to Alan, identification of Khallad, July 13, 2001. For the account of John's FBI counterpart, see Michael Rolince interview (Apr. 12, 2004). For John's focus on Malaysia, see DOJ Inspector General interview of John, Nov. 1, 2002.

⁴⁰⁷ DOJ Inspector General interview of John, Nov. 1, 2002.

⁴⁰⁸ For the account of the desk officer, see DOJ Inspector General interview of Michael D., Oct. 31, 2002. For cable information, see CIA records, audit of cable databases.

⁴⁰⁹ DOJ Inspector General interviews of Jane, Nov. 4, 2002; July 16, 2003.

⁴¹⁰ DOJ Inspector General interviews of Jane, Nov. 4, 2002; DOJ Inspector General interview of Dave, Oct. 31, 2002.

meeting. Because the CIA had not disseminated reports on its tracking of Mihdhar, “Jane” did not pull up any information about Mihdhar’s U.S. visa or about travel to the United States by Hazmi or Mihdhar.⁴¹¹

“Jane,” “Dave,” and an FBI analyst who was on detail to the CIA’s Bin Ladin unit went to New York on June 11 to meet with the agents about the *Cole* case. “Jane” brought the surveillance pictures. At some point in the meeting she showed the photographs to the agents and asked whether they recognized Quso in any of them. The agents asked questions about the photographs- Why were they taken? Why were these people being followed? Where are the rest of the photographs?⁴¹²

The only information “Jane” had about the meeting-other than the photographs-were the NSA reports that she had found on Intelink. These reports, however, contained caveats that their contents could not be shared with criminal investigators without the permission of the Justice Department’s Office of Intelligence Policy and Review (OIPR). Therefore “Jane” concluded that she could not pass on information from those reports to the agents. This decision was potentially significant, because the signals intelligence she did not share linked Mihdhar to a suspected terrorist facility in the Middle East. The agents would have established a link to the suspected facility from their work on the embassy bombings case. This link would have made them very interested in learning more about Mihdhar.⁴¹³ The sad irony is that the agents who found the source were being kept from obtaining the fruits of their own work.

“Dave,” the CIA analyst, knew more about the Kuala Lumpur meeting. He knew that Mihdhar possessed a U.S. visa, that his visa application indicated that he intended to travel to New York, that Hazmi had traveled to Los Angeles, and that a source had put Mihdhar in the company of Khallad. No one at the meeting asked him what he knew; he did not volunteer anything. He told investigators that as a CIA analyst, he was not authorized to answer FBI questions regarding CIA information. “Jane” said she assumed that if

⁴¹¹ DOJ Inspector General interviews of Jane, Nov. 4, 2002; July 16, 2003.

⁴¹² DOJ Inspector General interview of Jane, Nov. 4, 2002; DOJ Inspector General interview of Dave, Oct. 31, 2002; DOJ Inspector General interview of Russ F., Sept. 17, 2002; DOJ Inspector General interview of Steve B., Sept. 16, 2002.

⁴¹³ “Jane” did not seek OIPR’s permission to share this information at the meeting. “Jane” also apparently did not realize that one of the agents in attendance was a designated intelligence agent, so she could have shared all of the information with that agent regardless of the caveats. No one who was at the meeting suggested that option, however. DOJ Inspector General interview of Steve B., Sept. 16, 2002; DOJ Inspector General interview of Jane, July 16, 2003. These caveats were different from the legal limits we discussed in section 3.2. The Attorney General’s July 1995 procedures concerned FISA information developed in an FBI intelligence investigation. This, however, was NSA information. These particular caveats were the result of the Justice Department’s and NSA’s overabundance of caution in December 1999. During the millennium crisis, Attorney General Reno authorized electronic surveillance of three U.S. persons overseas. Because the searches were not within the United States, no FISA warrant was needed. Reno approved the surveillances pursuant to section 2.5 of Executive Order 12333 with the proviso that the results of these particular surveillances not be shared with criminal investigators or prosecutors without the approval of the Office of Intelligence Policy and Review. Because of the complexity of determining whether particular reporting was the fruit of particular surveillances, NSA decided to place these caveats on all its Bin Ladin-related reporting, not just reporting on the surveillances authorized by Reno. As a result, these caveats were placed on the reports relating to Mihdhar even though they were not covered by Reno’s December 1999 order. See DOJ memo, Reno to Freeh, FISA surveillance of a suspected al Qaeda operative, Dec. 24, 1999; NSA email, William L. to Karen C., “distribution restrictions,” Dec. 10, 1999; NSA email, William L. to Anthony L., “DOJ restrictions,” Dec. 20, 1999; NSA email, William L. to Brian C., “dissemination of terrorism reporting,” Dec. 29, 1999. See also NSA memo, Ann D. to others, “Reporting Guidance,” Dec. 30, 1999. In May 2000, it was brought to the Attorney General’s attention that these caveats prevented certain attorneys in the Terrorism and Violent Crime Section (TVCS) from reading the reporting. After discussions with NSA, the caveats were changed to specifically permit dissemination of these reports to designated attorneys in the TVCS and two attorneys in the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of New York. See NSA memo, Joan R. to Townsend and Reynolds, “Resumed Delivery of Classified Intelligence to TVCS,” June 9, 2000; NSA memo, Hayden to Asst. Attorney General, “Proposal to Provide UBL-related Product to U.S. Attorney’s Office/Southern District of New York,” Aug. 30, 2000.

“Dave” knew the answers to questions, he would have volunteered them. The New York agents left the meeting without obtaining information that might have started them looking for Mihdhar.⁴¹⁴

Mihdhar had been a weak link in al Qaeda's operational planning. He had left the United States in June 2000, a mistake KSM realized could endanger the entire plan-for to continue with the operation, Mihdhar would have to travel to the United States again. And unlike other operatives, Mihdhar was not “clean”: he had jihadist connections. It was just such connections that had brought him to the attention of U.S. officials.

Nevertheless, in this case KSM's fears were not realized. Mihdhar received a new U.S. visa two days after the CIA-FBI meeting in New York. He flew to New York City on July 4. No one was looking for him.

August 2001: The Search for Mihdhar and Hazmi Begins and Fails

During the summer of 2001 “John,” following a good instinct but not as part of any formal assignment, asked “Mary,” an FBI analyst detailed to the CIA's Bin Ladin unit, to review all the Kuala Lumpur materials one more time. She had been at the New York meeting with “Jane” and “Dave” but had not looked into the issues yet herself. “John” asked her to do the research in her free time.⁴¹⁵

“Mary” began her work on July 24. That day, she found the cable reporting that Mihdhar had a visa to the United States. A week later, she found the cable reporting that Mihdhar's visa application-what was later discovered to be his first application-listed New York as his destination. On August 21, she located the March 2000 cable that “noted with interest” that Hazmi had flown to Los Angeles in January 2000. She immediately grasped the significance of this information.⁴¹⁶

“Mary” and “Jane” promptly met with an INS representative at FBI headquarters. On August 22, the INS told them that Mihdhar had entered the United States on January 15, 2000, and again on July 4, 2001. “Jane” and “Mary” also learned that there was no record that Hazmi had left the country since January 2000, and they assumed he had left with Mihdhar in June 2000. They decided that if Mihdhar was in the United States, he should be found.⁴¹⁷

They divided up the work. “Mary” asked the Bin Ladin unit to draft a cable requesting that Mihdhar and Hazmi be put on the TIPOFF watch list. Both Hazmi and Mihdhar were added to this watch list on August 24.⁴¹⁸

“Jane” took responsibility for the search effort inside the United States. As the information indicated that Mihdhar had last arrived in New York, she began drafting what is known as a lead for the FBI's New York Field Office. A lead relays information from one part of the FBI to another and requests that a particular action be taken. She called an agent in New York to give him a “heads-up” on the matter, but her draft lead was not sent until August 28. Her email told the New York agent that she wanted him to get started

⁴¹⁴ For the facts known by Dave at this time, see CIA records, audit of cable databases; see also CIA email, Dave to John, timeline entries, May 15, 2001. For CIA analyst's role, see DOJ Inspector General interview of Dave, Oct. 31, 2002. For Jane's account, see DOJ Inspector General interview of Jane, July 16, 2003.

⁴¹⁵ DOJ Inspector General interview of Mary, Oct. 29, 2002.

⁴¹⁶ For Mary's account, see DOJ Inspector General interview of Mary, Oct. 29, 2002. For the reporting regarding Mihdhar and Hazmi, see CIA cable, Khalid's passport, Jan. 4, 2000; CIA cable, Mihdhar's visa application, Jan. 5, 2000; CIA cable, Hazmi entered U.S., Mar. 6, 2000. For Mary's cable access information, see CIA records, audit of cable databases.

⁴¹⁷ DOJ Inspector General interview of Mary, Oct. 29, 2002; DOJ Inspector General Interview of Jane, Nov. 4, 2002.

⁴¹⁸ DOJ Inspector General interview of Mary, Oct. 29, 2002; Intelligence report, Watchlisting of Bin Ladin-related individuals, Aug. 23, 2001; Joint Inquiry testimony of Christopher Kojm, Sept. 19, 2002. The watch-list request included Midhar, Nawaf al Hazmi, Salah Saeed Mohammed Bin Yousaf (they did not yet realize this was an alias for Tawfiq bin Attash, a.k.a. Khallad), and Ahmad Hikmat Shakir (who assisted Mihdhar in Kuala Lumpur).

as soon as possible, but she labeled the lead as “Routine”—a designation that informs the receiving office that it has 30 days to respond.⁴¹⁹

The agent who received the lead forwarded it to his squad supervisor. That same day, the supervisor forwarded the lead to an intelligence agent to open an intelligence case—an agent who thus was behind “the wall” keeping FBI intelligence information from being shared with criminal prosecutors. He also sent it to the *Cole* case agents and an agent who had spent significant time in Malaysia searching for another Khalid: Khalid Sheikh Mohammad.⁴²⁰

The suggested goal of the investigation was to locate Mihdhar, determine his contacts and reasons for being in the United States, and possibly conduct an interview. Before sending the lead, “Jane” had discussed it with “John,” the CIA official on detail to the FBI. She had also checked with the acting head of the FBI’s Bin Ladin unit. The discussion seems to have been limited to whether the search should be classified as an intelligence investigation or as a criminal one. It appears that no one informed higher levels of management in either the FBI or CIA about the case.⁴²¹ There is no evidence that the lead, or the search for these terrorist suspects, was substantively discussed at any level above deputy chief of a section within the Counterterrorism Division at FBI headquarters.

One of the *Cole* case agents read the lead with interest, and contacted “Jane” to obtain more information. “Jane” argued, however, that because the agent was designated a “criminal” FBI agent, not an intelligence FBI agent, the wall kept him from participating in any search for Mihdhar. In fact, she felt he had to destroy his copy of the lead because it contained NSA information from reports that included caveats ordering that the information not be shared without OIPR’s permission. The agent asked “Jane” to get an opinion from the FBI’s National Security Law Unit (NSLU) on whether he could open a criminal case on Mihdhar.⁴²²

“Jane” sent an email to the *Cole* case agent explaining that according to the NSLU, the case could be opened only as an intelligence matter, and that if Mihdhar was found, only designated intelligence agents could conduct or even be present at any interview. She appears to have misunderstood the complex rules that could apply to this situation.⁴²³

⁴¹⁹ Jane told investigators that she viewed this matter as just another lead and so assigned no particular urgency to the matter. DOJ Inspector General interviews of Jane, July 16, 2003; Nov. 4, 2002. For the draft lead, see attachment to FBI email, Jane to Craig D., “Re: FFI Request,” Aug. 28, 2001. For the final version, see FBI electronic communication, “Request to Open a Full Field Investigation,” Aug. 28, 2001.

⁴²⁰ FBI email, Craig D. to John L., “Fwd: Re: FFI Request,” Aug. 28, 2001; FBI email, John L. to Steve and others, “Fwd: Re: FFI Request,” Aug. 28, 2001. For an introduction to these legal limits and “the wall,” see section 3.2. In December 2000, pursuant to concerns of the FISA Court, the New York Field Office began designating certain agents as either intelligence or criminal agents. Intelligence agents could see FISA materials and any other information that bore cautions about sharing without obtaining the FISA Court’s permission or permission from the Justice Department’s OIPR. FBI electronic communication, “Instructions re FBI FISA Policy,” Dec. 7, 2000.

⁴²¹ While one witness recalls a discussion with a senior FBI official, that official denies that such a discussion took place. The other alleged participant does not recall such a meeting. John interview (Apr. 2, 2004); Michael Rolince interview (Apr. 12, 2004); Jane interview (July 13, 2004); DOJ Inspector General interview of Rodney M., Nov. 5, 2002. For investigation’s goal, see FBI electronic communication, “Request to Open a Full Field Investigation,” Aug. 28, 2001.

⁴²² DOJ Inspector General interviews of Jane, July 16, 2003; Nov. 4, 2002; DOJ Inspector General interviews of Steve B., Sept. 16, 2002; Nov. 14, 2002; Jane interview (July 13, 2004). FBI email, Jane to John L., “Fwd: Re: FFI Request,” Aug. 29, 2001. The analyst’s email, however, reflects that she was confusing a broad array of caveats and legal barriers to information sharing and rules governing criminal agents’ use of information gathered through intelligence channels. There was no broad prohibition against sharing information gathered through intelligence channels with criminal agents. This type of sharing occurred on a regular basis in the field. The court’s procedures did not apply to all intelligence gathered regardless of collection method or source. Moreover, once information was properly shared, the criminal agent could use it for further investigation.

⁴²³ FBI email, Jane to Steve, NSLU Response, Aug. 29, 2001. “Jane” says she only asked whether there was sufficient probable cause to open the matter as a criminal case and whether the criminal agent could attend any interview if Mihdhar was found. She said the answer she received to both questions was no. She did not ask whether the underlying information could have been shared.

The FBI agent angrily responded:

Whatever has happened to this-someday someone will die-and wall or not-the public will not understand why we were not more effective and throwing every resource we had at certain “problems.”

Let's hope the National Security Law Unit will stand behind their decisions then, especially since the biggest threat to us now, UBL, is getting the most “protection.”

“Jane” replied that she was not making up the rules; she claimed that they were in the relevant manual and “ordered by the [FISA] Court and every office of the FBI is required to follow them including FBI NY.”⁴²⁴

It is now clear that everyone involved was confused about the rules governing the sharing and use of information gathered in intelligence channels. Because Mihdhar was being sought for his possible connection to or knowledge of the *Cole* bombing, he could be investigated or tracked under the existing *Cole* criminal case. No new criminal case was needed for the criminal agent to begin searching for Mihdhar. And as NSA had approved the passage of its information to the criminal agent, he could have conducted a search using all available information. As a result of this confusion, the criminal agents who were knowledgeable about al Qaeda and experienced with criminal investigative techniques, including finding suspects and possible criminal charges, were thus excluded from the search.⁴²⁵

Jane interview (July 13, 2004). The NSLU attorney denies advising that the agent could not participate in an interview and notes that she would not have given such inaccurate advice. The attorney told investigators that the NSA caveats would not have precluded criminal agents from joining in any search for Mihdhar or from participating in any interview. Moreover, she said that she could have gone to the NSA and obtained a waiver of any such caveat because there was no FISA information involved in this case. There are no records of the conversation between “Jane” and the attorney. “Jane” did not copy the attorney on her email to the agent, so the attorney did not have an opportunity to confirm or reject the advice “Jane” was giving to the agent. DOJ Inspector General interview of Sherry S., Nov. 7, 2002.

“Jane” asked the New York agent assigned to the Mihdhar search to sign a FISA acknowledgment form indicating the agent understood how he had to treat FISA information. Because no FISA information was involved, she should not have required him to sign such a form. To the extent she believed, incorrectly, that the Attorney General's 1995 procedures applied to this situation, there was in fact an exception in place for New York. DOJ Inspector General interview of Sherry S., Nov. 7, 2002. More fundamentally, “Jane” apparently understood the welter of restrictions to mean, in workday shorthand, that any information gathered by intelligence agencies should not be shared with criminal agents. This was incorrect. DOJ Inspector General interviews of Jane, July 16, 2003; Nov. 4, 2002.

⁴²⁴ FBI emails between Steve B. and Jane, re: NSLU Response, Aug. 29, 2001. While the agent expressed his frustration with the situation to “Jane,” he made no effort to press the matter further by discussing his concerns with either his supervisor or the chief division counsel in New York.

⁴²⁵ Attorney General Ashcroft testified to us that this and similar information-sharing issues arose from Attorney General Reno's 1995 guidelines, discussed in chapter 3, and specifically from a March 1995 memorandum of then Deputy Attorney General Jamie Gorelick. John Ashcroft testimony, Apr. 13, 2004; DOJ memo, Gorelick to White, “Instructions on Separation of Certain Foreign Counterintelligence and Criminal Investigations,” Mar. 4, 1995.

We believe the Attorney General's testimony does not fairly or accurately reflect the significance of the 1995 documents and their relevance to the 2001 discussions. Whatever the merits of the March 1995 Gorelick memorandum and the subsequent July 1995 Attorney General procedures on information sharing, they did not apply to the information the analyst decided she could not share with the criminal agent. As discussed earlier, the reason “Jane” decided she could not share information was because the initial information on Mihdhar had been analyzed by the NSA. This reason was unrelated to either of the 1995 documents. The Gorelick memorandum applied to two particular criminal cases, neither of which was involved in the summer 2001 information-sharing discussions. As the FBI agent observed in his email, Part A of the 1995 procedures applied only to information obtained pursuant to a FISA warrant. None of the Mihdhar material was FISA information. There was an exemption for the Southern District of New York from Part B of the 1995 procedures, so they did not apply. Also, the 1995 procedures did not govern whether information could be shared between intelligence and criminal agents within the FBI, a separation that the Bureau did not begin making formally until long after the procedures were in place. The 1995 procedures governed only the sharing of information with criminal prosecutors. Even in that situation, the restriction obliged running the information through the OIPR screen.

What had happened, as we discussed in chapter 3, was a growing battle within the Justice Department during the 1990s, and between parts of Justice and the FISA Court, over the scope of OIPR's screening function and the propriety of using FISA-derived information in criminal matters. The FISA Court's concern with FBI sloppiness in its FISA applications also began to take a toll:

The search was assigned to one FBI agent, and it was his very first counterterrorism lead. Because the lead was “routine,” he was given 30 days to open an intelligence case and make some unspecified efforts to locate Mihdhar. He started the process a few days later. He checked local New York databases for criminal record and driver's license information and checked the hotel listed on Mihdhar's U.S. entry form. Finally, on September 11, the agent sent a lead to Los Angeles, because Mihdhar had initially arrived in Los Angeles in January 2000.⁴²⁶

We believe that if more resources had been applied and a significantly different approach taken, Mihdhar and Hazmi might have been found. They had used their true names in the United States. Still, the investigators would have needed luck as well as skill to find them prior to September 11 even if such searches had begun as early as August 23, when the lead was first drafted.⁴²⁷

Many FBI witnesses have suggested that even if Mihdhar had been found, there was nothing the agents could have done except follow him onto the planes. We believe this is incorrect. Both Hazmi and Mihdhar could have been held for immigration violations or as material witnesses in the *Cole* bombing case. Investigation or interrogation of them, and investigation of their travel and financial activities, could have yielded evidence of connections to other participants in the 9/11 plot. The simple fact of their detention could have derailed the plan. In any case, the opportunity did not arise.

the court began designating itself as the gatekeeper for the sharing of intelligence information; the FBI was required to separately designate criminal and intelligence agents; and the court banned one supervisory FBI agent from appearing before it. By late 2000, these factors had culminated in a set of complex rules and a widening set of beliefs—a bureaucratic culture—that discouraged FBI agents from even seeking to share intelligence information. Neither Attorney General acted to resolve the conflicting views within the Justice Department. Nor did they challenge the strict interpretation of the FISA statute set forth by the FISA Court and OIPR. Indeed, this strict interpretation remained in effect until the USA PATRIOT Act was passed after 9/11.

Simply put, there was no legal reason why the information the analyst possessed could not have been shared with the criminal agent. On August 27, “Jane” requested the NSA's permission to share the information with the criminal agents, but she intended for the information only to help the criminal agents in their ongoing *Cole* investigation. She still did not believe they could be involved in the intelligence investigation even if the NSA permitted the information to be shared. DOJ IG 9/11 Report, July 2, 2004, p. 339. The next day the NSA notified its representative at FBI headquarters that it had approved the passage of the information to the criminal agents. NSC email, Carlene C. to Richard K., “Response to FBI Sanitization Request,” Aug. 28, 2001. Thus, “Jane” had permission to share the information with the criminal agent prior to their August 29 emails.

⁴²⁶ DOJ Inspector General interview of Robert F., Dec. 18, 2002; FBI electronic communication, Los Angeles lead, Sept. 10, 2001.

⁴²⁷ Hazmi and Mihdhar used their true names to obtain California driver's licenses and open New Jersey bank accounts. Hazmi also had a car registered and had been listed in the San Diego telephone book. Searches of readily available databases could have unearthed the driver's licenses, the car registration, and the telephone listing. A search on the car registration would have unearthed a license check by the South Hackensack Police Department that would have led to information placing Hazmi in the area and placing Mihdhar at a local hotel for a week in early July 2001. The hijackers actively used the New Jersey bank accounts, through ATM, debit card, and cash transactions, until September 10. Among other things, they used their debit cards to pay for hotel rooms; and Hazmi used his card on August 27 to purchase tickets on Flight 77 for himself and his brother (and fellow hijacker), Salem al Hazmi. These transactions could have helped locate them if the FBI had obtained the bank records in time. There would have been no easy means, however, to determine the existence of these accounts, and obtaining bank cooperation pre-9/11 might have been problematic. The most likely means of successfully finding the men in the short time available was one not often used pre-9/11 for suspected terrorists: an FBI BOLO (be on the lookout) combined with a media campaign. This alone might have delayed or disrupted the plot, even if the men had not been physically located before September 11. But this would have been considered only if the FBI believed that they were about to carry out an imminent attack. No one at the FBI—or any other agency—believed that at the time.

See FBI report, financial spreadsheet re: 9/11 hijackers, undated; South Hackensack, N.J., Police Department report, Detective Bureau Report, Oct. 17, 2001 (case no. 20018437). According to Ramzi Binalshibh, had KSM known that Moussaoui had been arrested, he would have canceled the 9/11 attacks. Intelligence report, interrogation of Ramzi Binalshibh, Feb. 14, 2003. The publicity regarding Mihdhar and Hazmi might have had a similar effect because they could have been identified by the airlines and might have jeopardized the operation.

Phoenix Memo

The Phoenix memo was investigated thoroughly by the Joint Inquiry and the Department of Justice Inspector General.⁴²⁸ We will recap it briefly here. In July 2001, an FBI agent in the Phoenix field office sent a memo to FBI headquarters and to two agents on international terrorism squads in the New York Field Office, advising of the “possibility of a coordinated effort by Usama Bin Ladin” to send students to the United States to attend civil aviation schools. The agent based his theory on the “inordinate number of individuals of investigative interest” attending such schools in Arizona.⁴²⁹

The agent made four recommendations to FBI headquarters: to compile a list of civil aviation schools, establish liaison with those schools, discuss his theories about Bin Ladin with the intelligence community, and seek authority to obtain visa information on persons applying to flight schools. His recommendations were not acted on. His memo was forwarded to one field office. Managers of the Usama Bin Ladin unit and the Radical Fundamentalist unit at FBI headquarters were addressees, but they did not even see the memo until after September 11. No managers at headquarters saw the memo before September 11, and the New York Field Office took no action.⁴³⁰

As its author told investigators, the Phoenix memo was not an alert about suicide pilots. His worry was more about a Pan Am Flight 103 scenario in which explosives were placed on an aircraft. The memo's references to aviation training were broad, including aeronautical engineering.⁴³¹ If the memo had been distributed in a timely fashion and its recommendations acted on promptly, we do not believe it would have uncovered the plot. It might well, however, have sensitized the FBI so that it might have taken the Moussaoui matter more seriously the next month.

Zacarias Moussaoui

On August 15, 2001, the Minneapolis FBI Field Office initiated an intelligence investigation on Zacarias Moussaoui. As mentioned in chapter 7, he had entered the United States in February 2001, and had begun flight lessons at Airman Flight School in Norman, Oklahoma. He resumed his training at the Pan Am International Flight Academy in Eagan, Minnesota, starting on August 13. He had none of the usual qualifications for flight training on Pan Am's Boeing 747 flight simulators. He said he did not intend to become a commercial pilot but wanted the training as an “ego boosting thing.” Moussaoui stood out because, with little knowledge of flying, he wanted to learn how to “take off and land” a Boeing 747.⁴³²

The agent in Minneapolis quickly learned that Moussaoui possessed jihadist beliefs. Moreover, Moussaoui had \$32,000 in a bank account but did not provide a plausible explanation for this sum of money. He had traveled to Pakistan but became agitated when asked if he had traveled to nearby countries while in Pakistan (Pakistan was the customary route to the training camps in Afghanistan). He planned to receive martial arts training, and intended to purchase a global positioning receiver. The agent also noted that

⁴²⁸ Joint Inquiry report, pp. xiii, 325-335; DOJ IG 9/11 Report, July 2, 2004, pp. 59-106.

⁴²⁹ FBI electronic communication, Phoenix memo, July 10, 2001.

⁴³⁰ *Ibid*; Joint Inquiry report, pp. 325-335; DOJ IG 9/11 Report, July 2, 2004, pp. 59-106.

⁴³¹ DOJ Inspector General interview of Kenneth Williams, July 22, 2003.

⁴³² Unlike Moussaoui, the typical student at Pan Am Flight Academy holds an FAA Airline Transport Pilot rating or the foreign equivalent, is employed by an airline, and has several thousand flight hours. Moussaoui also stood out for several other reasons. He had paid nearly \$9,000 in cash for the training, yet had no explanation for the source of these funds; he had asked to fly a simulated flight from London's Heathrow Airport to New York's John F. Kennedy Airport; and he was also particularly interested in the operation of the aircraft doors. FBI electronic communication, Request OIPR permission to contact U.S. Attorney's Office regarding Zacarias Moussaoui, Aug. 18, 2001. For a detailed, step-by-step chronology of activities taken regarding Moussaoui prior to September 11, see DOJ IG 9/11 Report, July 2, 2004, pp. 109-197.

Moussaoui became extremely agitated whenever he was questioned regarding his religious beliefs. The agent concluded that Moussaoui was “an Islamic extremist preparing for some future act in furtherance of radical fundamentalist goals.” He also believed Moussaoui's plan was related to his flight training.⁴³³

Moussaoui can be seen as an al Qaeda mistake and a missed opportunity. An apparently unreliable operative, he had fallen into the hands of the FBI. As discussed in chapter 7, Moussaoui had been in contact with and received money from Ramzi Binalshibh. If Moussaoui had been connected to al Qaeda, questions should instantly have arisen about a possible al Qaeda plot that involved piloting airliners, a possibility that had never been seriously analyzed by the intelligence community.

The FBI agent who handled the case in conjunction with the INS representative on the Minneapolis Joint Terrorism Task Force suspected that Moussaoui might be planning to hijack a plane. Minneapolis and FBI headquarters debated whether Moussaoui should be arrested immediately or surveilled to obtain additional information. Because it was not clear whether Moussaoui could be imprisoned, the FBI case agent decided the most important thing was to prevent Moussaoui from obtaining any further training that he could use to carry out a potential attack.⁴³⁴

As a French national who had overstayed his visa, Moussaoui could be detained immediately. The INS arrested Moussaoui on the immigration violation. A deportation order was signed on August 17, 2001.⁴³⁵

The agents in Minnesota were concerned that the U.S. Attorney's Office in Minneapolis would find insufficient probable cause of a crime to obtain a criminal warrant to search Moussaoui's laptop computer.⁴³⁶ Agents at FBI headquarters believed there was insufficient probable cause. Minneapolis therefore sought a special warrant under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act to conduct the search (we introduced FISA in chapter 3).

To do so, however, the FBI needed to demonstrate probable cause that Moussaoui was an agent of a foreign power, a demonstration that was not required to obtain a criminal warrant but was a statutory requirement for a FISA warrant.⁴³⁷ The case agent did not have sufficient information to connect Moussaoui to a “foreign power,” so he reached out for help, in the United States and overseas.

⁴³³ FBI electronic communication, Request OIPR permission to contact U.S. Attorney's Office regarding Zacarias Moussaoui, Aug. 18, 2001.

⁴³⁴ DOJ Inspector General interview of Harry S., June 6, 2002; DOJ Inspector General interview of Greg J., July 9, 2002; FBI letterhead memorandum, Zacarias Moussaoui, Aug. 19, 2001.

⁴³⁵ DOJ IG 9/11 Report, July 2, 2004, p. 128.

⁴³⁶ Criminal search warrants must be approved by Department of Justice attorneys before submission to the court. Therefore, approval from the Minneapolis U.S. Attorney's Office was required before a criminal search warrant could be obtained. DOJ Inspector General interview of Coleen Rowley, July 16, 2002. Another agent, however, said that he spoke to an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Minneapolis office and received advice that the facts were almost sufficient to obtain a criminal warrant. DOJ Inspector General interview of Greg J., July 9, 2002. The Assistant United States Attorney said that if the FBI had asked for a criminal warrant at that time, he would have sought it. He believed that there was sufficient probable cause for a criminal warrant at that time. DOJ Inspector General interview of William K., May 29, 2003. Mary Jo White, the former U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York, told us that based on her review of the evidence known pre-9/11, she would have approved a criminal search warrant. Mary Jo White interview (May 17, 2004). Because the agents never presented the information to the Minneapolis U.S. Attorney's Office before 9/11, we cannot know for sure what its judgment would have been or whether a judge would have signed the warrant. In any event, the Minneapolis agents were concerned that if they tried to first obtain a criminal warrant but the U.S. Attorney's Office or the judge refused, the FISA Court might reject an application for a FISA warrant on the grounds that the agents were attempting to make an end run around the criminal process. Therefore, it was judged too risky to seek a criminal warrant unless it was certain that it would be approved. DOJ Inspector General interview of Greg J., July 9, 2002. In addition, FBI headquarters specifically instructed Minneapolis that it could not open a criminal investigation. DOJ IG 9/11 Report, July 2, 2004, p. 138. Finally, the Minneapolis Field Office mistakenly believed that the 1995 Attorney General procedures required OIPR's approval before it could contact the U.S. Attorney's Office about obtaining a criminal warrant.

⁴³⁷ The FISA definition of “foreign power” includes “a group engaged in international terrorism or activities in preparation therefor.”

The FBI agent's August 18 message requested assistance from the FBI legal attaché in Paris. Moussaoui had lived in London, so the Minneapolis agent sought assistance from the legal attaché there as well. By August 24, the Minneapolis agent had also contacted an FBI detailee and a CIA desk officer at the Counterterrorist Center about the case.⁴³⁸

The FBI legal attaché's office in Paris first contacted the French government on August 16 or 17, shortly after speaking to the Minneapolis case agent on the telephone. On August 22 and 27, the French provided information that made a connection between Moussaoui and a rebel leader in Chechnya, Ibn al Khattab. This set off a spirited debate between the Minneapolis Field Office, FBI headquarters, and the CIA as to whether the Chechen rebels and Khattab were sufficiently associated with a terrorist organization to constitute a "foreign power" for purposes of the FISA statute. FBI headquarters did not believe this was good enough, and its National Security Law Unit declined to submit a FISA application.⁴³⁹

After receiving the written request for assistance, the legal attaché in London had promptly forwarded it to his counterparts in the British government, hand-delivering the request on August 21. On August 24, the CIA also sent a cable to London and Paris regarding "subjects involved in suspicious 747 flight training" that described Moussaoui as a possible "suicide hijacker." On August 28, the CIA sent a request for information to a different service of the British government; this communication warned that Moussaoui might be expelled to Britain by the end of August. The FBI office in London raised the matter briefly with British officials as an aside, after a meeting about a more urgent matter on September 3, and sent the British service a written update on September 5. The case was not handled by the British as a priority amid a large number of other terrorist-related inquiries.⁴⁴⁰

On September 4, the FBI sent a teletype to the CIA, the FAA, the Customs Service, the State Department, the INS, and the Secret Service summarizing the known facts regarding Moussaoui. It did not report the case agent's personal assessment that Moussaoui planned to hijack an airplane. It did contain the FAA's comment that it was not unusual for Middle Easterners to attend flight training schools in the United States.⁴⁴¹

Although the Minneapolis agents wanted to tell the FAA from the beginning about Moussaoui, FBI headquarters instructed Minneapolis that it could not share the more complete report the case agent had prepared for the FAA. The Minneapolis supervisor sent the case agent in person to the local FAA office to fill in what he thought were gaps in the FBI headquarters teletype.⁴⁴² No FAA actions seem to have been taken in response.

There was substantial disagreement between Minneapolis agents and FBI headquarters as to what Moussaoui was planning to do. In one conversation between a Minneapolis supervisor and a headquarters agent, the latter complained that Minneapolis's FISA request was couched in a manner intended to get people "spun up." The supervisor replied that was precisely his intent. He said he was "trying to keep someone from

⁴³⁸ FBI electronic communication, Request to contact U.S. Attorney's Office regarding Zacarias Moussaoui, Aug. 18, 2001. For CTC contact, see FBI email, Harry S. to Chuck F., "Please Pass To [desk officer]," Aug. 24, 2001; FBI email, Harry S. to Chuck F., "Re: Fwd: 199M-MP-60130 (Zacarias Moussaoui)," Aug. 24, 2001.

⁴³⁹ DOJ Inspector General interview of Greg J., July 9, 2002; FBI electronic communication, Moussaoui investigation, Aug. 22, 2002; FBI electronic communication, Moussaoui investigation, Aug. 30, 2002.

⁴⁴⁰ FBI letterhead memorandum, Zacarias Moussaoui, Aug. 21, 2001; CIA cable, subjects involved in suspicious 747 flight training, Aug. 24, 2001; CIA cable, "Zacarias Moussaoui and Husayn 'Ali Hasan Ali-Attas," Aug. 28, 2001; Joseph H., interview (May 4, 2004); FBI letterhead memorandum, Zacarias Moussaoui, Sept. 5, 2001.

⁴⁴¹ FBI teletype, "Zacarias Moussaoui-International Terrorism," Sept. 4, 2001.

⁴⁴² DOJ Inspector General interview of Greg J., July 9, 2002.

taking a plane and crashing into the World Trade Center.” The headquarters agent replied that this was not going to happen and that they did not know if Moussaoui was a terrorist.⁴⁴³

There is no evidence that either FBI Acting Director Pickard or Assistant Director for Counterterrorism Dale Watson was briefed on the Moussaoui case prior to 9/11. Michael Rolince, the FBI assistant director heading the Bureau's International Terrorism Operations Section (ITOS), recalled being told about Moussaoui in two passing hallway conversations but only in the context that he might be receiving telephone calls from Minneapolis complaining about how headquarters was handling the matter. He never received such a call. Although the acting special agent in charge of Minneapolis called the ITOS supervisors to discuss the Moussaoui case on August 27, he declined to go up the chain of command at FBI headquarters and call Rolince.⁴⁴⁴

On August 23, DCI Tenet was briefed about the Moussaoui case in a briefing titled “Islamic Extremist Learns to Fly.”⁴⁴⁵ Tenet was also told that Moussaoui wanted to learn to fly a 747, paid for his training in cash, was interested to learn the doors do not open in flight, and wanted to fly a simulated flight from London to New York. He was told that the FBI had arrested Moussaoui because of a visa overstay and that the CIA was working the case with the FBI. Tenet told us that no connection to al Qaeda was apparent to him at the time. Seeing it as an FBI case, he did not discuss the matter with anyone at the White House or the FBI. No connection was made between Moussaoui's presence in the United States and the threat reporting during the summer of 2001.⁴⁴⁶

On September 11, after the attacks, the FBI office in London renewed their appeal for information about Moussaoui. In response to U.S. requests, the British government supplied some basic biographical information about Moussaoui. The British government informed us that it also immediately tasked intelligence collection facilities for information about Moussaoui. On September 13, the British government received new, sensitive intelligence that Moussaoui had attended an al Qaeda training camp in Afghanistan. It passed this intelligence to the United States on the same day. Had this information been available in late August 2001, the Moussaoui case would almost certainly have received intense, high-level attention.⁴⁴⁷

The FBI also learned after 9/11 that the millennium terrorist Ressam, who by 2001 was cooperating with investigators, recognized Moussaoui as someone who had been in the Afghan camps.⁴⁴⁸ As mentioned above, before 9/11 the FBI agents in Minneapolis had failed to persuade supervisors at headquarters that there was enough evidence to seek a FISA warrant to search Moussaoui's computer hard drive and belongings. Either the British information or the Ressam identification would have broken the logjam.

A maximum U.S. effort to investigate Moussaoui conceivably could have unearthed his connections to Binalshibh. Those connections might have brought investigators to the core of the 9/11 plot. The

⁴⁴³ Minneapolis may have been more concerned about Moussaoui's intentions because the case agent and the supervisory agent were both pilots. They were, therefore, more highly sensitized to the odd nature of Moussaoui's actions and comments regarding flying. DOJ Inspector General interview of Greg J., July 9, 2002; DOJ Inspector General interview of Harry S., June 20, 2002.

⁴⁴⁴ DOJ Inspector General interview of Michael Rolince, May 5, 2004; Michael Rolince interview (Apr. 12, 2004); DOJ IG 9/11 Report, July 2, 2004, pp. 168-170, 188.

⁴⁴⁵ CIA briefing materials, DCI Update, “Islamic Extremist Learns to Fly,” Aug. 23, 2001. Deputy Director of Central Intelligence John McLaughlin testified that he was told about Moussaoui several days before Tenet was briefed, although he did not recall the specific date of the briefing. John McLaughlin testimony, Apr. 14, 2004.

⁴⁴⁶ George Tenet interviews (Jan. 28, 2004; July 2, 2004).

⁴⁴⁷ For the renewed request, see FBI letterhead memorandum, Zacarias Moussaoui, Sept. 11, 2001. For the initial British response, see British Security Service memo, re: Zacarias Moussaoui, Sept. 12, 2001; information provided to the Commission by the British government; British liaison telex, “Zacarias Moussaoui-Background Information,” Sept. 13, 2001. See also Joseph H. interview (May 4, 2004).

⁴⁴⁸ Joint Inquiry report (classified version), pp. 340-341. Notably, the FBI analyst “Mary” who was looking at the Mihdhar information suggested that the U.S. government talk to Ressam to see if he knew anything about Mihdhar. See CIA email, Mary to John, seeking identification by Ressam, Aug. 21, 2001. There is no evidence that Ressam was asked about Moussaoui or Mihdhar prior to 9/11.

Binalshibh connection was recognized shortly after 9/11, though it was not an easy trail to find. Discovering it would have required quick and very substantial cooperation from the German government, which might well have been difficult to obtain.

However, publicity about Moussaoui's arrest and a possible hijacking threat might have derailed the plot.⁴⁴⁹ With time, the search for Mihdhar and Hazmi and the investigation of Moussaoui might also have led to a breakthrough that would have disrupted the plot.

Khalid Sheikh Mohammed

Another late opportunity was presented by a confluence of information regarding Khalid Sheikh Mohammed received by the intelligence community in the summer of 2001. The possible links between KSM, Moussaoui, and an individual only later identified as Ramzi Binalshibh would remain undiscovered, however.

Although we readily equate KSM with al Qaeda today, this was not the case before 9/11. KSM, who had been indicted in January 1996 for his role in the Manila air plot, was seen primarily as another freelance terrorist, associated with Ramzi Yousef. Because the links between KSM and Bin Ladin or al Qaeda were not recognized at the time, responsibility for KSM remained in the small Islamic Extremist Branch of the Counterterrorist Center, not in the Bin Ladin unit.

Moreover, because KSM had already been indicted, he became targeted for arrest. In 1997, the Counterterrorist Center added a Renditions Branch to help find wanted fugitives. Responsibility for KSM was transferred to this branch, which gave the CIA a “man-to-man” focus but was not an analytical unit. When subsequent information came, more critical for analysis than for tracking, no unit had the job of following up on what the information might mean.⁴⁵⁰

For example, in September 2000, a source had reported that an individual named Khalid al-Shaykh al-Ballushi was a key lieutenant in al Qaeda. Al-Ballushi means “from Baluchistan,” and KSM is from Baluchistan. Recognizing the possible significance of this information, the Bin Ladin unit sought more information. When no information was forthcoming, the Bin Ladin unit dropped the matter.⁴⁵¹ When additional pieces of the puzzle arrived in the spring and summer of 2001, they were not put together.

The first piece of the puzzle concerned some intriguing information associated with a person known as “Mukhtar” that the CIA had begun analyzing in April 2001. The CIA did not know who Mukhtar was at the time—only that he associated with al Qaeda lieutenant Abu Zubaydah and that, based on the nature of the information, he was evidently involved in planning possible terrorist activities.⁴⁵²

The second piece of the puzzle was some alarming information regarding KSM. On June 12, 2001, a CIA report said that “Khaled” was actively recruiting people to travel outside Afghanistan, including to the United States where colleagues were reportedly already in the country to meet them, to carry out terrorist-related activities for Bin Ladin. CIA headquarters presumed from the details of the reporting that this person was Khalid Sheikh Mohammed. In July, the same source was shown a series of photographs and identified a photograph of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed as the Khaled he had previously discussed.⁴⁵³

⁴⁴⁹ According to Ramzi Binalshibh, had KSM known that Moussaoui had been arrested, he would have cancelled the 9/11 attacks. Intelligence report, interrogation of Ramzi Binalshibh, Feb. 14, 2003.

⁴⁵⁰ Joint Inquiry report (classified version), pp. 329-331; Joint Inquiry interview of Mike, Alice, Larry, John, Terry, Aug. 12, 2002.

⁴⁵¹ CIA cable, Key UBL personalities, Sept. 25, 2000.

⁴⁵² CIA cable, Mukhtar information, May 23, 2002.

⁴⁵³ CIA cable, Biographical Information on Key UBL Associates in Afghanistan, June 11, 2001; Intelligence report, biographical information on Bin Ladin associates in Afghanistan, June 12, 2001. For the subsequent identification, see CIA cable, follow-up source on KSM, July 11, 2001.

The final piece of the puzzle arrived at the CIA's Bin Ladin unit on August 28 in a cable reporting that KSM's nickname was Mukhtar. No one made the connection to the reports about Mukhtar that had been circulated in the spring. This connection might also have underscored concern about the June reporting that KSM was recruiting terrorists to travel, including to the United States. Only after 9/11 would it be discovered that Mukhtar/KSM had communicated with a phone that was used by Binalshibh, and that Binalshibh had used the same phone to communicate with Moussaoui, as discussed in chapter 7. As in the Moussaoui situation already described, the links to Binalshibh might not have been an easy trail to find and would have required substantial cooperation from the German government. But time was short, and running out.⁴⁵⁴

Time Runs Out

As Tenet told us, “the system was blinking red” during the summer of 2001. Officials were alerted across the world. Many were doing everything they possibly could to respond to the threats.

Yet no one working on these late leads in the summer of 2001 connected the case in his or her in-box to the threat reports agitating senior officials and being briefed to the President. Thus, these individual cases did not become national priorities. As the CIA supervisor “John” told us, no one looked at the bigger picture; no analytic work foresaw the lightning that could connect the thundercloud to the ground.⁴⁵⁵

We see little evidence that the progress of the plot was disturbed by any government action. The U.S. government was unable to capitalize on mistakes made by al Qaeda. Time ran out.

⁴⁵⁴ For the reporting identifying Mukhtar as KSM, see CIA cable, source information re: KSM, Aug. 28, 2001.

⁴⁵⁵ John interview (Apr. 2, 2004).

CHAPTER 6

NEADS

“This is not at an exercise, not a test.”

BOSTON CENTER at 08:37:5

The morning of Tuesday, September 11, 2001, was the end of innocence and the beginning of a new age. That day ushered in a time of constant war, the toppling of regimes, the desperate hunt for arch villains, and the dawn of a new consciousness. America was vulnerable, not in the sense of a Pearl Harbor vulnerability, but here, in the homeland, with our greatest cities in peril.

The story of that morning is so complex, even chronologically, that it is almost impossible to properly discriminate important information from hundreds, if not thousands of recorded voices, hundreds of thousands of messages, and hundreds of hours of video tape all occupying a period of less than two hours. The analysis of that time took months, with bursts of new information, followed by years of formal investigation.

The authors have chosen to approach that fateful morning by using audio digital recordings, video recordings, and transcripts from government sources, primarily the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), NORAD (North American Air Defense Command), Air Force and FAA regional air traffic controllers (TRACOM). Much of this information was made public in 2004, and again in more complete form in following years leading up to 2011. All of this material was then transferred to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), where it was compiled and archived. During that process much of the original information was pulled from public view as it is today. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests have yielded much, if not all of it, accessible, but only to diligent researchers.

The first group that realized that something very bad was happening were the Air Force officers and enlisted personnel operating NORAD’s Northeast Air Defense Sector (NEADS). They are housed in Cold War Era remnant of the now closed Griffiss Air Force Base near Rome, New York. NEADS protects the northeastern portion of the United States. its boundaries include all of the northeastern megalopolis from Washington to Boston, west to the Great Lakes and Chicago and south to roughly the Tennessee/ Mississippi boundary then east to the Atlantic Ocean (See Figure 27). NORAD was designed to protect American and Canadian airspace from Soviet intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and Tu-95 “Bear” bombers. Since the end of the Cold War, the mission remains the same, but the threat levels were diminished greatly. Officers and enlisted personnel on duty that morning were Colonel Dawne Deskins (EADS vice-commander, Colonel Ian Sanderson, Colonel Robert “Bob” Marr, the battle commander, Major Kevin Nasypany (pronounced Nah-SIP-a-nee), the mission-crew commander, and enlisted personnel, the ID Techs: Senior Master Sergeant Maureen “Mo” Dooley, Master Sergeant Steve Citino, Tech Sergeant Jeremy Powell, Tech Sergeant Shelley Watson, Staff Sergeant William Huckabone, and Senior Airman Stacia Rountree.⁴⁵⁶ Every word, every sound, every grunt of frustration was captured on four sensitive Dictaphone multi-channel reel-to-reel tape recorders. Each captured segments of the real world environment, every telephone conversation,

⁴⁵⁶ Hart Seely, “For the Rome, N.Y., soldiers who monitor the skies, 9/11 remains an endless day,” [Syracuse, New York] *The Post Standard*, September 14, 2011; Bronner, “9/11 Live: The NORAD Tapes.”

conversations within the bunker, and the ubiquitous time stamps from the National Atomic Clock in Fort Collins, Colorado.⁴⁵⁷

NORAD CONFIGURATION

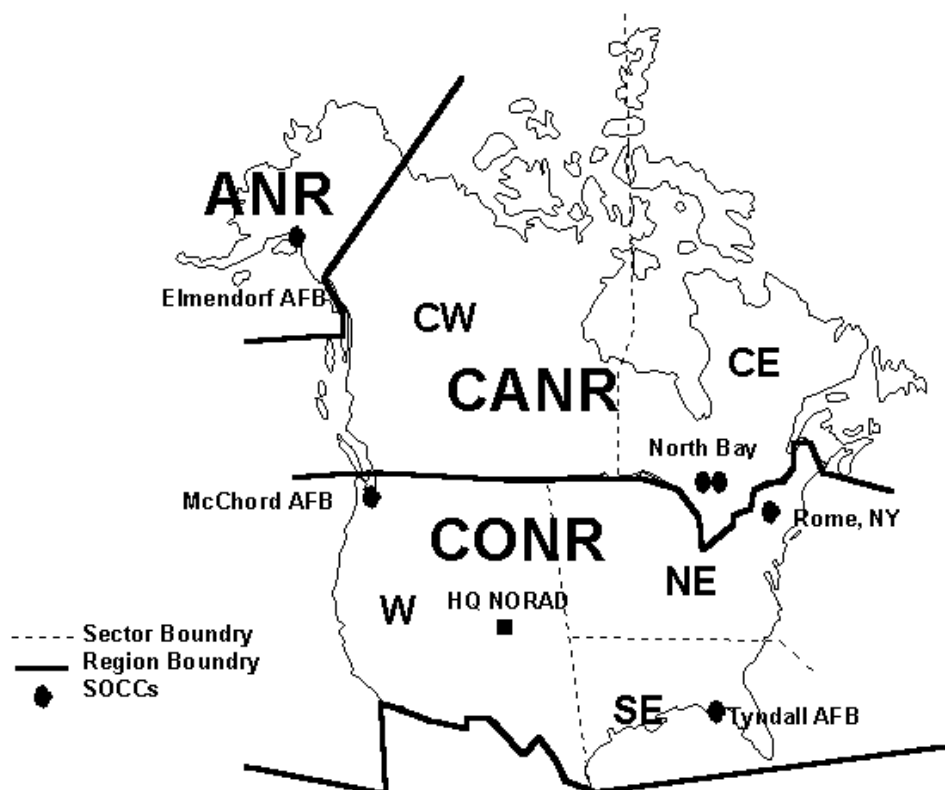


Figure 27. North American Air Defense Command (NORAD) sectors. NE is NEADS

(Image Source: Foundation of American Scientists website:

<http://fas.org/spp/military/docops/norad/ins10018.htm>)

The startling transition from peacetime to war footing has been one of chaos throughout time. That morning was no different. As disbelief of the magnitude of the first plane strike sunk in and then another, the immediate questions became: “How many more planes?” “Where are they?” “Where are they going?” “What are their targets?” The tapes reveal that as additional commands and agencies became involved, a cacophony of voices entered the conversation and orders and requests for information flowed in. Throughout this less than two-hour episode, the single, unrelenting, professional voice is that of Major Kevin Nasypany. NEADS was the front line in America’s defense. Despite what senior officers told investigators later and testified before the 9/11 Commission, NEADS was America’s only front line. It dispatched the fighters for air cover. It made the first attempt to contact the White House. It made the attempt to contact Air Force One to get the

⁴⁵⁷ Michael Bronner, “9/11 Live: The NORAD Tapes,” *Vanity Fair*, October 17, 2006. Bronner’s account remains the gold standard for the NEADS operation. <http://www.vanityfair.com/news/2006/08/NORAD200608> Imbedded in this article are sound clips from NEADS.

President out of danger.⁴⁵⁸ The 9/11 Commission criticized the Department of Defense's handling of the hijackings with specific units mentioned. NEADS was left out of the list. Their work, even flawed due to sensory overload, was exemplary.⁴⁵⁹



Figure 28. Major Kevin Nasypany (center) and Senior Airman Stacia Rountree (right).
(Image Source: *Vanity Fair*, Mark Schafer photographer).

Compounding the confusion of Tuesday, September 11, 2001, was that NORAD was in the midst of a week-long training exercise with major components. “Vigilant Guardian,” which postulated an attack by Soviet “Bear” bombers flying to targets in the United States via a North Pole Route.⁴⁶⁰ A companion exercise, “Global Guardian,” was an annual exercise that had moved up from late October to early September.⁴⁶¹ Part of Vigilant Guardian, was a three day (September 9 through 11) combined scenario of aircraft hijackings.⁴⁶² It was part of annual readiness exercises.

Vigilant Guardian tested all aspects of continental defense. B-52 bombers were loaded with nuclear tipped air launched cruise missiles (ALCMs).⁴⁶³ Missile bases were in a high state of readiness and on a war

⁴⁵⁸ See *The 9/11 Commission Final Report*, Chapter 11.

⁴⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, Chapter 1, Chapter 11.

⁴⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 458.

⁴⁶¹ “21st Space Wing Priorities,” *Space Observer*, March 23, 2001, 2.

<http://web.archive.org/web/20030320100542/http://www.peterson.af.mil/21sw/observer/23mar01.pdf>

⁴⁶² Bronner, “9/11 Live: The NORAD Tapes”; *USA Today*, April 18, 2004.

⁴⁶³ NORAD, August 23, 2001, information page to participants; History Commons, “Profile: Vigilant Guardian,” http://www.historycommons.org/entity.jsp?entity=vigilant_guardian William Lane Callaway, Historian, Eighth Air Force, Barksdale Air Force Base, Bossier City, Louisiana

footing. A NORAD/NEADS information sheet dated August 23, 2001 stated “Vigilant Guardian is a ‘Full-Blown Nuclear War’ Exercise” and is a “transition to wartime operations command post exercise.”⁴⁶⁴ It is not surprising that as the events of Tuesday morning unfolded, everyone’s first thoughts were on this exercise. Initial confusion arose due to the coincidental timing. It could not have been worse when dealing with a hostile event on the scale of 9/11.

The following is the transcript of what happened inside NEADS on the September 11, 2001. *Vanity Fair* magazine has kindly granted permission for its use. The article was written by Michael Bronner and was published in the October 17, 2006 issue. It remains the best account of that chaotic day. Citations from this point forward within this chapter are by the authors.

SEPTEMBER 11

9/11 Live: The NORAD Tapes

How did the U.S. Air Force respond on 9/11? Could it have shot down United 93, as conspiracy theorists claim? Obtaining 30 hours of never-before-released tapes from the control room of NORAD's Northeast head-quarters, the author reconstructs the chaotic military history of that day—and the Pentagon's apparent attempt to cover it up.

Tucked in a piney notch in the gentle folds of the Adirondacks' southern skirts—just up from a derelict Mohawk, Adirondack & Northern rail spur—is a 22-year-old aluminum bunker tricked out with antennae tilted skyward. It could pass for the Jetsons' garage or, in the estimation of one of the higher-ranking U.S. Air Force officers stationed there, a big, sideways, half-buried beer keg.

As Major Kevin Nasypany, the facility's mission-crew commander, drove up the hill to work on the morning of 9/11, he was dressed in his flight suit and prepared for battle. Not a real one. The Northeast Air Defense Sector (NEADS), where Nasypany had been stationed since 1994, is the regional headquarters for the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), the Cold War-era military organization charged with protecting North American airspace. As he poured his first coffee on that sunny September morning, the odds that he would have to defend against Russian "Bear Bombers," one of NORAD's traditional simulated missions, were slim. Rather, Nasypany (pronounced Nah-sip-a-nee), an amiable commander with a thick mini-mustache and a hockey player's build, was headed in early to get ready for the NORAD-wide training exercise he'd helped design. The battle commander, Colonel Bob Marr, had promised to bring in fritters.

⁴⁶⁴ NORAD, August 23, 2001, information page to participants.



Figure 29. Major Kevin Nasypany in the NEADS Battle Center
(Image Source: *Vanity Fair*, Mark Schafer photographer).

NEADS is a desolate place, the sole orphan left behind after the dismantling of what was once one of the country's busiest bomber bases—Griffiss Air Force Base, in Rome, New York, which was otherwise mothballed in the mid-90s. NEADS's mission remained in place and continues today: its officers, air-traffic controllers, and air-surveillance and communications technicians—mostly American, with a handful of Canadian troops—are responsible for protecting a half-million-square-mile chunk of American airspace stretching from the East Coast to Tennessee, up through the Dakotas to the Canadian border, including Boston, New York, Washington, D.C., and Chicago.

It was into this airspace that violence descended on 9/11, and from the NEADS operations floor that what turned out to be the sum total of America's military response during those critical 100-some minutes of the attack—scrambling four armed fighter jets and one unarmed training plane—emanated.

The story of what happened in that room, and when, has never been fully told, but is arguably more important in terms of understanding America's military capabilities that day than anything happening simultaneously on Air Force One or in the Pentagon, the White House, or NORAD's impregnable headquarters, deep within Cheyenne Mountain, in Colorado. It's a story that was intentionally obscured, some members of the 9/11 commission believe, by military higher-ups and members of the Bush administration who spoke to the press, and later the commission itself, in order to downplay the extent of the confusion and miscommunication flying through the ranks of the government.

The truth, however, is all on tape.

Through the heat of the attack the wheels of what were, perhaps, some of the more modern pieces of equipment in the room—four Dictaphone multi-channel reel-to-reel tape recorders mounted on a rack in a corner of the operations floor—spun impassively, recording every radio channel, with time stamps.

The recordings are fascinating and chilling. A mix of staccato bursts of military code; urgent, overlapping voices; the tense crackle of radio traffic from fighter pilots in the air; commanders' orders piercing through a mounting din; and candid moments of emotion as the breadth of the attacks becomes clearer.

For the NEADS crew, 9/11 was not a story of four hijacked airplanes, but one of a heated chase after more than a dozen potential hijackings—some real, some phantom—that emerged from the turbulence of misinformation that spiked in the first 100 minutes of the attack and continued well into the afternoon and evening. At one point, in the span of a single mad minute, one hears Nasypany struggling to parse reports of four separate hijackings at once. What emerges from the barrage of what Nasypany dubs "bad poop" flying at his troops from all directions is a picture of remarkable composure. Snap decisions more often than not turn out to be the right ones as commanders kick-start the dormant military machine. It is the fog and friction of war live—the authentic military history of 9/11.

"The real story is actually better than the one we told," a NORAD general admitted to 9/11-commission staffers when confronted with evidence from the tapes that contradicted his original testimony. And so it seems.

Subpoenaed by the commission during its investigation, the recordings have never been played publicly beyond a handful of sound bites presented during the commission's hearings. Last September, as part of my research for the film *United 93*, on which I was an associate producer, I requested copies from the Pentagon. I was played snippets, but told my chances of hearing the full recordings were nonexistent. So it was a surprise, to say the least, when a military public-affairs officer e-mailed me, a full seven months later, saying she'd been cleared, finally, to provide them.

"The signing of the Declaration of Independence took less coordination," she wrote.

I would ultimately get three CDs with huge digital "wav file" recordings of the various channels in each section of the operations floor, 30-some hours of material in full, covering six and a half hours of real time. The first disc, which arrived by mail, was decorated with blue sky and fluffy white clouds and was labeled, in the playful Apple Chancery font, "Northeast Air Defense Sector—DAT Audio Files—11 Sep 2001."

"This is not an exercise"

At 8:14 a.m., as an Egyptian and four Saudis commandeered the cockpit on American 11, the plane that would hit the north tower of the World Trade Center, only a handful of troops were on the NEADS "ops" floor. That's the facility's war room: a dimly lit den arrayed with long rows of radarscopes and communications equipment facing a series of 15-foot screens lining the front wall. The rest of the crew, about 30 Americans and five or six Canadians, were checking e-mails or milling around the hall. A briefing on the morning's training exercise was wrapping up in the Battle Cab, the glassed-in command area overlooking the ops floor.

On the Dictaphone decks, an automated voice on each channel ticked off, in Greenwich Mean Time, the last few moments of life in pre-9/11 America: "12 hours, 26 minutes, 20 seconds"—just before 8:30 a.m. eastern daylight time.

The first human voices captured on tape that morning are those of the "ID techs"—Senior Airman Stacia Rountree, 23 at the time, Tech Sergeant Shelley Watson, 40, and their boss, Master Sergeant Maureen "Mo" Dooley, 40. They are stationed in the back right corner of the ops floor at a console with several phones and a radarscope. Their job in a crisis is to facilitate communications between NEADS, the civilian F.A.A., and other military commands, gathering whatever information they can and sending it up the chain. Dooley—her personality at once motherly and aggressive—generally stands behind the other two, who are seated.

The tapes catch them discussing strategy of an entirely domestic order:



Figure 30. Colonel Dawne Deskins (EADS vice-commander (Center) and Senior Master Sergeant Maureen “Mo” Dooley
(Image Source: [Syracuse, New York] *The Post Standard*. www.Syracuse.com)

08:37:08⁴⁶⁵

O.K., a couch, an ottoman, a love seat, and what else ... ? Was it on sale ... ? Holy smokes! What color is it?

In the background, however, you can make out the sound of Jeremy Powell, then 31, a burly, amiable technical sergeant, fielding the phone call that will be the military's first notification that something is wrong. On the line is Boston Center, the civilian air-traffic-control facility that handles that region's high-flying airliners.

⁴⁶⁵ National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) is official repository of all 9/11 government documents, texts, audio, video. Documents were transferred to NARA by individual agencies and departments. During this process many of the previously public links, obtained by Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests have disappeared from the internet. After the NEADS audio transcripts, as well as FAA, other Department of Defense sources, and interviews by the 9/11 Commission, were archived, the audio/visual files were converted into the torrent format. This can be downloaded from any major browser. This includes all files that extensions ending in doc, jpg, jpeg, wav, pdf, etc. The primary link to this data is found at <http://www.911datasets.org/index.php/> There are thousands of hours of raw data. Each file group begins with a long sequence number followed by a sometimes cryptic subject file. Within this sub group, the researcher caches of files from very small selections to several thousand entries. Research in this subject takes patience, an enormous amount of time, diligence, and excellent listening skills. The NEADS files are found in [PQIAMQJTH24QE2SLP2XKCB2PRTC7VWPK](http://www.911datasets.org/images/FAA_RADES_NORAD_FOIA_Data.torrent) in the subgroup [FAA_RADES_NORAD_FOIA_Data.torrent](http://www.911datasets.org/images/FAA_RADES_NORAD_FOIA_Data.torrent). This will direct the researcher to the download link - http://www.911datasets.org/images/FAA_RADES_NORAD_FOIA_Data.torrent I This link contains 1,677 individual audio, text, still photography and video files. The entire subject contains 47.61 GB (gigabytes) of data. Each tape is from a different source – interior microphones at each desk position, telephone lines, etc. They must be combined to make a coherent sense of the situation as it unfolded.

08:37:52

BOSTON CENTER: Hi. Boston Center T.M.U. [Traffic Management Unit], we have a problem here. We have a hijacked aircraft headed towards New York, and we need you guys to, we need someone to scramble some F-16s or something up there, help us out.

POWELL: Is this real-world or exercise?

BOSTON CENTER: No, this is not an exercise, not a test.

Powell's question—"Is this real-world or exercise?"—is heard nearly verbatim over and over on the tapes as troops funnel onto the ops floor and are briefed about the hijacking. Powell, like almost everyone in the room, first assumes the phone call is from the simulations team on hand to send "inputs"—simulated scenarios—into play for the day's training exercise.

Boston's request for fighter jets is not as prescient as it might seem. Standard hijack protocol calls for fighters to be launched—"scrambled"—merely to establish a presence in the air. The pilots are trained to trail the hijacked plane at a distance of about five miles, out of sight, following it until, presumably, it lands. If necessary, they can show themselves, flying up close to establish visual contact, and, if the situation demands, maneuver to force the plane to land.

At this point, certainly, the notion of actually firing anything at a passenger jet hasn't crossed anyone's mind.

In the ID section, the women overhear the word "hijack" and react, innocently enough, as anyone might with news of something exciting going on at work:

08:37:56

WATSON: What?

DOOLEY: Whoa!

WATSON: What was that?

ROUNTREE: Is that real-world?

DOOLEY: Real-world hijack.

WATSON: Cool!

For the first time in their careers, they'll get to put their training to full use.

Almost simultaneously, a P.A. announcement goes out for Major Nasypany, who's taking his morning constitutional.

08:37:58

P.A.: Major Nasypany, you're needed in ops pronto. P.A.: Major Nasypany, you're needed in ops pronto.

[Recorded phone line:]

SERGEANT MCCAIN: Northeast Air Defense Sector, Sergeant McCain, can I help you?

SERGEANT KELLY: Yeah, Sergeant Kelly from Otis, how you doing today?

SERGEANT MCCAIN: Yeah, go ahead.

SERGEANT KELLY: The—I'm gettin' reports from my TRACON [local civilian air traffic] that there might be a possible hijacking.

SERGEANT MCCAIN: I was just hearing the same thing. We're workin' it right now.

SERGEANT KELLY: O.K., thanks.

"When they told me there was a hijack, my first reaction was 'Somebody started the exercise early,'" Nasypany later told me. The day's exercise was designed to run a range of scenarios, including a "traditional" simulated hijack in which politically motivated perpetrators commandeer an aircraft, land on a Cuba-like

island, and seek asylum. "I actually said out loud, 'The hijack's not supposed to be for another hour,'" Nasypany recalled. (The fact that there was an exercise planned for the same day as the attack factors into several conspiracy theories, though the 9/11 commission dismisses this as coincidence. After plodding through dozens of hours of recordings, so do I.)

On tape, one hears as Nasypany, following standard hijack protocol, prepares to launch two fighters from Otis Air National Guard Base, on Cape Cod, to look for American 11, which is now off course and headed south. He orders his Weapons Team—the group on the ops floor that controls the fighters—to put the Otis planes on "battle stations." This means that at the air base the designated "alert" pilots—two in this case—are jolted into action by a piercing "battle horn." They run to their jets, climb up, strap in, and do everything they need to do to get ready to fly short of starting the engines.

Meanwhile, the communications team at NEADS—the ID techs Dooley, Rountree, and Watson—are trying to find out, as fast as possible, everything they can about the hijacked plane: the airline, the flight number, the tail number (to help fighter pilots identify it in the air), its flight plan, the number of passengers ("souls on board" in military parlance), and, most important, where it is, so Nasypany can launch the fighters. All the ID section knows is that the plane is American Airlines, Flight No. 11, Boston to Los Angeles, currently somewhere north of John F. Kennedy International Airport—the point of reference used by civilian controllers.

ID tech WATSON places a call to the management desk at Boston Center, which first alerted NEADS to the hijack, and gets distressing news.

08:39:58

WATSON: It's the inbound to J.F.K.?

BOSTON CENTER: We—we don't know.

WATSON: You don't know where he is at all?

BOSTON CENTER: He's being hijacked. The pilot's having a hard time talking to the—I mean, we don't know. We don't know where he's goin'. He's heading towards Kennedy. He's—like I said, he's like 35 miles north of Kennedy now at 367 knots. We have no idea where he's goin' or what his intentions are.

WATSON: If you could please give us a call and let us know—you know any information, that'd be great.

BOSTON CENTER: Okay. Right now, I guess we're trying to work on—I guess there's been some threats in the cockpit. The pilot—

WATSON: There's been what?! I'm sorry.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Threat to the ... ?

BOSTON CENTER: We'll call you right back as soon as we know more info.

DOOLEY is standing over Watson, shouting whatever pertinent information she hears to Nasypany, who's now in position in the center of the floor.

08:40:36

DOOLEY: O.K., he said threat to the cockpit!

This last bit ratchets the tension in the room up considerably.

At Otis Air National Guard Base, the pilots are in their jets, straining at the reins. ("When the horn goes off, it definitely gets your heart," F-15 pilot Major Dan Nash later told me, thumping his chest with his hand.) But at NEADS, Nasypany's "tracker techs" in the Surveillance section still can't find American 11 on their scopes. As it turns out, this is just as the hijackers intended.

Radar is the NEADS controllers' most vital piece of equipment, but by 9/11 the scopes were so old, among other factors, that controllers were ultimately unable to find any of the hijacked planes in enough time to react. Known collectively as the Green Eye for the glow the radar rings give off, the scopes looked like something out of Dr. Strangelove and were strikingly anachronistic compared with the equipment at civilian air-traffic sites. (After 9/11, NEADS was equipped with state-of-the-art equipment.)

In order to find a hijacked airliner—or any airplane—military controllers need either the plane's beacon code (broadcast from an electronic transponder on board) or the plane's exact coordinates. When the hijackers on American 11 turned the beacon off, intentionally losing themselves in the dense sea of airplanes already flying over the U.S. that morning (a tactic that would be repeated, with some variations, on all the hijacked flights), the NEADS controllers were at a loss.

"You would see thousands of green blips on your scope," Nasypany told me, "and now you have to pick and choose. Which is the bad guy out there? Which is the hijacked aircraft? And without that information from F.A.A., it's a needle in a haystack."

Otis Scramble

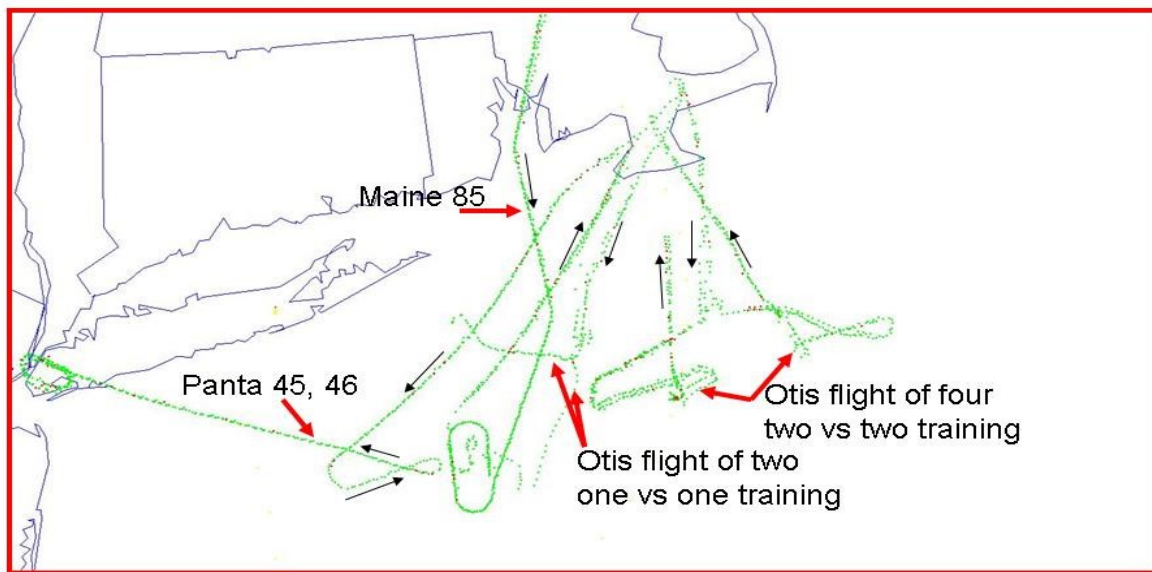


Figure 31. Fighter aircraft response from Otis Air National Guard Base located in Camp Edwards within Joint Base Cape Cod, Massachusetts (Image Source: NORAD).

At this point in the morning, more than 3,000 jetliners are already in the air over the continental United States, and the Boston controller's direction—"35 miles north of Kennedy"—doesn't help the NEADS controllers at all.

On tape, amid the confusion, one hears Major James Fox, then 32, the leader of the Weapons Team, whose composure will stand out throughout the attack, make an observation that, so far, ranks as the understatement of the morning.

08:43:06

FOX: I've never seen so much real-world stuff happen during an exercise.

Less than two minutes later, frustrated that the controllers still can't pinpoint American 11 on radar, Nasypany orders Fox to launch the Otis fighters anyway.

08:44:59

FOX: M.C.C. [Mission Crew Commander], I don't know where I'm scrambling these guys to. I need a direction, a destination—

NASYPANY: O.K., I'm gonna give you the Z point [coordinate]. It's just north of—New York City.

FOX: I got this lat long, 41-15, 74-36, or 73-46.

NASYPANY: Head 'em in that direction.

FOX: Copy that.

Having them up, Nasypany figures, is better than having them on the ground, assuming NEADS will ultimately pin down American 11's position. His job is to be proactive—to try to gain leverage over the situation as fast as possible. His backstop is Colonel Marr, the battle commander and Nasypany's superior up in the Battle Cab, whose role is more strategic, calculating the implications of each move several hours down the line.

Marr, 48 at the time (and since retired), is a well-liked leader. Most of his conversations on 9/11 are unrecorded: he speaks over a secure phone with his superior, Major General Larry Arnold, stationed at NORAD's command center at Tyndall Air Force Base, in Florida, or over an intercom with Nasypany. In the latter case, only Nasypany's side of the conversations is recorded.

In the last lines of his first briefing to Marr, Nasypany unwittingly, in his last line, trumps Fox in the realm of understatement.

08:46:36

NASYPANY: Hi, sir. O.K., what—what we're doing, we're tryin' to locate this guy. We can't find him via I.F.F. [the Identification Friend or Foe system]. What we're gonna do, we're gonna hit up every track within a 25-mile radius of this Z-point [coordinate] that we put on the scope. Twenty-nine thousand [feet] heading 1-9-0 [east]. We're just gonna do—we're gonna try to find this guy. They can't find him. There's supposedly been threats to the cockpit. So we're just doing the thing ... [off-mic conversation] True. And probably right now with what's going on in the cockpit it's probably really crazy. So, it probably needs to—that will simmer down and we'll probably get some better information.

American 11 slammed into the north tower of the World Trade Center four seconds into this transmission.

More than 150 miles from Manhattan, within the same minute as American 11 hits the tower, the stoplight in the Alert Barn at Otis Air National Guard Base on Cape Cod turns from red to green, Colonel Marr and General Arnold having approved Nasypany's order to scramble the fighters. The pilots taxi out and fire the afterburners as the planes swing onto the runway. NEADS has no indication yet that American 11 has crashed.

Five minutes later, Rountree, at the ID station, gets the first report of the crash from Boston Center (as her colleagues Watson and Dooley overhear).

08:51:11

ROUNTREE: A plane just hit the World Trade Center.

WATSON: What?

ROUNTREE: Was it a 737?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE (background): Hit what?

WATSON: The World Trade Center—

DOOLEY: Who are you talking to? [Gasps.]

WATSON: Oh!

DOOLEY: Get—pass—pass it to them—

WATSON: Oh my God. Oh God. Oh my God.

ROUNTREE: Saw it on the news. It's—a plane just crashed into the World Trade Center.

DOOLEY: Update New York! See if they lost altitude on that plane altogether.

WATSON places a call to civilian controllers at New York Center.

WATSON: Yes, ma'am. Did you just hear the information regarding the World Trade Center?

NEW YORK CENTER: No.

WATSON: Being hit by an aircraft?

NEW YORK CENTER: I'm sorry?!

WATSON: Being hit by an aircraft.

NEW YORK CENTER: You're kidding.

WATSON: It's on the world news.

In light of this news, someone asks Nasypany what to do with the fighters—the two F-15s from Otis Air National Guard Base—which have now just blasted off for New York at full afterburner to find American 11. (The flying time at full speed from Cape Cod to New York is about 10 minutes.) Pumped with adrenaline, Nasypany doesn't miss a beat.

08:52:40

NASYPANY: Send 'em to New York City still. Continue! Go!

NASYPANY: This is what I got. Possible news that a 737 just hit the World Trade Center. This is a real-world. And we're trying to confirm this. Okay. Continue taking the fighters down to the New York City area, J.F.K. area, if you can. Make sure that the F.A.A. clears it— your route all the way through. Do what we gotta do, okay? Let's press with this. It looks like this guy could have hit the World Trade Center.

"I'm not gonna stop what I initially started with scrambling Otis—getting Otis over New York City," Nasypany recalled when I played him this section of his tape. "If this is a false report, I still have my fighters where I want them to be."

Meanwhile, confusion is building on the ops floor over whether the plane that hit the tower really was American 11. Rumors that it was a small Cessna have started to circulate through the civilian air-traffic system. ID tech Rountree is on the phone with Boston Center's military liaison, Colin Scoggins, a civilian manager, who at first seems to confirm that it was American 11 that went into the tower.

08:55:18

BOSTON CENTER (Scoggins): Yeah, he crashed into the World Trade Center.

ROUNTREE: That is the aircraft that crashed into the World Trade Center?

BOSTON CENTER (Scoggins): Yup. Disregard the—disregard the tail number [given earlier for American 11].

ROUNTREE: Disregard the tail number? He did crash into the World Trade Center?

BOSTON CENTER (Scoggins): That's—that's what we believe, yes.

But an unidentified male trooper at NEADS overhears the exchange and raises a red flag.

08:56:31

MALE NEADS TECH: I never heard them say American Airlines Flight 11 hit the World Trade Center. I heard it was a civilian aircraft.

DOOLEY, the ID desk's master sergeant, takes the phone from Rountree to confirm for herself, and the story veers off course ...

DOOLEY (to Boston): Master Sergeant Dooley here. We need to have—are you giving confirmation that American 11 was the one—

BOSTON CENTER (Scoggins): No, we're not gonna confirm that at this time. We just know an aircraft crashed in and ...

DOOLEY: You—are you—can you say—is anyone up there tracking primary on this guy still?

BOSTON CENTER (Scoggins): No. The last [radar sighting] we have was about 15 miles east of J.F.K., or eight miles east of J.F.K. was our last primary hit. He did slowdown in speed. The primary that we had, it slowed down below—around to 300 knots.

DOOLEY: And then you lost 'em?

BOSTON CENTER (Scoggins): Yeah, and then we lost 'em.

The problem, Scoggins told me later, was that American Airlines refused to confirm for several hours that its plane had hit the tower. This lack of confirmation caused uncertainty that would be compounded in a very big way as the attack continued. (Though airlines have their own means of monitoring the location of their planes and communicating with their pilots, they routinely go into information lockdown in a crisis.)

Amid the chaos, Nasypany notices that some of his people are beginning to panic, so he makes a joke to relieve the tension.

08:57:11

NASYPANY: Think we put the exercise on the hold. What do you think? [Laughter.]

Just at that moment, in one of the dark, U-shaped air-traffic-control areas at New York Center, on Long Island, a half-dozen civilian controllers are watching a second plane that's turned off course: United 175, also scheduled from Boston to Los Angeles. As the controllers try to hail the pilots, a manager comes running in and confirms that the plane that hit the first tower was, indeed, a commercial airliner, rather than a small Cessna. It's just at that moment that United 175, 38 minutes into its flight and now near Allentown, Pennsylvania, moving southwest farther and farther off course, makes a sudden swing northeast toward Manhattan. Suddenly—instinctively—the civilian controllers know: it's another hijacking, and it's not going to land.

The controllers start speculating what the hijacker is aiming at—one guesses the Statue of Liberty—and the room erupts in profanity and horror. One controller is looking at his scope, calling out the rate of descent every 12 seconds as he watches the radar refresh. It is not until the last second, literally, that anyone from New York Center thinks to update NEADS. ID tech Rountree fields the call.

09:03:17

ROUNTREE: They have a second possible hijack!

Almost simultaneously, United 175 slams into the south tower of the World Trade Center, something several NEADS personnel witness live on CNN, including Colonel Marr, the commanding officer. (Dooley told me she remembers looking up toward the Battle Cab and, for a long moment, seeing Marr's jaw drop and everyone around him frozen.)

On the ops floor, there is considerable confusion as to whether the second hijacking New York Center just called in is the same plane that hit the second tower, or whether there are now three missing planes.

09:03:52

NASYPANY (to Marr): Sir, we got—we've got unconfirmed second hit from another aircraft. Fighters are south of—just south of Long Island, sir. Right now. Fighters are south of Long Island.

There's seemingly enough commotion in the Battle Cab that Nasypany needs to clarify: "Our fighters ..." The two F-15s, scrambled from Otis, are now approaching the city.

In the background, several troops can be heard trying to make sense of what's happening.

09:04:50

—Is this explosion part of that that we're lookin' at now on TV?

—Yes.

—Jesus ...

—And there's a possible second hijack also—a United Airlines ...

—Two planes?...

—Get the fuck out ...

—I think this is a damn input, to be honest.

The last line—"I think this is a damn input"—is a reference to the exercise, meaning a simulations input. It's either gallows humor or wishful thinking. From the tape, it's hard to tell.

"We've already had two. Why not more?"

Meanwhile, flying southwest over the ocean, the two fighters from Otis Air National Guard Base are streaking toward Manhattan. The pilots are startled, to say the least, when they see billowing smoke appear on the horizon; no one's briefed them about what's going on. They were scrambled simply to intercept and escort American 11—a possible hijacking—and that is all they know.

"From 100 miles away at least, we could see the fire and the smoke blowing," Major Dan Nash, one of the F-15 pilots, told me. "Obviously, anybody watching CNN had a better idea of what was going on. We were not told anything. It was to the point where we were flying supersonic towards New York and the controller came on and said, 'A second airplane has hit the World Trade Center.' ... My first thought was 'What happened to American 11?'"

With both towers now in flames, Nasypany wants the fighters over Manhattan immediately, but the weapons techs get "pushback" from civilian F.A.A. controllers, who have final authority over the fighters as long as they are in civilian airspace. The F.A.A. controllers are afraid of fast-moving fighters colliding with a passenger plane, of which there are hundreds in the area, still flying normal routes—the morning's unprecedented order to ground all civilian aircraft has not yet been given. To Nasypany, the fact that so many planes are still in the sky is all the more reason to get the fighters close. ("We've already had two," he told me, referring to the hijackings. "Why not more?")

The fighters are initially directed to a holding area just off the coast, near Long Island.

Nasypany isn't happy, and he makes sure that's duly noted for posterity as he calls out to Major Fox, the leader of the Weapons Team.

09:07:20

NASYPANY: Okay, Foxy. Plug in. I want to make sure this is on tape.... This is what—this is what I foresee that we probably need to do. We need to talk to F.A.A. We need to tell 'em if this stuff's gonna keep on going, we need to take those fighters on and then put 'em over Manhattan, O.K.? That's the best thing.

That's the best play right now. So, coordinate with the F.A.A. Tell 'em if there's more out there, which we don't know, let's get 'em over Manhattan. At least we got some kinda play.

He tells the Battle Cab he wants Fox to launch two more fighters from Langley Air Force Base, in Virginia, to establish a greater presence over New York, but the request is refused. The order from the Battle Cab is to put the Langley jets on battle stations only—to be ready, but not to launch.

"The problem there would have been I'd have all my fighters in the air at the same time, which means they'd all run out of gas at the same time," Marr later explained.

Incredibly, Marr has only four armed fighters at his disposal to defend about a quarter of the continental United States. Massive cutbacks at the close of the Cold War reduced NORAD's arsenal of fighters from some 60 battle-ready jets to just 14 across the entire country. (Under different commands, the military generally maintains several hundred unarmed fighter jets for training in the continental U.S.) Only four of NORAD's planes belong to NEADS and are thus anywhere close to Manhattan—the two from Otis, now circling above the ocean off Long Island, and the two in Virginia at Langley.

0910 EDT Sep 11, 2001

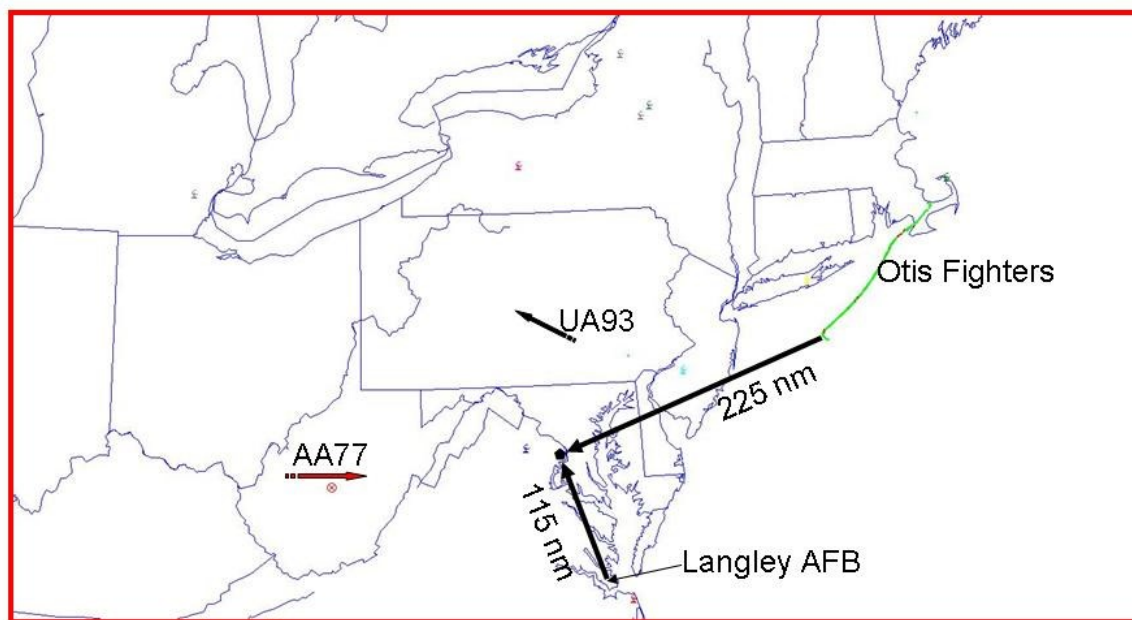


Figure 32. Airliner locations as of 9:10 Eastern Daylight Time. Source Image: NORAD.

Nasypany starts walking up and down the floor, asking all his section heads and weapons techs if they are prepared to shoot down a civilian airliner if need be, but he's jumping the gun: he doesn't have the authority to order a shootdown, nor does Marr or Arnold, or Vice President Cheney, for that matter. The order will need to come from President Bush, who has only just learned of the attack at a photo op in Florida.

On the ops floor, you hear Nasypany firmly pressing the issue. He briefs Marr on the armaments on board the F-15s, and how he sees best to use them "if need be":

09:19:44

NASYPANY: My recommendation, if we have to take anybody out, large aircraft, we use AIM-9s in the face.... If need be.

If there's another hijacking and the jets can engage, Nasypany is telling Marr, a missile fired into the nose of the plane will have the greatest chance of bringing it down.

But the prospect soon becomes real. Mo Dooley's voice erupts from the ID station on the operations floor.

The Langley Scramble

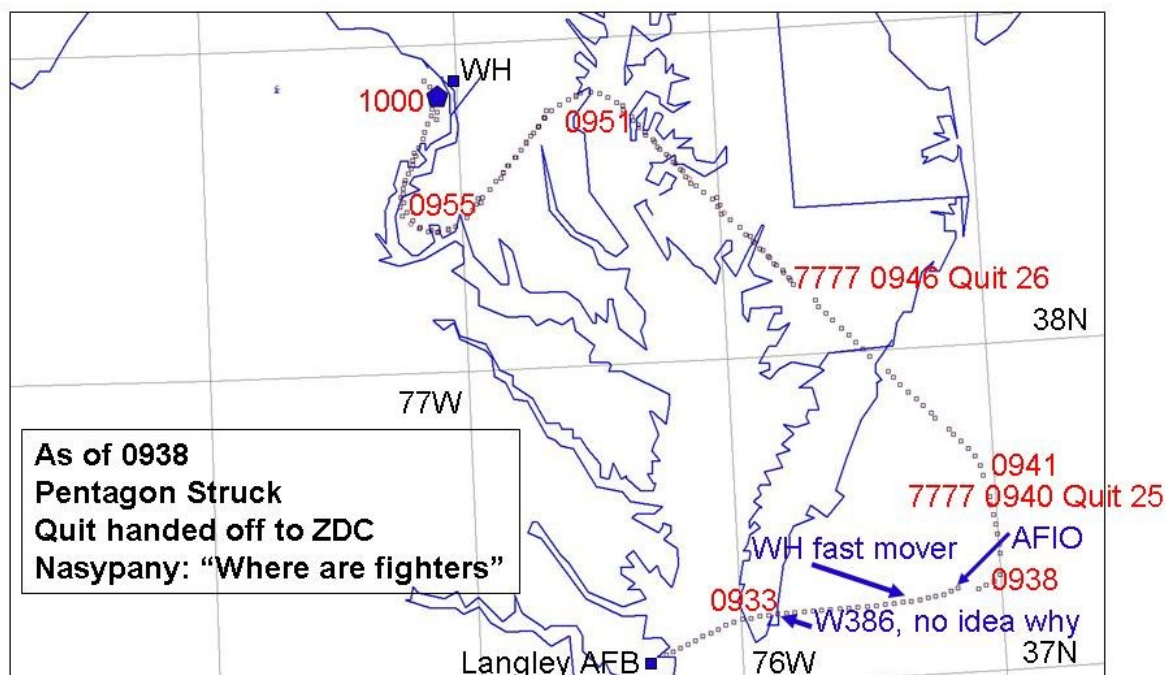


Figure 33. Fighter aircraft response from Langley Air Force Base which is art of Joint Base Langley-Eustis, located in Hampton, Virginia. Image Source: NORAD.

09:21:37

DOOLEY: Another hijack! It's headed towards Washington!

NASYPANY: Shit! Give me a location.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay. Third aircraft—hijacked—heading toward Washington.

This report, received from Colin Scoggins at Boston Center, will set off a major escalation in the military response to the attack, resulting in the launch of additional armed fighter jets. But 20 months later, when the military presents to the 9/11 commission what is supposed to be a full accounting of the day, omitted from the official time line is any mention of this reported hijacking and the fevered chase it engenders.

It was the Friday before Memorial Day weekend, 2003, and the hearing room in the Hart Senate Office Building, in Washington, was half empty as the group of mostly retired military brass arranged

themselves at the witness table before the 9/11 commission. The story the NORAD officers had come to tell before the commission was a relatively humbling one, a point underscored by the questions commission chairman Thomas Kean introduced during his opening remarks: How did the hijackers defeat the system, and why couldn't we stop them? These were important questions. Nearly two years after the attack, the Internet was rife with questions and conspiracy theories about 9/11—in particular, where were the fighters? Could they have physically gotten to any of the hijacked planes? And did they shoot down the final flight, United 93, which ended up in a Pennsylvania field?

On hand, dressed in business suits (with the exception of Major General Craig McKinley, whose two stars twinkled on either epaulet), were Major General Larry Arnold (retired), who had been on the other end of the secure line with NEADS's Colonel Marr throughout the attack, and Colonel Alan Scott (retired), who had been with Arnold at NORAD's continental command in Florida on 9/11 and who worked closely with Marr in preparing the military's time line. None of the military men were placed under oath.

Their story, in a nutshell, was one of being caught off guard initially, then very quickly ramping up to battle status—in position, and in possession of enough situational awareness to defend the country, and the capital in particular, before United 93, the fourth hijacked plane, would have reached Washington.

Major General Arnold explained to the commission that the military had been tracking United 93 and the fighters were in position if United 93 had threatened Washington. "It was our intent to intercept United Flight 93," Arnold testified. "I was personally anxious to see what 93 was going to do, and our intent was to intercept it."

Colonel Marr, the commanding officer at NEADS on 9/11, had made similar comments to ABC News for its one-year-anniversary special on the attacks, saying that the pilots had been warned they might have to intercept United 93, and stop it if necessary: "And we of course passed that on to the pilots: United Airlines Flight 93 will not be allowed to reach Washington, D.C."

When I interviewed him recently, Marr recalled a conversation he had had with Arnold in the heat of the attack. "I remember the words out of General Arnold's mouth, or at least as I remember them, were 'We will take lives in the air to save lives on the ground.'" In actuality, they'd never get that chance.

In the chronology presented to the 9/11 commission, Colonel Scott put the time NORAD was first notified about United 93 at 9:16 a.m., from which time, he said, commanders tracked the flight closely. (It crashed at 10:03 a.m.) If it had indeed been necessary to "take lives in the air" with United 93, or any incoming flight to Washington, the two armed fighters from Langley Air Force Base in Virginia would have been the ones called upon to carry out the shootdown. In Colonel Scott's account, those jets were given the order to launch at 9:24, within seconds of NEADS's receiving the F.A.A.'s report of the possible hijacking of American 77, the plane that would ultimately hit the Pentagon. This time line suggests the system was starting to work: the F.A.A. reports a hijacking, and the military reacts instantaneously. Launching after the report of American 77 would, in theory, have put the fighters in the air and in position over Washington in plenty of time to react to United 93.

In testimony a few minutes later, however, General Arnold added an unexpected twist: "We launched the aircraft out of Langley to put them over top of Washington, D.C., not in response to American Airlines 77, but really to put them in position in case United 93 were to head that way."

How strange, John Azzarello, a former prosecutor and one of the commission's staff members, thought. "I remember being at the hearing in '03 and wondering why they didn't seem to have their stories straight. That struck me as odd."

The ears of another staff member, Miles Kara, perked up as well. "I said to myself, That's not right," the retired colonel, a former army intelligence officer, told me. Kara had seen the radar re-creations of the fighters' routes. "We knew something was odd, but we didn't have enough specificity to know how odd."

As the tapes reveal in stark detail, parts of Scott's and Arnold's testimony were misleading, and others simply false. At 9:16 a.m., when Arnold and Marr had supposedly begun their tracking of United 93, the

plane had not yet been hijacked. In fact, NEADS wouldn't get word about United 93 for another 51 minutes. And while NORAD commanders did, indeed, order the Langley fighters to scramble at 9:24, as Scott and Arnold testified, it was not in response to the hijacking of American 77 or United 93. Rather, they were chasing a ghost. NEADS was entering the most chaotic period of the morning.

"Chase this guy down"

At 9:21 a.m., just before Dooley's alert about a third hijacked plane headed for Washington, NEADS is in the eye of the storm—a period of relative calm in which, for the moment, there are no reports of additional hijackings.

The call that sets off the latest alarm ("Another hijack! It's headed towards Washington!") comes from Boston and is wholly confounding: according to Scoggins, the Boston manager, American 11, the plane they believed was the first one to hit the World Trade Center, is actually still flying—still hijacked—and now heading straight for D.C. Whatever hit the first tower, it wasn't American 11.

The chase is on for what will turn out to be a phantom plane.

09:21:50

NASYPANY: O.K. American Airlines is still airborne—11, the first guy. He's heading towards Washington. O.K., I think we need to scramble Langley right now. And I'm—I'm gonna take the fighters from Otis and try to chase this guy down if I can find him.

Arnold and Marr approve scrambling the two planes at Langley, along with a third unarmed trainer, and Nasypany sets the launch in motion.

It's a mistake, of course. American 11 was, indeed, the plane that hit the first tower. The confusion will persist for hours, however. In Boston, it is Colin Scoggins who has made the mistaken call.

"When we phoned United [after the second tower was hit], they confirmed that United 175 was down, and I think they confirmed that within two or three minutes," Scoggins, the go-to guy at Boston Center for all things military, later told me. "With American Airlines, we could never confirm if it was down or not, so that left doubt in our minds."

An unwieldy conference call between F.A.A. centers had been established, and Scoggins was monitoring it when the word came across—from whom or where isn't clear—that American 11 was thought to be headed for Washington. Scoggins told me he thinks that the problem started with someone overheard trying to confirm from American whether American 11 was down—that somewhere in the flurry of information zipping back and forth during the conference call this transmogrified into the idea that a different plane had hit the tower, and that American 11 was still hijacked and still in the air. The plane's course, had it continued south past New York in the direction it was flying before it dipped below radar coverage, would have had it headed on a straight course toward D.C. This was all controllers were going on; they were never tracking an actual plane on the radar after losing American 11 near Manhattan, but if it had been flying low enough, the plane could have gone undetected. "After talking to a supervisor, I made the call and said [American 11] is still in the air, and it's probably somewhere over New Jersey or Delaware heading for Washington, D.C.," Scoggins told me.

Over the next quarter-hour, the fact that the fighters have been launched in response to the phantom American 11—rather than American 77 or United 93—is referred to six more times on Nasypany's channel alone. How could Colonel Scott and General Arnold have missed it in preparing for their 9/11-commission testimony? It's a question Arnold would have to answer later, under oath.

In the middle of the attack, however, the hijackers' sabotaging of the planes' beacons has thrown such a wrench into efforts to track them that it all seems plausible.

09:23:15

ANDERSON: They're probably not squawking anything [broadcasting a beacon code] anyway. I mean, obviously these guys are in the cockpit.

NASYPANY: These guys are smart.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Yeah, they knew exactly what they wanted to do.

Another officer asks Nasypany the obvious question.

09:32:20

MAJOR JAMES ANDERSON: Have you asked—have you asked the question what you're gonna do if we actually find this guy? Are we gonna shoot him down if they got passengers on board? Have they talked about that?

Approval for any such order would have to come from the commander in chief. Just after 9:30, however, the president was in his motorcade preparing to leave the Emma Booker Elementary School, in Sarasota, for the airport and the safety of Air Force One. The 9/11 commission determined that the president had not been aware of any further possible hijackings and was not yet in touch with the Pentagon.

But a clear shootdown order wouldn't have made a difference. The Langley fighters were headed the wrong way—due east, straight out to sea into a military-training airspace called Whiskey 386, rather than toward Washington, which NEADS believed was under attack. According to the 9/11 commission, the Langley pilots were never briefed by anyone at their base about why they were being scrambled, so, despite having been given the order from NEADS to fly to Washington, the pilots ended up following their normal training flight plan out to sea—a flight plan dating from the Cold War. As one pilot later told the commission, "I reverted to the Russian threat—I'm thinking cruise-missile threat from the sea."

At NEADS, a 28-year-old staff sergeant named William Huckabone, staring at his Green Eye, is the first to notice that the Langley jets are off course. His voice is a mix of stress and dread as he and the controller next to him, Master Sergeant Steve Citino, order a navy air-traffic controller who's handling the fighters to get them turned around toward Baltimore to try to cut off the phantom American 11. The navy air-traffic controller seems not to understand the urgency of the situation.

09:34:12

NAVY A.T.C.: You've got [the fighters] moving east in airspace. Now you want 'em to go to Baltimore?

HUCKABONE: Yes, sir. We're not gonna take 'em in Whiskey 386 [military training airspace over the ocean].

NAVY A.T.C.: O.K., once he goes to Baltimore, what are we supposed to do?

HUCKABONE: Have him contact us on auxiliary frequency 2-3-4 decimal 6. Instead of taking handoffs to us and us handing 'em back, just tell Center they've got to go to Baltimore.

NAVY A.T.C.: All right, man. Stand by. We'll get back to you.

CITINO: What do you mean, "We'll get back to you"? Just do it!

HUCKABONE: I'm gonna choke that guy!

CITINO: Be very professional, Huck.

HUCKABONE: O.K.

CITINO: All right, Huck. Let's get our act together here.

All hell is breaking loose around them. Boston Center has called in with another suspected hijacking—the controllers there don't know the call sign yet—and ID tech Watson is speed-dialing everyone she can to find a position on the resurrected American 11. In the course of a call to Washington Center, the operations manager there has sprung new information about yet another lost airplane: American 77.

09:34:01

WASHINGTON CENTER: Now, let me tell you this. I—I'll—we've been looking. We're—also lost American 77—

WATSON: American 77?

DOOLEY: American 77's lost—

WATSON: Where was it proposed to head, sir?

WASHINGTON CENTER: Okay, he was going to L.A. also—

WATSON: From where, sir?

WASHINGTON CENTER: I think he was from Boston also. Now let me tell you this story here. Indianapolis Center was working this guy—

WATSON: What guy?

WASHINGTON CENTER: American 77, at flight level 3-5-0 [35,000 feet]. However, they lost radar with him. They lost contact with him. They lost everything. And they don't have any idea where he is or what happened.

This is a full 10 minutes later than the time Major General Arnold and Colonel Scott would give in their testimony; reality was a lot messier. Forty minutes prior, at 8:54 a.m., controllers at Indianapolis Center had lost radar contact with American 77, flying from Washington Dulles to LAX, and assumed the plane had crashed because they weren't aware of the attack in New York. Though they soon realized this was another hijacking and sent warnings up the F.A.A. chain, no one called the military; it was only by chance that NEADS's Watson got the information in her call to Washington Center.

As Watson takes in the information from Washington Center, Rountree's phone is ringing again. By this point, the other ID techs have taken to calling Rountree "the bearer of death and destruction" because it seems every time she picks up the phone there's another hijacking. And so it is again. At Boston Center, Colin Scoggins has spotted a low-flying airliner six miles southeast of the White House.

09:35:41

ROUNTREE: Huntress [call sign for NEADS] ID, Rountree, can I help you?

BOSTON CENTER (Scoggins): Latest report, [low-flying] aircraft six miles southeast of the White House.

ROUNTREE: Six miles southeast of the White House?

BOSTON CENTER (Scoggins): Yup. East—he's moving away?

ROUNTREE: Southeast from the White House.

BOSTON CENTER (Scoggins): Air—aircraft is moving away.

ROUNTREE: Moving away from the White House?

BOSTON CENTER (Scoggins): Yeah....

ROUNTREE: Deviating away. You don't have a type aircraft, you don't know who he is—

BOSTON CENTER (Scoggins): Nothing, nothing. We're over here in Boston so I have no clue. That—hopefully somebody in Washington would have better—information for you.

This will turn out to be American 77, but since the hijackers turned the beacon off on this plane as well, no one will realize that until later. Depending on how you count, NEADS now has three reported possible hijackings from Boston (the phantom American 11 and two unidentified planes) as well as Washington Center's report that American 77 is lost.

Of these four vague and ultimately overlapping reports, the latest—word of a plane six miles from the White House—is the most urgent. The news sets off a frenzy.

09:36:23

NASYPANY: O.K. I got a aircraft six miles east of the White House! Get your fighters there as soon as possible!

MALE VOICE: That came from Boston?

HUCKABONE: We're gonna turn and burn it—crank it up—

MALE TECH: Six miles!

HUCKABONE: All right, here we go. This is what we're gonna do—

NASYPANY: We've got an aircraft deviating eight [sic] miles east of the White House right now.

FOX: Do you want us to declare A.F.I.O. [emergency military control of the fighters]⁴⁶⁶ and run 'em straight in there?

NASYPANY: Take 'em and run 'em to the White House.

FOX: Go directly to Washington.

CITINO: We're going direct D.C. with my guys [Langley fighters]? Okay. Okay.

HUCKABONE: Ma'am, we are going A.F.I.O. right now with Quit 2-5 [the Langley fighters]. They are going direct Washington.

NAVY A.T.C.: Quit 2-5, we're handing 'em off to Center right now.

HUCKABONE: Ma'am, we need to expedite that right now. We've gotta contact them on 2-3-4-6.

"Six miles south, or west, or east of the White House is—it's seconds [away]," Nasypany told me later. "Airliners traveling at 400-plus knots, it's nothing. It's seconds away from that location."

The White House, then, is in immediate danger. Radar analysis in the following weeks will show that the plane abruptly veers away and turns toward the Pentagon, though the controllers at NEADS have no way of knowing this in the moment. Looking in the general capital area, one of the tracker techs thinks he spots the plane on radar, then just as quickly loses it.

09:37:56

MALE TECH: Right here, right here, right here. I got him. I got him.

NASYPANY: We just lost track. Get a Z-point [coordinate] on that.... O.K., we got guys lookin' at 'em. Hold on.... Where's Langley at? Where are the fighters?

The fighters have no chance. They're about 150 miles away, according to radar analysis done later. Even at top speed—and even if they know the problem is suicide hijackings of commercial airliners rather than Russian missiles—it will take them roughly 10 minutes to get to the Pentagon.

09:38:50

NASYPANY: We need to get those back up there—I don't care how many windows you break!... Goddammit! O.K. Push 'em back!

But the Pentagon is already in flames, American 77 having plowed through the E-ring of the west side of the building seconds before, at 9:37:46. The Langley fighters will not be established over Washington for another 20 minutes.

"You were just so mad"

On the ops floor, everyone is staring at CNN on the overhead screen. Seeing the first pictures of the Pentagon in flames is gut-wrenching. Nasypany's voice can be heard cursing in frustration: "Goddammit! I can't even protect my N.C.A. [National Capital Area]." You hear troops prod one another to stay focused.

CITINO: O.K.—let's watch our guys, Huck. Not the TV.

⁴⁶⁶ Authorization for Interceptor Operations, weapons ready and cleared for use.

"The more it went on, the more unbelievable it got, and then the one that did the Pentagon," Dooley told me, "we just couldn't believe it. You were just so mad that you couldn't stop these guys and so you're looking for the next one. Where are they going next?"

It looks like Washington again. Three minutes after the Pentagon is hit, Scoggins, at Boston Center, is back on the phone. The Boston controllers are now tracking Delta 1989—Boston to Las Vegas—which fits the same profile as the other hijackings: cross-country, out of Boston, lots of fuel, and possibly off course. But this one's different from the others in one key respect: the plane's beacon code is still working. In this chase, NEADS will have a chance, as the excitement in Dooley's last line reflects:

09:40:57

ROUNTREE: Delta 89, that's the hijack. They think it's possible hijack.

DOOLEY: Fuck!

ROUNTREE: South of Cleveland. We have a code on him now.

DOOLEY: Good. Pick it up! Find it!

MALE TECH: Delta what?

ROUNTREE: Eight nine—a Boeing 767.

DOOLEY: Fuck, another one—

They quickly find the plane on radar—it's just south of Toledo—and begin alerting other F.A.A. centers. They're not sure where the plane is headed. If it's Chicago, they're in big trouble, because they don't have any planes close enough to cut it off. Marr and Nasypany order troops to call Air National Guard bases in that area to see if anyone can launch fighters. A base in Selfridge, Michigan, offers up two unarmed fighters that are already flying, on their way back from a training mission.

09:54:54

SELFIDGE FLIGHT OFFICER: Here—here's what we can do. At a minimum, we can keep our guys airborne. I mean, they don't have—they don't have any guns or missiles or anything on board. But we—

NEADS TECH: It's a presence, though.

But NEADS is victim again to an increasingly long information lag. Even before Rountree gets the urgent call that Delta 1989 is hijacked, a civilian air-traffic controller in Cleveland in contact with the pilot has determined that the flight is fine—that Delta 1989 isn't a hijacking after all.

Meanwhile, however, NEADS has gotten a call from a NORAD unit in Canada with yet another suspected hijacking headed south across the border toward Washington. In the barrage of information and misinformation, it becomes increasingly difficult for the controllers to keep count of how many suspected hijackings are pending. So far, it is known that three have hit buildings, but given the uncertainty about the fates of American 11 and American 77—no one knows yet that this is the plane that hit the Pentagon—the sense at NEADS is that there are possibly three hijacked jets still out there, and who knows how many more yet to be reported. At this point, no one on the military side is aware that United 93 has been hijacked.

Then, over a crackly radio, one of the Langley fighter pilots, now in a combat air patrol over Washington, is calling in urgently.

10:07:08

PILOT: Baltimore is saying something about an aircraft over the White House. Any words?

CITINO: Negative. Stand by. Do you copy that, SD [Major Fox]? Center said there's an aircraft over the White House. Any words?

FOX: M.C.C. [Nasypany], we've got an aircraft reported over the White House.

A fourth hijacking? Nasypany, who's running full throttle, replies instinctively.

NASYPANY: Intercept!

FOX: Intercept!

NASYPANY: Intercept and divert that aircraft away from there.

On one channel, you hear a weapons tech very dramatically hailing the fighters and ordering the intercept.

CITINO: Quit 2-5 [Langley fighters], mission is intercept aircraft over White House. Use F.A.A. for guidance.

FOX: Divert the aircraft away from the White House. Intercept and divert it.

CITINO: Quit 2-5, divert the aircraft from the White House.

PILOT: Divert the aircraft....

Meanwhile, Nasypany calls the Battle Cab. With a plane headed straight for the White House, Nasypany needs an update on his rules of engagement—fast.

10:07:39

NASYPANY: Do you hear that? That aircraft over the White House. What's the word? ... Intercept and what else? ...Aircraft over the White House.

The "what else?" is the big question: do they have the authority to shoot? The request skips up the chain to Arnold.

"I was in Vietnam," Arnold later told me. "When people are shooting at you, you don't know when it's going to stop. And that same thought went through my mind [on 9/11]. You begin to wonder, How can I get control of this situation? When can we as a military get control of this situation?"

Arnold, in turn, passes the request for rules of engagement farther up the chain.

It is in the middle of this, simultaneously, that the first call comes in about United 93. ID tech Watson fields it.

10:07:16

CLEVELAND CENTER: We got a United 93 out here. Are you aware of that?

WATSON: United 93?

CLEVELAND CENTER: That has a bomb on board.

WATSON: A bomb on board?! And this is confirmed? You have a [beacon code], sir?

CLEVELAND CENTER: No, we lost his transponder.

The information is shouted out to Nasypany.

NASYPANY: Gimme the call sign. Gimme the whole nine yards.... Let's get some info, real quick. They got a bomb?

But by the time NEADS gets the report of a bomb on United 93, everyone on board is already dead. Following the passengers' counterattack, the plane crashed in a field in Pennsylvania at 10:03 a.m., 4 minutes before Cleveland Center notified NEADS, and a full 35 minutes after a Cleveland Center controller, a veteran named John Werth, first suspected something was wrong with the flight. At 9:28, Werth actually heard the guttural sounds of the cockpit struggle over the radio as the hijackers attacked the pilots.

Werth's suspicions about United 93 were passed quickly up the F.A.A.'s chain of command, so how is it that no one from the agency alerted NEADS for more than half an hour?

A former senior executive at the F.A.A., speaking to me on the condition that I not identify him by name, tried to explain. "Our whole procedures prior to 9/11 were that you turned everything [regarding a hijacking] over to the F.B.I.," he said, reiterating that hijackers had never actually flown airplanes; it was expected that they'd land and make demands. "There were absolutely no shootdown protocols at all. The F.A.A. had nothing to do with whether they were going to shoot anybody down. We had no protocols or rules of engagement."

In his bunker under the White House, Vice President Cheney was not notified about United 93 until 10:02—only one minute before the airliner impacted the ground. Yet it was with dark bravado that the vice president and others in the Bush administration would later recount sober deliberations about the prospect of shooting down United 93. "Very, very tough decision, and the president understood the magnitude of that decision," Bush's then chief of staff, Andrew Card, told ABC News.

Cheney echoed, "The significance of saying to a pilot that you are authorized to shoot down a plane full of Americans is, a, you know, it's an order that had never been given before." And it wasn't on 9/11, either.

President Bush would finally grant commanders the authority to give that order at 10:18, which—though no one knew it at the time—was 15 minutes after the attack was over.

But comments such as those above were repeated by other administration and military figures in the weeks and months following 9/11, forging the notion that only the passengers' counterattack against their hijackers prevented an inevitable shootdown of United 93 (and convincing conspiracy theorists that the government did, indeed, secretly shoot it down). The recordings tell a different story, and not only because United 93 had crashed before anyone in the military chain of command even knew it had been hijacked.

At what feels on the tapes like the moment of truth, what comes back down the chain of command, instead of clearance to fire, is a resounding sense of caution. Despite the fact that NEADS believes there may be as many as five suspected hijacked aircraft still in the air at this point—one from Canada, the new one bearing down fast on Washington, the phantom American 11, Delta 1989, and United 93—the answer to Nasypany's question about rules of engagement comes back in no uncertain terms, as you hear him relay to the ops floor.

10:10:31

NASYPANY (to floor): Negative. Negative clearance to shoot.... Goddammit!...

FOX: I'm not really worried about code words at this point.

NASYPANY: Fuck the code words. That's perishable information. Negative clearance to fire. ID. Type. Tail.

The orders from higher headquarters are to identify by aircraft type and tail number, and nothing more. Those orders—and the fact that the pilots have no clearance to shoot—are reiterated by NEADS controllers as a dramatic chase towards the White House continues. Two more problems emerge: the controllers can't find the White House on their dated equipment, and they have trouble communicating with the Langley fighters (which are referred to by their call signs, Quit 2-5 and Quit 2-6).

CITINO: Quit 2-6, Huntress.⁴⁶⁷ How far is the—suspect aircraft?

PILOT: Standby. Standby.... About 15 miles, Huntress.

CITINO: Huntress copies two-two miles.

PILOT: 15 miles, Huntress.

CITINO: 15 miles. One-five ...noise level please ... It's got to be low. Quit 2-6, when able say altitude of the aircraft.... Did we get a Z-track [coordinates] up for the White House?

HUCKABONE: They're work in' on it.

CITINO: Okay. Hey, what's this Bravo 0-0-5 [unidentified target]?

FOX: We're trying to get the Z-point. We're trying to find it.

HUCKABONE: I don't even know where the White House is.

CITINO: Whatever it is, it's very low. It's probably a helicopter.

MALE VOICE: It's probably the helicopter you're watching there.... There's probably one flying over the [Pentagon].

⁴⁶⁷ Huntress is the NEADS call sign.

MALE VOICE: It's probably the smoke. The building's smoked. [They're seeing more pictures of the flaming Pentagon on CNN.]

HUCKABONE: Holy shit.... Holy shit ...

CITINO: Yes. We saw that. O.K.—let's watch our guys, Huck. Not the TV.... Quit 2-6, status? SD, they're too low. I can't talk to 'em. They're too low. I can't talk to 'em.

FOX: Negative clearance to fire.

CITINO: O.K. I told 'em mission is ID and that was it.

FOX: Do whatever you need to divert. They are not cleared to fire.

As it turns out, it's just as well the pilots are not cleared to shoot. Delta 1989 and the Canadian scare turn out to be false alarms. American 11 and United 93 are already down. And the fast-moving target near the White House that the armed fighters are racing to intercept turns out to be a friendly—a mistake by a civilian controller who was unaware of the military's scrambles, as weapons techs Huckabone and Citino, and their senior director, Fox, suddenly realize.

HUCKABONE: It was our guys [the fighters from Langley].

CITINO: Yup. It was our guys they saw. It was our guys they saw—Center saw.

FOX: New York did the same thing....

CITINO: O.K., Huck. That was cool. We intercepted our own guys.

At that point in the morning, Marr later told me, preventing an accidental shootdown was a paramount concern. "What you don't want happening is a pilot having to make that decision in the heat of the moment where he is bearing all that burden as to whether I should shoot something down or not," Marr said.

It is 12 minutes after United 93 actually crashed when NEADS's Watson first hears the word. Her voice is initially full of hope as she mistakenly believes she is being told that United 93 has landed safely.

10:15:00

WATSON: United nine three, have you got information on that yet?

WASHINGTON CENTER: Yeah, he's down.

WATSON: What—he's down?

WASHINGTON CENTER: Yes.

WATSON: When did he land? Because we have confirmation—

WASHINGTON CENTER: He did—he did—he did not land.

Here, on the tape, you hear the air rush out of WATSON's voice.

WATSON: Oh, he's down down?

MALE VOICE: Yes. Yeah, somewhere up northeast of Camp David.

WATSON: Northeast of Camp David.

WASHINGTON CENTER: That's the—that's the last report. They don't know exactly where.

"I know what spin is"

On June 17, 2004, a year after the 9/11 commission's initial public hearing, Major General Arnold and a more robust contingent of NORAD and Pentagon brass arrived to testify before the commission at its 12th and final public meeting. This time, they would testify under oath.

The hearing began with an elaborate multi-media presentation in which John Farmer Jr., the commission's senior counsel, John Azzarello, and another staff attorney, Dana Hyde, took turns illustrating, in withering detail, the lag time between when the F.A.A. found out about each of the hijacked aircraft and the time anyone from the agency notified the military. Excerpts from the NEADS tapes and parallel recordings from the F.A.A., which show the civilian side in equal turmoil, were played in public for the first time. (Both sets of recordings were provided to the commission only after being subpoenaed.)

The focus of the pointed questioning that followed wasn't on why the military didn't do better, but rather on why the story Major General Arnold and Colonel Scott had told at the first hearing was so wrong, in particular with respect to the phantom American 11, which the officers had never mentioned, and United 93, which they claimed to have been tracking. Commissioner Richard Ben-Veniste, who cut his teeth 30 years earlier working for the Watergate special prosecutor, led off the questioning and came out swinging.

"General, is it not a fact that the failure to call our attention to the miscommunication and the notion of a phantom Flight 11 continuing from New York City south in fact skewed the whole reporting of 9/11?" he asked Arnold, who replied that he had not been aware of those facts when he testified the year before.

"I've been in government and I know what spin is," Farmer, the senior counsel, told me. The military's story was "a whole different order of magnitude than spin. It simply wasn't true." Farmer says he doesn't understand why the military felt the need to spin at all. "The information they got [from the F.A.A.] was bad information, but they reacted in a way that you would have wanted them to. The calls Marr and Nasypany made were the right ones."

Both Marr and Arnold bristled when I asked about the commission's suspicion that there had been an effort to spin the story. "I can't think of any incentive why we'd want to spin that," Marr said, his eyes tensing for the first time in what had been friendly interviews. "I'll be the first to admit that immediately after—in fact, for a long time after—we were very confused with who was what and where, what reports were coming in. I think with having 29 different reports of hijackings nationwide, for us it was next to impossible to try and get back there and figure out the fidelity [about the morning's chronology] that the 9/11 commission ended up being able to show."

Azzarello, Farmer, and several other commission members I spoke to dismissed this fog-of-war excuse and pointed out that not only had the military already reviewed the tapes but that the false story it told at the first hearing had a clear purpose. "How good would it have looked for the government in general if we still couldn't have stopped the fourth plane an hour and 35 minutes [into the attack]?" Azzarello asked. "How good would it have looked if there was a total breakdown in communication and nothing worked right?"

If nothing else, it might have given the public a more realistic sense of the limitations, particularly in the face of suicide terrorism, of what is, without doubt, the most powerful military in the world.

As one of its last acts before disbanding, in July 2004, the 9/11 commission made referrals to the inspector general's offices of both the Department of Transportation (which includes the F.A.A.) and the Defense Department to further investigate whether witnesses had lied. "Commission staff believes that there is significant evidence that the false statements made to the commission were deliberately false," Farmer wrote to me in an e-mail summarizing the commission's referral. "The false testimony served a purpose: to obscure mistakes on the part of the F.A.A. and the military, and to overstate the readiness of the military to intercept and, if necessary, shoot down UAL 93." A spokesman for the Transportation Department's inspector general's office told me that the investigation had been completed, but he wasn't at liberty to share the findings, because the report had not been finalized. A spokesman at the Pentagon's inspector general's office said its investigation had also been completed, but the results are classified.

Poring over time-stamped transcripts that undercut the Pentagon's official story, one is tempted to get caught up in a game of "gotcha." For those on the operations floor in the thick of it that day, however, the cold revelations of hindsight are a bitter pill to swallow.

Listening to the tapes, you hear that inside NEADS there was no sense that the attack was over with the crash of United 93; instead, the alarms go on and on. False reports of hijackings, and real responses, continue well into the afternoon, though civilian air-traffic controllers had managed to clear the skies of all commercial and private aircraft by just after 12 p.m. The fighter pilots over New York and D.C. (and later Boston and Chicago) would spend hours darting around their respective skylines intercepting hundreds of aircraft they deemed suspicious. Meanwhile, Arnold, Marr, and Nasypany were launching as many additional fighters as they could, placing some 300 armed jets in protective orbits over every major

American city by the following morning. No one at NEADS would go home until late on the night of the 11th, and then only for a few hours of sleep.

Five years after the attack, the controversy around United 93 clearly eats at Arnold, Marr, Nasypany, and several other military people I spoke with, who resent both conspiracy theories that accuse them of shooting the flight down and the 9/11 commission's conclusion that they were chasing ghosts and never stood a chance of intercepting any of the real hijackings. "I don't know about time lines and stuff like that," Nasypany, who is now a lieutenant colonel, said in one of our last conversations. "I knew where 93 was. I don't care what [the commission says]. I mean, I care, but—I made that assessment to put my fighters over Washington. Ninety-three was on its way in. I knew there was another one out there. I knew there was somebody else coming in—whatever you want to call it. And I knew what I was going to have to end up doing." When you listen to the tapes, it couldn't feel more horrendously true.

When I asked Nasypany about the conspiracy theories—the people who believe that he, or someone like him, secretly ordered the shootdown of United 93 and covered it up—the corners of his mouth began to quiver. Then, I think to the surprise of both of us, he suddenly put his head in his hands and cried. "Flight 93 was not shot down," he said when he finally looked up. "The individuals on that aircraft, the passengers, they actually took the aircraft down. Because of what those people did, I didn't have to do anything."

On the day, however, there was no time for sentiment. Within 30 seconds of the report that United 93 has crashed, killing everyone on board, once again, the phone is ringing.

10:15:30

POWELL: Southeast just called. There's another possible hijack in our area....

NASYPANY: All right. Fuck ...



Figure 34. The routes of all four commercial aircraft in Black lines and Fighter Interceptors in Red lines on September 11, 2001 (Image Source: Paul Schreyer. Data Source: NORAD).

CHAPTER 7

FAA, RADES, NORAD:

THE ATTACKS AS SEEN FROM THE AIR CONTROLLERS

“He’s NORDO (no radio contact), roger.”
ATHENS SECTOR⁴⁶⁸

As shown in Chapter 6, the sheer chaos of the electronic communications during the attacks on Tuesday morning, September 11, 2001, was all but overwhelming. Several reporting agencies and Air Force command posts in the northeastern United States grappled with this problem that morning. *The New York Times* created a synthesis of these records and published them on September 7, 2011. They are archived and can be experienced interactively.⁴⁶⁹ The entire set of recordings can be seen and heard through the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).⁴⁷⁰

8:13 AM⁴⁷¹

BOSTON CENTER⁴⁷²

American 11, climb maintain level three five zero.

⁴⁶⁸ Athens Sector is one of the three high altitude control areas in the Boston Center. It handles Boston terminal arrival traffic and Long Island, New York metro arrivals. Additionally, it handles New York metro traffic bound for Canada and international flights.

⁴⁶⁹ http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2011/09/08/nyregion/911-tapes.html?rref=collection%2Ftimestopic%2F9%2F11%20Hijackers&action=click&contentCollection=timestopics®ion=stream&module=stream_unit&version=latest&contentPlacement=7&pgtype=collection&r=0

⁴⁷⁰ National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) is official repository of all 9/11 government documents, texts, audio, video. Documents were transferred to NARA by individual agencies and departments. During this process many of the previously public links, obtained by Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests have disappeared from the internet. After the NEADS audio transcripts, as well as FAA, other Department of Defense sources, and interviews by the 9/11 Commission, were archived, the audio/visual files were converted into the torrent format. This can be downloaded from any major browser. This includes all files that extensions ending in doc, jpg, jpeg, wav, pdf, etc. The primary link to this data is found at

<http://www.911datasets.org/index.php/> There are thousands of hours of raw data. Each file group begins with a long sequence number followed by a sometimes cryptic subject file. Within this sub group, the researcher caches of files from very small selections to several thousand entries. Research in this subject takes patience, an enormous amount of time, diligence, and excellent listening skills. The NEADS and FAA files are found in [POIAMQJTH24QE2SLP2XKCB2PRTC7VWPK](#) in the subgroup [FAA RADES NORAD FOIA Data.torrent](#). This will direct the researcher to the download link -

http://911datasets.org/images/FAA_RADES_NORAD_FOIA_Data.torrent This link contains 1,677 individual audio, text, still photography and video files. The entire subject contains 47.61 GB (gigabytes) of data. Each tape is from a different source – interior microphones at each desk position, telephone lines, etc. They must be combined to make a coherent sense of the situation as it unfolded.

⁴⁷¹ At this time stamp, Boston Center FAA air traffic controller (TRACON), Peter Zalewski, attempts to contact American Airlines Flight 11.

⁴⁷² All CAPS refer to the sender of the transmission. Boston Center is located in Nashua, New Hampshire.

BOSTON CENTER

American 11 climb maintain level three five zero.

BOSTON CENTER

American 11, Boston Center.

BOSTON CENTER

[unclear] ...Mike Lima how do you hear?

MIKE LIMA

Mike Lima has you loud and clear.

BOSTON CENTER

American 11, Boston Center.

BOSTON CENTER

American one-one, the American on the frequency, how do you hear me? Athens Sector -

ATHENS SECTOR

This is Athens.

BOSTON CENTER

This is Boston Center, I turned American 20 left and I was going to climb him, he will not respond to me now... at all.

ATHENS SECTOR

Looks like he's turning right.

BOSTON CENTER

Yeah, I turned him 20 right.

ATHENS SECTOR

Oh, Okay

BOSTON CENTER

And he's only going to, I think, 29.⁴⁷³

ATHENS SECTOR

Okay

BOSTON CENTER

Well.

ATHENS SECTOR

Sure, that's fine.

BOSTON CENTER

But I'm not talking to him.

ATHENS SECTOR

He won't answer you. He's NORDO,⁴⁷⁴ roger. Thanks.

BOSTON CENTER

...[unclear] Mike Lima, descend at pilot's discretion and maintain flight level two-four-zero.⁴⁷⁵

MIKE LIMA

...Two-four-zero, will begin now, Mike Lima.

BOSTON CENTER

American 11, Boston Center.

BOSTON CENTER

American 11, if you hear Boston Center, ident...

BOSTON CENTER

(Boston Center communicates with another flight on the same frequency.)

OTHER FLIGHT

Boston Center, 683. Flight level two-one-zero, climb to two-three-zero.⁴⁷⁶

⁴⁷³ Cruising altitude of 29,000 feet.

⁴⁷⁴ No radio contact

⁴⁷⁵ Cruising altitude of 24,000 feet.

⁴⁷⁶ The aircraft is flying level at 21,000 feet and is beginning a climb to 23,000 feet.

BOSTON CENTER

[Unclear] 683, Boston Center, roger. Climb maintain level three-one-zero.⁴⁷⁷

OTHER FLIGHT

Climb maintain three-one-zero.

BOSTON CENTER

American 11 if you hear Boston Center ident please, or acknowledge.

BOSTON CENTER

(Dead air for 43 seconds.)

BOSTON CENTER

American 11, if you hear Boston Center, re-contact Boston Center on one-two-seven-point-eight-two, that's American 11, one-two-seven-eight-two.⁴⁷⁸

8:19 AM

BETTY ONG⁴⁷⁹

Number 3 in the back. Um, the cockpit's not answering. Somebody's stabbed in business class, and um I think there is Mace that we can't breathe. I don't know, I think we're getting hijacked.

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Which flight are you on?

BETTY ONG

Flight 12.⁴⁸⁰

AMERICAN AIRLINES

And what seat are you in? [Silence] Ma'am, are you there?

BETTY ONG

⁴⁷⁷ Climb to 31,000 feet.

⁴⁷⁸ Frequency 127.82.

⁴⁷⁹ Betty Ong, a flight attendant on American Airlines Flight 11 from Boston to Los Angeles. Using a seatback Airfone (air to ground telephone) from her seat in the back of the plane, she contacts American Airlines reservations agents at its Southeastern Reservations Office in Cary, North Carolina, and Nydia Gonzalez, an operations agent.

⁴⁸⁰ Flight 12 had been the segment number for the previous leg of Flight 11's journey that day.

Yes.

AMERICAN AIRLINES

What seat are you in? ... Ma'am, what seat are you in?

BETTY ONG

We just left Boston Center, we're up in the air.

AMERICAN AIRLINES

I know.

BETTY ONG

We're supposed to go to L.A. and the cockpit's not answering their phone ...

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Okay, but what seat are you sitting in? What's the number of your seat?

BETTY ONG

Okay I'm in the jump seat right now. That's 3R.

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Okay, are you the flight attendant? I'm sorry, did you say you're the flight attendant?

BETTY ONG

Hello?

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Hello, what is your name?

BETTY ONG

Hi, you're gonna have to speak up. I can't hear you.

AMERICAN AIRLINES

What is your name?

BETTY ONG

Okay, my name is Betty Ong. I'm Number 3 on Flight 11.

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Okay

BETTY ONG

And the cockpit is not answering their phone and there's somebody stabbed in business class and there's, we can't breathe in business class. Somebody's got Mace or something.

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Can you describe the person, that you said someone is what in business class?

BETTY ONG

I'm, I'm sitting in the back, somebody's coming back from business. If you can hold on for one second, they're coming back. [Garbled voices] Anyone know who stabbed who?

Background Noise

[Garbled voices] I don't know, but Karen and Bobby got stabbed.

BETTY ONG

Our, our Number 1 got stabbed. Our purser is stabbed. Ah, nobody knows who stabbed who and we can't even get up to business class right now because nobody can breathe.⁴⁸¹ Our Number 1 is, is stabbed right now. And our Number 5. Our first-class passenger that, ah, first, ah, class galley flight attendant and our purser has been stabbed and we can't get to the cockpit, the door won't open. Hello?

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Yeah, I'm taking it down, all the information. We're also, you know, of course, recording this. Umm, at this point?

NYDIA GONZALEZ⁴⁸²

This is operations. What flight number are we talking about?

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Flight 12.

NYDIA GONZALEZ

Flight 12, Okay

⁴⁸¹ It is believed the hijackers sprayed mace to subdue the crew members and passengers in the forward cabin.

⁴⁸² Nydia Gonzalez is at the American Airlines Raleigh Reservation Center in North Carolina.

BETTY ONG

No, we're on Flight 11 right now. This is Flight 11.

AMERICAN AIRLINES

This is Flight 11. I'm sorry, Nadine.

BETTY ONG

Boston to Los Angeles.

American Airlines?

Yes.

BETTY ONG

Our Number 1 has been stabbed, and our 5 has been stabbed. Can anybody get up to the cockpit? Can anybody get up to the cockpit? We can't even get into the cockpit. We don't know who's up there.

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Well if they were shrewd, they would keep the door closed, and...

BETTY ONG

I'm sorry?

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Would they not maintain a sterile cockpit?⁴⁸³

BETTY ONG

I think the guys are up there. They might have gone there — jammed their way up there, or something. Nobody can call the cockpit. We can't even get inside.

(Silence)

BETTY ONG

Is anybody still there?

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Yes, we're still here.

⁴⁸³ Secluded and secure from intruders. The pilot and co-pilot would be safe.

BETTY ONG

Okay I'm staying on the line as well.

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Okay

NYDIA GONZALEZ

Hi, who is calling reservations? Is this one of the flight attendants, or who? Who are you, hon?

AMERICAN AIRLINES

She gave her name as Betty Ong.

BETTY ONG

Yeah, I'm Number 3. I'm Number 3 on this flight, and we're the first —

NYDIA GONZALEZ

You're Number 3 on this flight?

BETTY ONG

Yes and I have...

NYDIA GONZALEZ

And this is Flight 11? From where to where?

BETTY ONG

Flight 11.

NYDIA GONZALEZ

Have you guys called anyone else?

BETTY ONG

No. Somebody's calling medical and we can't get a doc...

8:21 AM

AMERICAN AIRLINES

American Airlines Emergency line, please state your emergency.

NYDIA GONZALEZ

Hey, this is Nydia at American Airlines calling, I am monitoring a call in which Flight 11, the flight attendant is advising our reps that the pilot, everyone's been stabbed.

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Flight 11?

NYDIA GONZALEZ

Yeah.

NYDIA GONZALEZ

They can't get into the cockpit is what I'm hearing.

AMERICAN AIRLINES

OKAY Who is this I'm talking to?

NYDIA GONZALEZ

Excuse me, this is Nydia at American Airlines at the Raleigh Reservation Center, I'm the operations specialist on duty.

AMERICAN AIRLINES

I'm sorry what was your name again?

NYDIA GONZALEZ

Nydia.

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Nydia, and what's your last name?

NYDIA GONZALEZ

Gonzalez, G-O-N-Z-A-L-E-Z.

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Raleigh Reservations, Okay

NYDIA GONZALEZ

I've got the flight attendant on the line with one of our agents.

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Okay, and she's calling how?

NYDIA GONZALEZ

Through reservations, I can go out on the line and ask the flight attendant questions.

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Okay, uh, uh, I'm assuming they've declared an emergency, let me get ATC⁴⁸⁴ on here, stand by.

NYDIA GONZALEZ

Gotten any contact with anybody? [then to Betty Ong] I'm on still with security, Okay, Betty? You are doing a great job just stay calm, Okay? We are, absolutely ...

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Okay, we're contacting the flight crew now, we're all, we're also contacting ATC.

NYDIA GONZALEZ

Okay

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Anything else from this flight attendant?

NYDIA GONZALEZ

Uh, so far what I've gotten, the number five flight attendant's been stabbed, but she seems to be breathing, the number one seems to be stabbed pretty badly, she's lying down on the floor, they don't know if she is conscious or not. The other flight attendants are in the back, uh, and that's as far as I know. It seems like the passengers in coach might not be aware of what's going on right now.

AMERICAN AIRLINES

These two passengers were from first class?

NYDIA GONZALEZ

⁴⁸⁴ Air Traffic Controller (TRACON)

Okay, I'd l ... Hey, Betty? Do you know any information as far as the (garbled) of the men there in the cockpit with the pilots? Were they from first class? They were sitting in 2 A and B. They are in the cockpit with the pilots.

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Who's helping them? Is there a doctor on board?

NYDIA GONZALEZ

Is there a doctor on board, Betty, that's assisting you guys? You don't have any doctors on board. Okay, so you've gotten all the first-class passengers out of first class?

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Have they taken everyone out of first class?

NYDIA GONZALEZ

Yeah, she's just saying that they have. They're in coach. What's going on, honey? Okay, the aircraft is erratic again. Flying very erratically. She did say that all the first-class passengers have been moved back to coach, so the first-class cabin is empty. What's going on - on your end, Craig?

AMERICAN AIRLINES

We contacted Air Traffic Control, they are going to handle this as a confirmed hijacking, so they're moving all the traffic out of this aircraft's way.

NYDIA GONZALEZ

Okay

AMERICAN AIRLINES

He turned his transponder off,⁴⁸⁵ so we don't have a definitive altitude for him. We're just going by — they seem to think that they have him on a primary radar. They seem to think that he is descending.

NYDIA GONZALEZ

Okay

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Okay, Nydia?

NYDIA GONZALEZ

⁴⁸⁵ Without the transponder engaged, the aircraft would disappear from the radar screens.

Yes dear, I'm here.

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Okay, I have a dispatcher currently taking the current fuel on board.

NYDIA GONZALEZ

Uh, huh.

AMERICAN AIRLINES

And we're going to run some profiles.

NYDIA GONZALEZ

Okay AMERICAN AIRLINES

To see exactly what his endurance is.

NYDIA GONZALEZ

Okay

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Did she —

NYDIA GONZALEZ

She doesn't have any idea who the other passenger might be in first. Apparently they might have spread something so it's, it's um — they're having a hard time breathing or getting in that area.

NYDIA GONZALEZ

What's going on, Betty? Betty, talk to me. Betty, are you there? Betty? [Inaudible] Do you think we lost her? Okay, so we'll like - we'll stay open. We - I think we might have lost her.

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Okay

8:24 AM⁴⁸⁶

BOSTON CENTER

Is that American 11 trying to call?

MOHAMED ATTA

[Garbled] We have some planes. Just stay quiet and we'll be Okay. We are returning to the airport.

BOSTON CENTER

And, uh, who's trying to call me, here?

BOSTON CENTER

American 11 are you trying to call?

MOHAMED ATTA

Nobody move, everything will be Okay If you try to make any moves, you will injure yourself and the airplane. Just stay quiet.

8:37 AM⁴⁸⁷

SERGEANT JEREMY POWELL

Huntress weapons, Sergeant Powell.⁴⁸⁸

JOSEPH COOPER

Hi, Boston Center, TMU⁴⁸⁹, we have ah a problem here, we have a hijacked aircraft headed towards New — New York and we need you guys to, we need someone to scramble some F-16s or something up there to help us out.

SERGEANT JEREMY POWELL

Is, Is this real world or exercise?

JOSEPH COOPER

⁴⁸⁶ A Boston Center FAA controller hears an American 11 hijacker saying "We have some planes," and "We are returning to the airport." This is Mohamed Atta, the pilot and lead hijacker.

⁴⁸⁷ Joseph Cooper, an Air Traffic Controller contacts NEADS and alerts them of the suspected hijacking of American Flight 11. NEADS believes this part of the exercise they have been conducting.

⁴⁸⁸ Huntress is the operational call sign for NEADS.

⁴⁸⁹ Traffic Management Unit.

No, this is not an exercise, not a test.

SERGEANT JEREMY POWELL

Okay, hey, ah hold on one second, Oh, Okay?

JOSEPH COOPER

Yes.

SERGEANT JEREMY POWELL

Hey, hey, hey, hey, hey, hey, seriously, [garbled] big time [garbled].

8:38 AM⁴⁹⁰

ID TECH 1

What?

ID TECH 2

What was that?

Background Noise

Is that real world?

SERGEANT MAUREEN DOOLEY

Real world hijacking.

SERGEANT SHELLEY WATSON

Cool. Where is it?

SERGEANT SHELLEY WATSON

Boston Center?

SERGEANT SHELLEY WATSON

Open line

⁴⁹⁰ NEADS identification technicians (ID Tech) Senior Airman Stacia Rountree, Sergeant Shelley Watson, and Sergeant Maureen Dooley try to discover from the FAA in Boston Center where American 11 is headed, but no one knows for sure. (See Chapter 6) Responding to the call is Colin Scoggins, the military operations specialist in Boston Center.

COLIN SCOGGINS

Boston Center, military desk.

SERGEANT WATSON

Yeah, Huntress calling, ah, in reference to the hijacked aircraft.

COLIN SCOGGINS

Yes.

SERGEANT SHELLEY WATSON

We're checking to get some information from you, if we could.

COLIN SCOGGINS

OKAY, what would, what do you need?

SERGEANT SHELLEY WATSON

We need call sign, type aircraft.

COLIN SCOGGINS

It's, ah, American 11.

SERGEANT SHELLEY WATSON

American 11?

COLIN SCOGGINS

Type aircraft is a, uh, 767.

SERGEANT SHELLEY WATSON

And, number of souls on board, do you know that?

COLIN SCOGGINS

Uh, I don't, know, hold on. Hey Dan, do we got souls on board, and all that information?

COLIN SCOGGINS

No. We don't have any of that information.

SERGEANT SHELLEY WATSON

You don't have any of that? Okay

COLIN SCOGGINS

We know the position, about 40 miles north of Kennedy.

SERGEANT SHELLEY WATSON

Forty miles north of Kennedy?

COLIN SCOGGINS

Right.

SERGEANT SHELLEY WATSON

Do you have a mode three (tracking information from the plane's transponder, which the hijackers had turned off)?

COLIN SCOGGINS

No we don't, he's a primary target, only (they could only track it with primary radar, which is more difficult).

SERGEANT SHELLEY WATSON

Primary target only?

COLIN SCOGGINS

Yeah.

SERGEANT SHELLEY WATSON

OKAY. And you don't know where he's coming from or destination?

COLIN SCOGGINS

No idea. He took off out of Boston Center originally heading for ah, Los Angeles.

SERGEANT SHELLEY WATSON

Boston Center to Los Angeles?

COLIN SCOGGINS

That was his original destination, yeah.

SERGEANT SHELLEY WATSON

And where are they going now, do you know?

COLIN SCOGGINS

No idea. He's heading towards Kennedy, looks like his speed is decreasing, I'm not exactly sure where, nobody really knows.

SERGEANT WATSON

Are you the controlling agency? Or is New York?

COLIN SCOGGINS

Boston Center.

SERGEANT SHELLEY WATSON

Boston Center.

COLIN SCOGGINS

Right now we are. He's headed right for New York Center.

SERGEANT SHELLEY WATSON

And is there any military assistance requested?

COLIN SCOGGINS

Ah, yes we're actually trying to get ah F-15s to ah...

SERGEANT SHELLEY WATSON

(Yes you do want) F-15s out.

COLIN SCOGGINS

Yeah, F15s out of Otis.

SERGEANT SHELLEY WATSON

But you don't have, uh, you don't have any modes or codes on him?

COLIN SCOGGINS

Uh, no, right now, right now, it's just ah, no we don't have any mode C.

SERGEANT SHELLEY WATSON

Is he inbound to J.F.K.?

COLIN SCOGGINS

We, we don't know. Heh ...

SERGEANT SHELLEY WATSON

You don't know where he is at all?

COLIN SCOGGINS

He's been hijacked, the pilot's having a hard time talking to the, I mean, we don't know, we don't know where he's going, he's heading towards Kennedy, he's ah, like I said he's like 35 miles north of Kennedy now at 367 knots.

SERGEANT SHELLEY WATSON

Okay

COLIN SCOGGINS

No idea where he's going (or what he's, what his potential..)

SERGEANT SHELLEY WATSON

If you could please give us a call, and let us know, ah you know any information, that would be great.

COLIN SCOGGINS

Okay, right now I guess we're trying to work on, I guess there's been some threats in the cockpit, ah the pilot...

SERGEANT SHELLEY WATSON

Based on what? I'm sorry.

COLIN SCOGGINS

Ah. We'll call you right back as soon as we know more info.

SERGEANT SHELLEY WATSON

Thank you.

COLIN SCOGGINS

Sure.

SERGEANT SHELLEY WATSON

Okay

8:40 AM⁴⁹¹

APPROACH⁴⁹²

Cape Approach is on.

TOWER⁴⁹³

Tower is on.

SERGEANT POWELL

Giant Killer.

SERGEANT POWELL

This is Huntress placing Panta four-five, four-six on battle stations, I repeat battle stations, time one-two-four-one (Greenwich Mean Time). Authenticate HOTEL ROMEO, all parties acknowledge with initials. Command Post.

SERGEANT POWELL

Giant Killer, Tower.

TOWER

[Garbled]

SERGEANT POWELL

Approach.

APPROACH

Tango Juliet and say again the call sign.

SERGEANT POWELL

Panta, papa alfa november tango alfa, four-five, four-six.⁴⁹⁴

APPROACH

Tango Juliet.

⁴⁹¹ Sergeant Jeremy W. Powell, a NORAD controller at NEADS, orders two alert fighter pilots to battle stations at Otis Air Force Base on Cape Cod, Massachusetts. He then ordered them to take off although they did not yet have formal approval from the defense secretary's office, as protocol required.

⁴⁹² Cape Cod air traffic approach controller.

⁴⁹³ Otis Air Force Base control tower.

⁴⁹⁴ Panta, PANTA 45 and 46. The call signs for the two alert fighter interceptor aircraft.

SERGEANT POWELL

Juliet Papa. All parties are cleared to drop.

8:42 AM⁴⁹⁵

MAJOR JAMES FOX

I've never seen so much real world stuff happen during an exercise.

Background Noise

COLONEL DAWNE DESKINS

[Garbled].

MAJOR JAMES FOX

Steve, lat long,⁴⁹⁶ 41.⁴⁹⁷

UNKNOWN

Right.

UNKNOWN

What was that?

UNKNOWN

(White noise)

MAJOR JAMES FOX

Okay. Find this guy.

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

Yeah, 41.

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

Yeah, we're putting it in.

⁴⁹⁵ NEADS does not know where to send the fighter jets because the hijackers had turned off the plane's transponder, making them all but invisible on radar thus making it harder to track them. Mission Crew Commander (MCC) Major Kevin Nasypany speaks to Major James Fox, who is seeking direction.

⁴⁹⁶ Latitude and longitude coordinates.

⁴⁹⁷ Map grid number.

Background Noise

Fourteen-forty-three.

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

Fourteen-forty-three, look for it, right there, Okay, mode three, fourteen-forty-three, last known. No, this is real world. Okay. We're in the high chair.

Background Noise

I've got a Z point, sir.⁴⁹⁸

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

Last known position, that we got out this guy, was right there at the Z point, he's headed one-nine-zero⁴⁹⁹ at 29,000 feet, heading down, so we're looking for somebody, you know what start hitting up tracks all around that area, that Z point, Okay, just north of ah...

MCC/T⁵⁰⁰

SDMCC, scramble Otis.

MAJOR JAMES FOX

Copy, say mission.

MAJOR JAMES FOX

MCC, I don't know where I'm scrambling these guys to. I need a direction, ah destination.

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

OKAY, I'm going to give you the Z point, it's just north of ah New York City.

MAJOR JAMES FOX

I got this lat long forty-one-fifteen-seventy-four-thirty-six, or seventy-three-forty-six:

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

Head 'em in that direction.

MAJOR JAMES FOX

Copy that.

⁴⁹⁸ Z values are elevations in feet.

⁴⁹⁹ 190 degrees from magnetic north.

⁵⁰⁰ Mission Crew Commander

8:46 AM⁵⁰¹

8:47 AM⁵⁰²



Figure 35. NBC NEWS Shortly after 8:46 AM
(www.NBCNEWS.com)

NEW YORK [CENTER]

Everybody copy?

HERNDON CENTER

Say that again, please.

BOSTON CENTER

We, we, looks like we lost the primary target about 20 west of Kennedy, and we had a report of an ELT⁵⁰³ in the area. We're gonna ah, guess we'll ah, get some Coast Guard activity up there.

UNKNOWN

⁵⁰¹ American Airlines Flight 11 crashes into the North Tower of the World Trade Center.

⁵⁰² Initial reports of a fire at the World Trade Center, but not the cause.

⁵⁰³ Emergency Locator Transmitter.

Well, we lost the track too.

UNKNOWN

Hey Boston Center, this is New York, ah what type of aircraft was the American?

BOSTON CENTER

767.

ACI WATCH

This is the ACI watch.⁵⁰⁴ Say again if you lost, ah, track of the aircraft, over.

BOSTON CENTER

Boston Center has lost track, on our frequency we had some threats that it was a hijack [garbled] the tapes.

NEW YORK CENTER

New York confirms that we've lost the track as well, and we were ah got a report of, an, ELT in the area that the track was in.

NEW YORK CENTER

Kennedy Tower⁵⁰⁵ reports, are you serious? Kennedy Tower reports that there was a fire at the World Trade Center. And that's ah that's the area where we lost the airplane.

9:01 AM⁵⁰⁶

MULLIGAN

Check with your NOM (operations manager), do you know if anyone down there has done any coordination to scramble fighter-type airplanes?

BELL

[indistinct].

MULLIGAN

⁵⁰⁴ Airports Council International.

⁵⁰⁵ John F. Kennedy International Airport control tower.

⁵⁰⁶ A second plane, United 175, is also missing, a manager from FAA's New York Center tells the FAA Command Center, in Herndon, Virginia, to alert the military immediately. The FAA controllers do not know that fighter aircraft have been scrambled.

No, we have several situations going, going on here, it is escalating big, big time, and we need to get the military involved with us.

BELL

Why, what's going on?

MULLIGAN

Just get me somebody who has the authority to get military in the air, now.

BELL

Alright, I'll go tell 'em.

9:02 AM⁵⁰⁷

UNKNOWN

Hey, can you look out your window right now?

TRACON

Yeah.

UNKNOWN

Can you, can you see a guy at about 4,000 feet, about five east of the airport right now, look's like he's ...

TRACON

Yeah, I see him.

UNKNOWN

Do you see that guy, look, is he descending into the building also?

TRACON

He's descending really quick too, Yeah.

UNKNOWN

Well that's ...

⁵⁰⁷ The air traffic controllers at Kennedy visually observe a plane in a rapid descent.

TRACON

Forty five hundred right now, he just dropped 800 feet in like, like one, one sweep.

UNKNOWN

That's another situation.

UNKNOWN

What kind of airplane is that, can you guys tell?

TRACON

I don't know, I'll read it out in a minute.

Background Noise

Another one just hit the building.

Background Noise

Wow.

Background Noise

[Garbled] Wow. Another one just hit it hard. Another one just hit the World Trade.

TRACON

The whole building just, ah, came apart.

Background Noise

Oh my God.

UNKNOWN

Holy smoke. All right, I guess you guys are going to be busy.

TRACON

OKAY

9:03 AM⁵⁰⁸

9:06 AM

⁵⁰⁸ United Airlines Flight 175 crashes into World Trade Center's South Tower.

FAA confirms that the hijacker on American 11 said “planes,” not “plane.”

FAA

[Garbled] It’s confirmed on that tape that they said “we have planes.”

9:07 AM

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY⁵⁰⁹

Okay, Foxy (Maj. James Fox), this is what, this is what I foresee that we probably need to do. We need to talk to FAA We need to tell ‘em if this stuff is going to keep on going we need to take those fighters, put ‘em over Manhattan. Okay?



Figure 36. United Flight 175 crashes into the South Tower of the World Trade Center at 9:03 AM.
(Image Source: www.aol.com)

⁵⁰⁹ The fighter pilots, who had been sent into military airspace off the coast of Long Island, are redirected to Manhattan. Major Kevin Nasypany, is the Mission Crew Commander (MCC).

UNKNOWN

Sir.

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

That's the best thing, that's the best play right now. So, coordinate with FAA, tell 'em if there's more out there, which we don't know, let's get 'em over Manhattan, at least we got some kind of play.

9:11 AM

AMERICAN AIRLLINES⁵¹⁰

American Dispatch, Jim McDonald.

INDIANAPOLIS CENTER

Indianapolis Center. Did you get a hold of American 77 by chance?

AMERICAN AIRLINES

No, sir, but we have an unconfirmed report that a second airplane hit the World Trade Center, and it's [Garbled].

INDIANAPOLIS CENTER

Say again.

AMERICAN

You know we lost American 11, to a hijacking, so, American was up, ah, a Boston to Los Angeles flight.

INDIANAPOLIS CENTER

It was, all right, I can't really, I can't hear what you're saying there. Did you say American 11?

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Yes. We were hijacked.

AMERICAN AIRLINES

It was a Boston to L.A. flight. And 77 is a Dulles-L.A. flight. And ah we have an unconfirmed report a second airplane just flew into the World Trade Center.

⁵¹⁰ The Indianapolis Center's Operations Manager makes contact with Jim McDonald, an American Airlines dispatcher, who confirms that American Airlines Flight 11 was hijacked.

INDIANAPOLIS CENTER

[Garbled.]

INDIANAPOLIS CENTER

Thank you very much. Good bye.

9:21 AM

Background Noise

Okay, third aircraft hijacked, heading towards Washington. No [possible aside].

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY⁵¹¹

Okay, ah, American Airlines is still airborne, 11, the first guy, he's heading toward Washington. Okay, I think we need to scramble Langley right now and I'm, I'm gonna take the fighters from Otis and try to chase this guy down if I can find him.

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

Yeah.

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

You sure?

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

Okay, he's heading towards Langley, or I should say Washington. American 11, the original guy, he's still airborne. We're still [indistinct] getting a —

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

We're getting a position. Got a position?

Background Noise

[Garbled] Got a hijack real world, gotta go.

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

Okay

⁵¹¹ Incorrectly, but amid reports that American 11 is still airborne and headed to Washington, fighter jets from Langley Air Force Base in Virginia are told to head north, in the direction of Baltimore.

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

Foxy, scramble Langley. Head 'em towards the Washington area.

MAJOR JAMES FOX

Roger that.

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

Could be ... American ... We're trying to get a code on this guy right now, we do have a tail number.
It's a —

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

Uh ooh, we are, it's ah, uuuuh, What was the tail number?

Background Noise

Panta four-five, four-six.

SERGEANT MAUREEN DOOLEY

November three-three-four alpha alpha.⁵¹²

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

November three-three-four alpha alpha. If we can find him. We, we're getting, we're trying to get, we're trying to get the modes trying to get the position on this guy. So, [Garbled] then we'll run on him.

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

Yep, Okay, bye.

Background Noise

Okay

9:28 AM

CLEVELAND CENTER

United 93, that traffic for you is one o'clock, 12 miles eastbound, three-seven-zero.

UA93

⁵¹² N334 AA

Negative contact, we're looking, United 93.

UA93

Hey!⁵¹³

CLEVELAND CENTER

Somebody call Cleveland Center?

AMERICAN 1060

Roger American, ah, ten-sixty, with you we're at three-seven-zero, we're slowing due to the delays if possible going eastbound.

CLEVELAND CENTER

That's American ten-sixty?

UA93

(Sounds of screams)

CLEVELAND CENTER

You got United 93?

CLEVELAND CENTER 2

United 93, south of Chardon? Descended.

CLEVELAND CENTER

What's that?

CLEVELAND CENTER 2

I just sayin' it looks like he descended there.

CLEVELAND CENTER

United 93 verify three-five-zero.

CLEVELAND CENTER 2

United 93, Cleveland Center.

⁵¹³ The hijack begins on United Airlines Flight 93. An open air transmission picks up sounds of a struggle and screaming.

CLEVELAND CENTER

Go ahead.

CLEVELAND CENTER 3

Do you have United 93 south of Chardon?

CLEVELAND CENTER 4

We hear some funny noises, we're trying to get him. Do you have him?

CLEVELAND CENTER 3

No.

CLEVELAND CENTER 4

Thank You. United 93, Cleveland Center.

CLEVELAND CENTER

United 1523, did you hear your company, did you hear some interference on the frequency, couple a minutes ago, screaming.

UNITED 1523

Yes I did, 797, and ah we couldn't tell what it was either.

CLEVELAND CENTER

Okay. United 93, Cleveland Center, if you hear the center, ident.

AMERICAN 1060

American 1060, ditto on the other transmissions.

CLEVELAND CENTER

American 1060, you heard that also.

AMERICAN 1060

Yes sir, twice.

CLEVELAND CENTER

Roger, we heard that also, thanks, just wanted to confirm it wasn't some interference.

9:28 AM

ID TECH

Hi, this is Huntress calling, Uh, I was told to give you a buzz for our, our Mission Crew Commander, any information, I guess three aircraft out of Boston are missing and apparently two of them have hit the World Trade Center and one is enroute to Washington. Did you get that information?

CLEVELAND CENTER

Yeah.

ID TECH

American one-one is not the aircraft that crashed, it is still airborne, did you get that information?⁵¹⁴

ID TECH

That's what we just found out

ID TECH

We don't know where it is though, it's headed towards Washington, was the last known information.

SERGEANT MAUREEN DOOLEY

Washington Center better get on the line. —

ID TECH

Right. And I don't know but somebody's gotta get the president going, this is not good.

SERGEANT MAUREEN DOOLEY

[Background Noise]

They'd better start looking for this guy.

ID TECH

Ah, yeah, we just hung up, I'm not going to say too much right now, but ah I wanted to give you a heads-up. Ah, do you have any information though where American one-one is, or anything?

SERGEANT MAUREEN DOOLEY

See this guy, they, Boston Center is the only one giving us any kinds of decent, freaking input.

ID TECH

⁵¹⁴ Erroneous information.

Just want to, just want to say one more thing, too, Ah, Washington Center, I don't know if they don't think this is serious, or not, but they are not, unless they hear from like the centers. If you could give them a heads-up and let them know that this is —

ID TECH

Washington Center, they're not really, not at all, Okay sir?

SERGEANT MAUREEN DOOLEY

We've got to get a point out on that American Airlines.

Background Noise

We do, we've got it on Langley scrambled.

SERGEANT MAUREEN DOOLEY

They got him?

Background Noise

I don't know if he's on him yet, but Langley is scrambled to intercept [indistinct] and headed for Washington [Garbled] the fighters over [Garbled].

ID TECH

[Garbled] I just talked to them.

SERGEANT MAUREEN DOOLEY

And I'd have the president airborne, where ever!

ID TECH

Boston Center is calling Washington Center right now.

SERGEANT MAUREEN DOOLEY

What's up?

ID TECH

Uh, Boston Center has no clue where they are and he's goin' let Washington Center know that this is very serious.

SERGEANT MAUREEN DOOLEY

Good.

ID TECH

Because nobody's acting serious there.

SERGEANT MAUREEN DOOLEY

Yeah, fuckin'.

ID TECH

So.

SERGEANT MAUREEN DOOLEY

Hey.

Background Noise

American airlines headed toward D.C. [Garbled].

ID TECH

I do, I lat long.

SERGEANT MAUREEN DOOLEY

Hey, anybody good at math? Take a lat, last lat long and they were doing two hundred and ninety knots.

ID TECH

Did you get the third call sign?

SERGEANT MAUREEN DOOLEY

Headed towards Washington.

SERGEANT MAUREEN DOOLEY

The Z point that was the American Airlines one.

SERGEANT MAUREEN DOOLEY

No, our first, our first Z point, yeah, that was the American Airlines, that was our lat long on him.

9:32 AM

ZIAD JARRAH⁵¹⁵

Please sit down and keep remaining sitting, we have a bomb on board, so —

CLEVELAND CENTER

Ah. Calling Cleveland Center, you are unreadable, say again slowly

9:32 AM

ID TECH

Open line.

ID TECH

Huntress ID unsecure line.

WASHINGTON CENTER

Huntress ID, this is Washington Center, the Operations Manager, ah.

ID TECH

Go ahead sir.

WASHINGTON CENTER

Okay, I guess you'd called here a couple of times, you never talked to me, but if there's anything you need, or anything I can help you with, let me know what it is right now please.

ID TECH

Okay, ah, do you want me to let you know what we have going on, sir?

WASHINGTON CENTER

I would, yes, well I have a pretty good idea, but yes.

ID ECH

Okay, there are three aircraft missing out of Boston Center, I just spoke with Boston Center, and they said they're not sure of the third aircraft call sign but they do have two, one of them is United one-seven-five.

⁵¹⁵ Hijacker

WASHINGTON CENTER

Uh huh.

ID TECH

The other one is American one-one. They thought that the American one-one was the aircraft that crashed into the World Trade Center with the United one-seven-five, however, American one-one is not the aircraft that crashed, he said the pilot on American one-one was talking to him, having a rough time telling him what's going on, there was threats in the cockpit being made, this was the initial ah hijack information that we got, American one-one, it's a 767, from Boston to Los Angeles. Proposed route he was headed towards J.F.K. at the time that they lost contact, but that was not the aircraft headed, ah, into the World Trade Center, that hit it.

WASHINGTON CENTER

Okay

ID TECH

Is what Boston Center's saying, he, the last known, and I'm not sure where we heard it, through the grapevine, people calling, is that American one-one was headed toward Washington, and that's the only thing —

WASHINGTON CENTER

Was headed toward where?

ID TECH

Washington Center.

WASHINGTON CENTER

Okay

ID TECH

So, your AOR,⁵¹⁶ and I just wanted to give you a heads-up.

WASHINGTON CENTER

Okay, now,

ID TECH

⁵¹⁶ Area of Responsibility.

The last known lat long that we had, primary target only, was four-zero-three-eight north, zero-seven-four-zero-three west on American one-one.

ID TECH

The last —

WASHINGTON CENTER

Okay, go ahead.

WASHINGTON CENTER

Okay

ID TECH

But again, remember nothing has been confirmed as far as which aircraft have hit the World Trade Center, but the other one we have is information headed towards Washington.

WASHINGTON CENTER

Okay, now let me tell you this, I, we've been looking, we've also lost American 77.

ID TECH

American 77.

WASHINGTON CENTER

Excuse me?

ID TECH

Where was he proposed to head, sir?

SERGEANT MAUREEN DOOLEY

American 77.

SERGEANT MAUREEN DOOLEY

Okay, American 77's lost.

ID TECH

Where was he proposed to head, sir?

WASHINGTON CENTER

Okay, he was going to L.A. also.

SERGEANT MAUREEN DOOLEY

He was also going to L.A.

ID TECH

He was going to L.A.

WASHINGTON CENTER

Now, uh —

ID TECH

From where, sir?

WASHINGTON CENTER

Ah, I think he was from Boston Center, also. Now —

SERGEANT MAUREEN DOOLEY

Boston to L.A.

WASHINGTON CENTER

Now let me tell you this story here. Ah, Indy, Indianapolis Center was working this guy.

ID TECH

What guy?

WASHINGTON CENTER

American 77.

ID TECH

Okay

WASHINGTON CENTER

At flight level three-five-zero, however —

SERGEANT MAUREEN DOOLEY

Indianapolis Center! [heard in *Background Noise*].

WASHINGTON CENTER

They lost radar with him, they lost contact with him, they lost everything and they don't have any idea where he is or what happened. So what we've done at the round surrounding Centers here is to tell everyone to look out for limited codes, primary targets or whatever the case may be.

ID TECH

Okay.

WASHINGTON CENTER

And that was the last time, that was about fifteen minutes ago since I talked to the Indianapolis Center, ah, Operations Manager.

ID TECH

Do you have a type aircraft sir?

WASHINGTON CENTER

That was a 767 I believe.

SERGEANT MAUREEN DOOLEY

767.

ID Tech

Okay, and, ah, right, I'll call Indianapolis [Garbled].

WASHINGTON CENTER

Somebody else is talking, I'm sorry, I can't hear you in Background Noise.

ID TECH

Um, all I need is the lat long, last known position of the 767.

WASHINGTON CENTER

Well I don't know, that was Bos..., that was Indy Center. But they said somewhere, it was, last time I talked to 'em they said that it was east of York. And I don't even know what state that is.

ID TECH

Ok, sir, well I'm going to go ahead and just give them a call.

WASHINGTON CENTER

Okay,

ID TECH

Thank you, sir.

WASHINGTON CENTER

Thanks.

9:37 AM⁵¹⁷



Figure 37. Time Stamped Pentagon traffic camera still at the moment of impact of American Airlines Flight 77.

9:38 AM

GOFER 06⁵¹⁸

And, uh, Washington Center, this is Gofer zero-six.

⁵¹⁷ American Airlines Flight 77 crashes into the Pentagon.

⁵¹⁸ A military transport plane, call sign GOFER 06, tells controllers at Reagan National Airport (DCA) that it has seen American 77 crash into the Pentagon.

DCA

Gofer zero-six, go ahead.

GOFER 06

Yes sir, that aircraft is down, he's in our 12 o'clock position, ah, look's like it's just to the, uh, northwest of the airfield at this time, sir.

DCA

Gofer eight-six, thank you. Descend and maintain two thousand.

GOFER 06

Okay, We are down to two thousand. And, uh, this is Gofer zero six, it looks like that aircraft crashed into the Pentagon, sir.

DCA

Gofer eight-six, Gofer zero-six, thank you.

9:39 AM

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

[Garbled] If need be. I don't care how many windows you break.

UNKNOWN

Langley had them [Garbled] in three-eighty-six.

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

Why'd they go up there?

UNKNOWN

Because Giant Killer sent them out there.

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

God Damn it!

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

OK, Pat? Just push 'em back.

10:00 AM

HERNDON CENTER⁵¹⁹

United 93.

FAA

Yes.

HERNDON CENTER

Was waving his wings as he went past the V, the VFR aircraft, they don't quite know what that means. Rockin' his ring, wings.⁵²⁰

10:03 AM⁵²¹

10:07 AM⁵²²

HERNDON CENTER

OKAY, there's now on that United 93.

FAA

Yes.

HERNDON CENTER

There is a report of black smoke in the last position I gave you, fifteen miles south of Johnstown.

FAA

Uh, from the airplane or from the ground?

HERNDON CENTER

Uh, they're speculating it's from the aircraft, ah who, it hit the ground, that's what they're, that's what they're speculating, that's speculation only.

FAA

⁵¹⁹ Herndon Center is the Air Traffic Control Command Center is located in Herndon, Virginia.

⁵²⁰ Another pilot in the air sees United 93 rocking its wings; it is believed the hijackers were trying to keep the onrushing passengers off balance. VFR means Visual Flight Rules. The pilot visually observed this action.

⁵²¹ United Airlines Flight 93 crashes at Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

⁵²² Black Smoke is seen rising from Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

Okay. We're getting a preliminary report that United 93 hit the ground about 15 miles south of Johnstown, or thereabouts.

HERNDON CENTER

How about American 77, that report by the Indianapolis [sic] state police, do we have any update on that?

FAA

[Background Noise] We have some black smoke reported near Shirley? [Garbled].

HERNDON CENTER

I didn't get that from you, did I?

HERNDON CENTER

[Background Noise] You didn't get that from me? What?

10:09 AM

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

1527, Mode 3, do we have a track number 2? 1527, Mode 3 we got a track number?

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

Okay, we got a Mode 3 on this, ah, United 93.

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

How close are you?⁵²³

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

3951 North 07846 West

SERGEANT MAUREEN DOOLEY

This is the guy with the bomb on board.

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

Got it.

⁵²³ To the unknown aircraft over the White House.

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

Toledo was, look for him, hey I need a track number.

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

OKAY, hey, Brian⁵²⁴ Okay, two Syracuse birds will be airborne in less than 20 minutes?

Background Noise

Near Pittsburgh, Mode 3, 1527.

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

Any weapons?

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

We don't know, we'll press with that.

Background Noise

We have any committed on the one, aircraft with a bomb on it?

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

We're getting to it, we don't know where it is, we're getting track on it.

Background Noise

Pass that to weapons.

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

[on phone to Battle Cab] Yeah, Okay, Got it. [Hangs up phone.]

Background Noise

United nine three, Mode 3 1527.

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

Negative, negative clearance to shoot.⁵²⁵

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

Jaime? [to Major James Fox]

⁵²⁴ Captain Brian Nagle

⁵²⁵ The unknown aircraft over the White House.

Background Noise

1527 Brian.

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

God damnit! Foxy?

MAJOR JAMES FOX

I'm not really worried about the code words.

MAJOR KEVIN NASYPANY

Fuck the code words, that's perishable information. Negative clearance to fire, ID, type, tail. (they are only to identify the type and tail number of the plane).

10:14 AM

NEADS

I also want to give you a heads up, Washington Center.

WASHINGTON CENTER

Go ahead.

NEADS

United nine three, have you got information on that yet?

WASHINGTON CENTER

Yeah, he's down.⁵²⁶

NEADS

He's down?

WASHINGTON CENTER

Yes.

NEADS

When did he land? Because we had confirmation —

WASHINGTON CENTER

⁵²⁶ 11 minutes after the crash.

He did not land.

NEADS

Oh, he's down, down?

WASHINGTON CENTER

Somewhere northeast of Camp David.

NEADS

[*Background Noise*] Northeast of Camp David.

WASHINGTON CENTER

That's the last report, they don't know exactly where.

10:32 AM

VOICE ONE

You need to read this, Region Commander has declared that we can shoot down tracks if they are not responding to our, uh, directions.⁵²⁷

MCC POSITION

Okay, I'll pass that to weapons.

VOICE ONE

Okay, MCC POSITION

The Region Com, the Region Commander has declared that we can shoot down aircraft that do not respond to our direction. Copy that?

WEAPONS

Copy that sir.

MCC POSITION

So if you're trying to divert somebody and he won't divert

MAJOR JAMES FOX

⁵²⁷ MCC gives the fighter pilots permission to shoot down civilian planes, an order relayed from Vice President Dick Cheney.

D.O. is saying no.⁵²⁸

MCC POSITION

No? It came over the chat. Foxy, you got a conflict on that? You got a conflict on that direction?

MAJOR JAMES FOX

Right now, no, but keep checking.

MCC POSITION

Okay

VOICE ONE

Hey

MCC POSITION

Okay

VOICE ONE

You read that from the vice president, right? The vice president has cleared —

MCC POSITION

Vice president has cleared us to intercept tracks.

VOICE ONE

Of interest.

MCC POSITION

...And shoot them down if they do not respond, per CONR CC.⁵²⁹

⁵²⁸ Director of Operations

⁵²⁹ NORAD, Continental United States Command Center.



Figure 38. The smoke and dust plume rising from the Twin Towers was visible from space for several days. This image is from September 12, 2001
(Image Source: www.space.com)

CHAPTER 8

FIRST RESPONDERS

“A hero is no braver than an ordinary man, but he is brave five minutes longer.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

The attacks on the twin towers of the World Trade Center New York on Tuesday, September 11, 2001, came as an utter shock, not only to the Air Force and the civilian air traffic controllers, but to the emergency responders at what would soon become known as “Ground Zero.” The New York City Fire Department (FDNY) the New York City Police Department (NYPD), the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey Police Department (PAPD) all rushed to the scene and performed heroically. These American heroes charged headlong into utter devastation, billowing clouds of toxic dust and soot, wreckage that was all but unrecognizable, and the human carnage of victims dead and wounded. They witnessed people throwing themselves from the towers to keep from being incinerated. They helped people who were distraught, dazed, and horribly wounded. Finally, many FDNY commanders and firemen climbed the stairways of the towers, hoping to extinguish the blazes before the towers collapsed.



Figure 39. The collapse of the Twin Towers created giant wreckage piles, plumes of toxic dust, and debris.
(Image Source: ABC NEWS. www.abcnews.com)

Of the 2,977 victims of the New York, Virginia, and Shanksville, Pennsylvania attacks, 2,606 died within and near the World Trade Center in New York,⁵³⁰ American Airlines Flight 11 carried 87 passengers and crew,⁵³¹ United Airlines Flight 175 carried 60 passengers and crew,⁵³² The attack on the Pentagon carried out by American Airlines Flight 77 killed 125 military personnel inside the Pentagon,⁵³³ and 59 passengers and crew on the airliner, United Airlines Flight 93, which crashed into the earth near Shanksville, Pennsylvania, carried 40 passengers in crew.⁵³⁴ Also dead among the four flights were the 19 hijackers who carried out the unprecedented terrorist attacks.

Southern Manhattan saw the destruction of buildings 3 through 7 of the World Trade Center, the U.S. Custom House in 6 World Trade Center, the Marriott Hotel in 3 World Trade Center, the Deutsche Bank Building and others were heavily damaged.⁵³⁵



Figure 40. Aerial image of the dust cloud expanding, eventually over most of lower Manhattan. Image (Source: www.aol.com; www.ABCNEWS.com)

⁵³⁰ CNN, “Accused 9/11 plotter Khalid Sheikh Mohammed faces New York trial,” broadcast November 13, 2009; WIBW, “Alleged 9/11 Plotters Face Trial Blocks from WTC Site”, November 13, 2009. BIBW is a CBS affiliate television station in Topeka, Kansas.

⁵³¹ CNN, “American Airlines Flight 11,” <http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2001/memorial/lists/by-location/page93.html>

⁵³² CNN, “United Airlines Flight 175,” <http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2001/memorial/lists/by-location/page96.html>

⁵³³ CNN, “American Airlines Flight 77,” <http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2001/memorial/lists/by-location/page100.html>

⁵³⁴ CNN, United Airlines Flight 93,” <http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2001/memorial/lists/by-location/page98.html>

⁵³⁵ Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA), “World Trade Center Building Performance Study,” May 2002; Anthony Summers and Robbyn Swan, *The Eleventh Day: The Full Story of 9/11 and Osama Bin Laden* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2001), 75; Matt Chaban, “130 Liberty Finally Gone from Ground Zero,” *The New York Observer*, February 9, 2011.

Of the dead, 411 were first responders. Firefighters lost 343 men and women including a chaplain and two paramedics from FDNY.⁵³⁶ NYPD lost thirty-seven officers.⁵³⁷ PAPD lost thirty-seven officers.⁵³⁸ Additionally, eight emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and private ambulance service EMTs lost their lives.⁵³⁹

Firefighters came from all over Manhattan the Bronx, Queens, Brooklyn and one crew from Staten Island. Most of the deaths came from the closest responding companies.



Figure 41. Firefighter responders often found their fire trucks and large response vehicles could not get near the jammed Ground Zero area
(Image Source: www.aol.com; www.mic.com)

⁵³⁶ Don Van Holt, Webster for NYFD.com. "The Unofficial Home Page of FDNY: A Never Ending Story," http://nyfd.com/9_11_wtc.html

⁵³⁷ *USA Today*, "Post 9/11 report recommends police, fire response changes," *USA Today*, Associated Press, August 19, 2002.

⁵³⁸ CNN, "Police back on day-to-day beat after 9/11 nightmare," July 21, 2002.

⁵³⁹ <http://www.world-memorial.org/Tribute/EMS/medics.html>

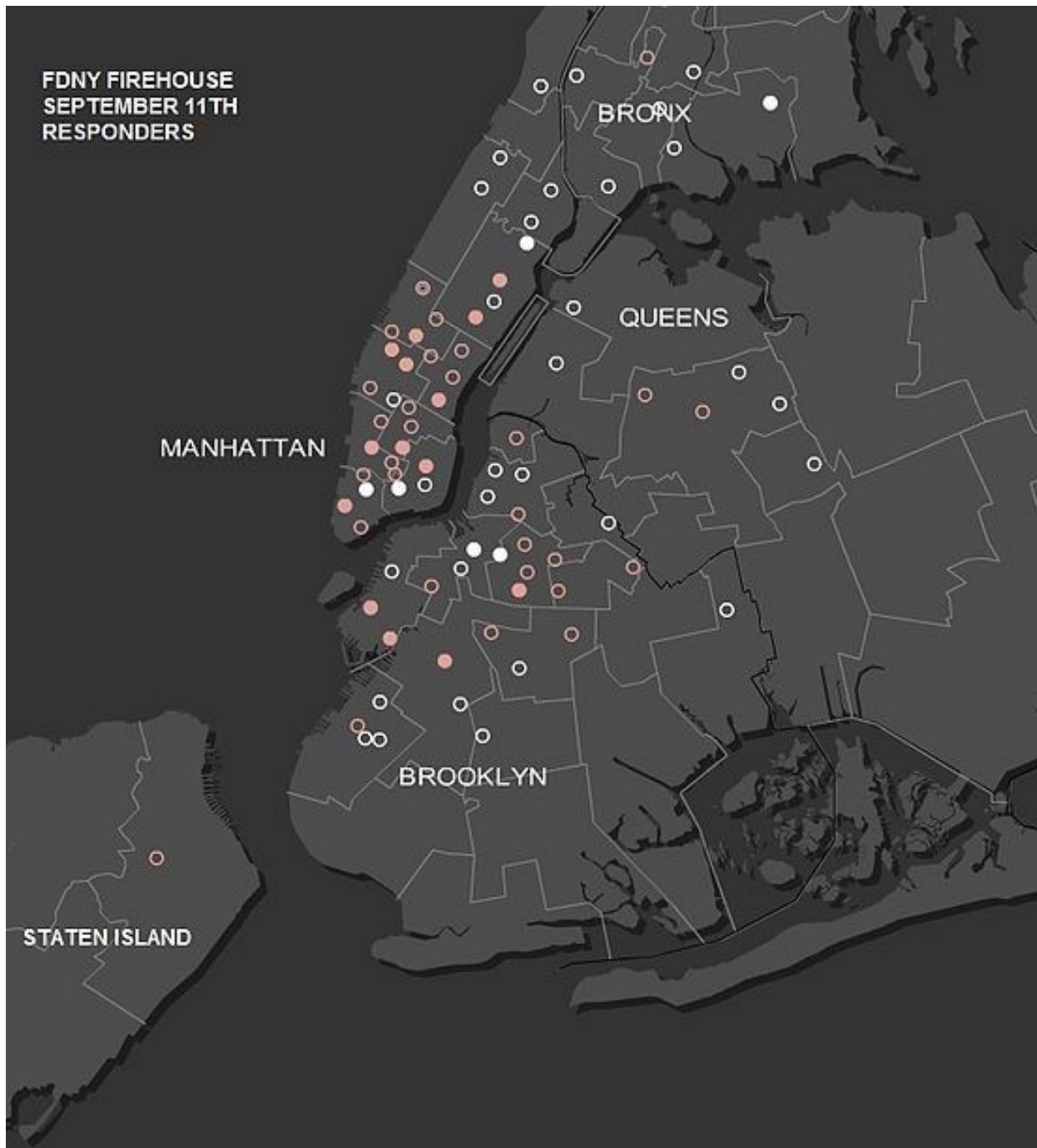


Figure 42. Fire station deployment in New York City during 9/11 operations. Circles show the location of the fire company responding; solid circles illustrate multiple companies. Rose-colored circles indicate companies which suffered casualties.
(Image Source: www.wikipedia.org)⁵⁴⁰

⁵⁴⁰ "Exhibit 10: Deployment of Fire Special Operations Units , www.nyc.gov; Map Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emergency_workers_killed_in_the_September_11_attacks



Figure 43. FDNY firemen heading into the toxic dust cloud
(Image Source: CBS NEWS. www.cbsnews.com)

The following lists contain details of losses by company, rank and location of deaths, followed by the names of first responders that gave their lives in New York on 9/11.⁵⁴¹

NEW YORK CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Company name	Chiefs	Captains	Lieutenants	Firefighters	Total	Site
Battalion 1	1		1		2	North Tower
Battalion 2	2			1	3	North Tower
Battalion 4			1		1	North Tower
Battalion 6	1				1	South Tower
Battalion 7	1		2		3	South Tower
Battalion 8	1			1	2	South Tower
Battalion 9	2		1	2	5	South Tower
Battalion 11	1				1	North Tower
Battalion 12	1				1	South Tower
Battalion 22			1		1	North Tower
Battalion 43			1		1	South Tower
Battalion 47			1		1	South Tower
Battalion 48	1			1	2	North Tower
Battalion 49	1			1	2	South Tower
Battalion 50	1				1	North Tower
Battalion 57	2			1	3	South Tower
Division 1		2			2	North Tower
Division 11		1			1	South Tower
Division 15	1	2			3	North Tower
Engine 1			1	1	2	North Tower
Engine 4				4	4	North Tower
Engine 5				1	1	North Tower
Engine 6				3	3	North Tower
Engine 8				1	1	South Tower
Engine 10			1	1	2	North Tower
Engine 21		1			1	North Tower
Engine 22				4	4	South Tower
Engine 23				4	4	South Tower
Engine 26		1		1	2	North Tower
Engine 29				1	1	South Tower
Engine 33			1	4	5	North Tower
Engine 37				1	1	North Tower

⁵⁴¹ NYC.gov; formatting in https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emergency_workers_killed_in_the_September_11_attacks

Company name	Chiefs	Captains	Lieutenants	Firefighters	Total	Site
Engine 40			1	4	5	South Tower
Engine 50				1	1	South Tower
Engine 54				3	3	South Tower
Engine 55		1		3	4	North Tower
Engine 58		1			1	South Tower
Engine 74				1	1	South Tower
Engine 201		1		3	4	South Tower
Engine 205		1			1	South Tower
Engine 207				3	3	North Tower
Engine 214				3	3	South Tower
Engine 216				1	1	South Tower
Engine 217		1		3	4	South Tower
Engine 219				1	1	South Tower
Engine 226				3	3	South Tower
Engine 230		1		5	6	South Tower
Engine 235		1		4	5	South Tower
Engine 238		1			1	South Tower
Engine 279				2	2	South Tower
Engine 285				1	1	South Tower
Engine 320	1				1	North Tower
Haz-Mat 1		1		6	7	South Tower
Ladder 2	1			6	7	South Tower
Ladder 3	1	1		9	11	North Tower
Ladder 4	1	1		7	9	South Tower
Ladder 5		2		6	8	North Tower
Ladder 7	1			5	6	South Tower
Ladder 8	1				1	North Tower
Ladder 9				3	3	North Tower
Ladder 10				1	1	North Tower
Ladder 11		1		6	7	South Tower
Ladder 12				2	2	South Tower
Ladder 13	1			4	5	North Tower
Ladder 15		1		7	8	South Tower
Ladder 16		1		1	2	South Tower
Ladder 20	1			6	7	North Tower
Ladder 21				6	6	South Tower
Ladder 24	1			1	2	South Tower
Ladder 25		1		6	7	South Tower

Company name	Chiefs	Captains	Lieutenants	Firefighters	Total	Site
Ladder 27				1	1	South Tower
Ladder 35	1			4	5	South Tower
Ladder 38				1	1	South Tower
Ladder 42				1	1	North Tower
Ladder 101			1	6	7	North Tower
Ladder 105	1			4	5	South Tower
Ladder 111			1		1	North Tower
Ladder 118			1	5	6	South Tower
Ladder 131				1	1	South Tower
Ladder 132				5	5	South Tower
Ladder 136				1	1	South Tower
Ladder 166				1	1	North Tower
Rescue 1	1		1	9	11	North Tower
Rescue 2			1	6	7	North Tower
Rescue 3				6	6	South Tower
Rescue 4	1		1	4	6	South Tower
Rescue 5	1		1	8	10	North Tower
Special Operations 1	1		2		4	North Tower
Squad 1	1		3	8	12	South Tower
Squad 18			1	6	7	North Tower
Squad 41			1	5	6	North Tower
Squad 252				5	5	North Tower
Squad 288			1	5	6	South Tower
Other				11	11	
Total	17	23	44	257	343	



Figure 44. Image Source: www.911Memorial.org

RANK, NAME, AGE⁵⁴²

The following list provides further details to the preceding list by categorizing the FDNY company with the rank, name, and age (if available) of each casualty. Names without ranks typically denote the rank of firefighter.

Company	Fatalities
FDNY Chief	Peter J. Ganci, Jr., 54
FDNY Commissioner	William M. Feehan, 72
FDNY Marshal	Ronald Paul Bucca, 47
FDNY Chaplain	Mychal Judge, 68
Battalion 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Matthew Lancelot Ryan, 54 • Lt. Paul Thomas Mitchell, 46
Battalion 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief William McGovern, 49 • Chief Richard Prunty, 57 • Faustino Apostol, Jr., 55
Battalion 4	Lt. Thomas O'Hagan, 43

⁵⁴² *Ibid.*

Company	Fatalities
Battalion 6	Chief John P. Williamson, 46
Battalion 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Orio Palmer, 45 • Lt. Stephen G. Harrell, 44 • Lt. Philip Scott Petti, 43
Battalion 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Thomas Patrick DeAngelis, 51 • Thomas McCann, 45
Battalion 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Dennis Lawrence Devlin, 51 • Chief Edward F. Geraghty, 45 • Lt. Charles William Garbarini, 44 • Carl Asaro, 39 • Alan D. Feinberg, 48
Battalion 11	Chief John M. Paolillo, 51
Battalion 12	Chief Frederick Claude Scheffold, Jr., 57
Battalion 22	Lt. Charles Joseph Margiotta, 44
Battalion 43	Lt. Geoffrey E. Guja, 49
Battalion 47	Lt. Anthony Jovic, 39
Battalion 48	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Joseph Grzelak, 52 • Michael Leopoldo Bocchino, 45
Battalion 49	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief John Moran, 42
Battalion 50	Chief Lawrence T. Stack, 58
Battalion 57	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Dennis Cross, 60 • Chief Joseph Ross Marchbanks, Jr, 47
Division 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capt. Joseph D. Farrelly, 47 • Capt. Thomas Moody, 45
Division 11	Capt. Timothy M. Stackpole, 42
Division 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Thomas Theodore Haskell, Jr., 37 • Capt. Martin J. Egan, Jr., 36 • Capt. William O'Keefe, 48
Engine 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt. Andrew Desperito, 43 • Michael T. Weinberg, 34
Engine 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calixto Anaya, Jr, 35 • James C. Riches, 29 • Thomas G. Schoales, 27

Company	Fatalities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul A. Tegtmeier, 41
Engine 5	Manuel Del Valle, Jr, 32
Engine 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul Beyer, 37 • Thomas Holohan, 36 • William R. Johnston, 31
Engine 8	Robert Parro, 35
Engine 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt. Gregg Arthur Atlas, 44 • Jeffrey James Olsen, 31
Engine 21	Capt. William Francis Burke, Jr., 46
Engine 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thomas Anthony Casoria, 29 • Michael J. Elferis, 27 • Vincent D. Kane, 37 • Martin E. McWilliams, 35
Engine 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robert McPadden, 30 • James Nicholas Pappageorge, 29 • Hector Luis Tirado, Jr., 30 • Mark P. Whitford, 31
Engine 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capt. Thomas Farino, 37 • Dana R Hannon, 29
Engine 29	Michael Ragusa, 29
Engine 33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt. Kevin Pfeifer, 42 • David Arce, 36 • Michael Boyle, 37 • Robert Evans, 36 • Keithroy Marcellus Maynard, 30
Engine 37	John Giordano, 47
Engine 40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt. John F. Ginley, 37 • Kevin Bracken, 37 • Michael D. D'Auria, 25 • Bruce Gary, 51 • Steven Mercado, 38
Engine 50	Robert W. Spear, Jr., 30
Engine 54	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul John Gill, 34 • Jose Guadalupe, 37

Company	Fatalities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christopher Santora, 23
Engine 55	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt. Peter L. Freund, 45 • Robert Lane, 28 • Christopher Mozzillo, 27 • Stephen P. Russell, 40
Engine 58	Lt. Robert B. Nagel, 55
Engine 74	Ruben D. Correa, 44
Engine 201	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt. Paul Richard Martini, 37 • Gregory Joseph Buck, 37 • Christopher Pickford, 32 • John Albert Schardt, 34
Engine 205	Lt. Robert Francis Wallace, 43
Engine 207	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karl Henry Joseph, 25 • Shawn Edward Powell, 32 • Kevin O. Reilly, 28
Engine 214	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt. Carl John Bedigian, 35 • John Joseph Florio, 33 • Michael Edward Roberts, 31 • Kenneth Thomas Watson, 39
Engine 216	Daniel Suhr, 37
Engine 217	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt. Kenneth Phelan, 41 • Steven Coakley, 36 • Philip T. Hayes, 67 • Neil Joseph Leavy, 34
Engine 219	John Chipura, 39
Engine 226	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brian McAleese, 36 • David Paul De Rubbio, 38 • Stanley S. Smagala, Jr., 36
Engine 230	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt. Brian G. Ahearn, 43 • Frank Bonomo, 42 • Michael Scott Carlo, 34 • Jeffrey Stark, 30 • Eugene Whelan, 31 • Edward James White III, 30
Engine 235	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt. Steven Bates, 42

Company	Fatalities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nicholas Paul Chiofalo, 39 • Francis Esposito, 32 • Lee S. Fehling, 28 • Lawrence G. Veling, 44
Engine 238	Lt. Glenn E. Wilkinson, 46
Engine 279	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ronnie Lee Henderson, 52 • Anthony Rodriguez, 36
Engine 285	Raymond R. York, 45
Engine 320	Capt. James J. Corrigan, 60
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt. John A. Crisci, 48 • Dennis M. Carey, 51 • Martin N. DeMeo, 47 • Thomas Gardner, 39 • Jonathan R. Hohmann, 48 • Dennis Scauso, 46 • Kevin Joseph Smith, 47
Haz-Mat 1	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capt. Frederick Ill, Jr, 49 • Michael J. Clarke, 27 • George DiPasquale, 33 • Denis P. Germain, 33 • Daniel Edward Harlin, 41 • Carl Molinaro, 32 • Dennis Michael Mulligan, 32
Ladder 2	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capt. Patrick J. Brown, 48 • Lt. Kevin W. Donnelly, 43 • Michael Carroll, 39 • James Raymond Coyle, 26 • Gerard Dewan, 35 • Jeffrey John Giordano, 45 • Joseph Maloney, 45 • John Kevin McAvoy, 47 • Timothy Patrick McSweeney, 37 • Joseph J. Ogren, 30 • Steven John Olson, 38
Ladder 3	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capt. David Terence Wooley, 54 • Lt. Daniel O'Callaghan, 42 • Joseph Angelini, Jr, 38 • Peter Brennan, 30 • Michael E. Brennan, 27
Ladder 4	

Company	Fatalities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michael Haub, 34 • Michael F. Lynch, 33 • Samuel Oitice, 45 • John James Tipping II, 33
Ladder 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt. Vincent Francis Giammona, 40 • Lt. Michael Warchola, 51 • Louis Arena, 32 • Andrew Brunn, 28 • Thomas Hannafin, 36 • Paul Hanlon Keating, 38 • John A. Santore, 49 • Gregory Thomas Saucedo, 31
Ladder 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capt. Vernon Allan Richard, 53 • George Cain, 35 • Robert Joseph Foti, 42 • Richard Muldowney Jr, 40 • Charles Mendez, 38 • Vincent Princiotta, 39
Ladder 8	Lt. Vincent Gerard Halloran, 43
Ladder 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gerard Baptiste, 35 • John P. Tierney, 27 • Jeffrey P. Walz, 37
Ladder 10	Sean Patrick Tallon, 26
Ladder 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt. Michael Quilty, 42 • Michael F. Cammarata, 22 • Edward James Day, 45 • John F. Heffernan, 37 • Richard John Kelly, Jr, 50 • Robert King, Jr, 36 • Matthew Rogan, 37
Ladder 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Angel L. Juarbe, Jr, 35 • Michael D. Mullan, 34
Ladder 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capt. Walter G. Hynes, 46 • Thomas Hetzel, 33 • Dennis McHugh, 34 • Thomas E. Sabella, 44 • Gregory Stajk, 46

Company	Fatalities
Ladder 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt. Joseph Gerard Leavey, 45 • Richard Lanard Allen, 30 • Arthur Thaddeus Barry, 35 • Thomas W. Kelly, 50 • Scott Kopytko, 32 • Scott Larsen, 35 • Douglas E. Oelschlager, 36 • Eric T. Olsen, 41
Ladder 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt. Raymond E. Murphy, 46 • Robert Curatolo, 31
Ladder 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capt. John R. Fischer, 46 • John Patrick Burnside, 36 • James Michael Gray, 34 • Sean S. Hanley, 35 • David Laforge, 50 • Robert Thomas Linnane, 33 • Robert D. McMahon, 35
Ladder 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gerald T. Atwood, 38 • Gerard Duffy, 53 • Keith Glascoe, 38 • Joseph Henry, 25 • William E. Krukowski, 36 • Benjamin Suarez, 34
Ladder 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capt. Daniel J. Brethel, 43 • Stephen Elliot Belson, 51
Ladder 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt. Glenn C. Perry, 41 • Matthew Barnes, 37 • John Michael Collins, 42 • Kenneth Kumpel, 42 • Robert Minara, 54 • Joseph Rivelli, 43 • Paul G. Ruback, 50
Ladder 27	John Marshall, 35
Ladder 35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capt. Frank Callahan, 51 • James Andrew Giberson, 43 • Vincent S. Morello, 34 • Michael Otten, 42

Company	Fatalities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michael Roberts, 30
Ladder 38	Joseph Spor, Jr., 35
Ladder 42	Peter Alexander Bielfeld, 44 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt. Joseph Gullickson, 37 • Patrick Byrne, 39 • Salvatore B. Calabro, 38
Ladder 101	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brian Cannizzaro, 30 • Thomas J. Kennedy, 36 • Joseph Maffeo, 31 • Terence A. McShane, 37
Ladder 105	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capt. Vincent Brunton, 43 • Thomas Richard Kelly, 39 • Henry Alfred Miller, Jr, 51 • Dennis O'Berg, 28 • Frank Anthony Palombo, 46
Ladder 111	Lt. Christopher P. Sullivan, 39 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt. Robert M. Regan, 48 • Joseph Agnello, 35 • Vernon Paul Cherry, 49
Ladder 118	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scott Matthew Davidson, 33 • Leon Smith, Jr., 48 • Peter Anthony Vega, 36
Ladder 131	Christian Michael Otto Regenhard, 28 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrew Jordan, 36 • Michael Kiefer, 25
Ladder 132	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thomas Mingione, 34 • John T. Vigiano II, 36 • Sergio Villanueva, 33
Ladder 136	Michael Joseph Cawley, 32
Ladder 166	William X. Wren, 61 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capt. Terence S. Hatton, 41 • Lt. Dennis Mojica, 50 • Joseph Angelini, Sr., 63
Rescue 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gary Geidel, 44 • William Henry, 49 • Kenneth Joseph Marino, 40 • Michael Montesi, 39 • Gerard Terence Nevins, 46

Company	Fatalities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patrick J. O'Keefe, 44 • Brian Edward Sweeney, 29 • David M. Weiss, 41
Rescue 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt. Peter C. Martin, 43 • William David Lake, 44 • Daniel F. Libretti, 43 • John Napolitano, 32 • Kevin O'Rourke, 44 • Lincoln Quappe, 38 • Edward Rall, 44
Rescue 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christopher Joseph Blackwell, 42 • Thomas Foley, 32 • Thomas Gambino, Jr., 48 • Raymond Meisenheimer, 46 • Donald J. Regan, 47 • Gerard Patrick Schrang, 45
Rescue 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capt. Brian Hickey, 47 • Lt. Kevin Dowdell, 46 • Terrence Patrick Farrell, 45 • William J. Mahoney, 37 • Peter Allen Nelson, 42 • Durrell V. Pearsall, 34
Rescue 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capt. Louis Joseph Modafferi, 45 • Lt. Harvey Harrell, 49 • John P. Bergin, 39 • Carl Vincent Bini, 44 • Michael Curtis Fiore, 46 • Andre G. Fletcher, 37 • Douglas Charles Miller, 34 • Jeffrey Matthew Palazzo, 33 • Nicholas P. Rossomando, 35 • Allan Tarasiewicz, 45
Special Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Raymond Matthew Downey, 63 • Capt. Patrick J. Waters, 44 • Lt. Timothy Higgins, 43 • Lt. Michael Thomas Russo, Sr, 44
Squad 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capt. James M. Amato, 43 • Lt. Edward A. D'Atri, 38

Company	Fatalities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt. Michael Esposito, 41 • Lt. Michael N. Fodor, 53 • Brian Bilcher, 37 • Gary Box, 37 • Thomas M. Butler, 37 • Peter Carroll, 42 • Robert Cordice, 28 • David J. Fontana, 37 • Matthew David Garvey, 37 • Stephen Gerard Siller, 34
Squad 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt. William E. McGinn, 43 • Eric Allen, 44 • Andrew Fredricks, 40 • David Halderman, 40 • Timothy Haskell, 34 • Manuel Mojica, 37 • Lawrence Virgilio, 38
Squad 41	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt. Michael K. Healey, 42 • Thomas Patrick Cullen III, 31 • Robert Hamilton, 43 • Michael J. Lyons, 32 • Gregory Sikorsky, 34 • R. Bruce Van Hine, 48
Squad 252	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tarel Coleman, 32 • Thomas Kuveikis, 48 • Peter J. Langone, 41 • Patrick Lyons, 34 • Kevin Prior, 28
Squad 288	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt. Ronald T. Kerwin, 42 • Ronnie E. Gies, 43 • Joseph Hunter, 31 • Jonathan Lee Ielpi, 29 • Adam David Rand, 30 • Timothy Matthew Welty, 34
EMS Battalion 49	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paramedic Carlos R. Lillo, 37
EMS Battalion 57	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paramedic Ricardo J. Quinn, 40



Figure 45. Image source: www.aol.com

NEW YORK CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT⁵⁴³

The 23 NYPD officers, including four sergeants and two detectives, who died at the scene were:

- Sgt. Timothy A. Roy, Sr., 36
- Sgt. John Gerard Coughlin, 43
- Sgt. Rodney C. Gillis, 33
- Sgt. Michael S. Curtin, 45
- Det. Joseph V. Vigiano, 34
- Det. Claude Daniel Richards, 46
- Moira Ann Smith, 38
- Ramon Suarez, 45
- Paul Talty, 40
- Santos Valentin, Jr., 39
- Walter E. Weaver, 30
- Ronald Philip Kloefer, 39
- Thomas M. Langone, 39
- James Patrick Leahy, 38
- Brian Grady McDonnell, 38
- John William Perry, 38

⁵⁴³ www.NYC.gov; formatting in https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emergency_workers_killed_in_the_September_11_attacks; “9/11 Victims – Police & Port Authority,” www.Afge171.org; www.nyc.gov/html/nypd/html/memorial/memorial_wtc.shtml

- Glen Kerrin Pettit, 30
- John D'Allara, 47
- Vincent Danz, 38
- Jerome M. P. Dominguez, 37
- Stephen P. Driscoll, 38
- Mark Joseph Ellis, 26
- Robert Fazio, Jr., 41



Figure 46. NYPD officer assisting a women during the initial debris cloud
 (Image Source: New York Daily News archived by Getty Images. www.nydailynews.com)

PORT AUTHORITY POLICE DEPARTMENT⁵⁴⁴

- Supt. Ferdinand V. Morrone, 63
- Chief James A. Romito, 51
- Lt. Robert D. Cirri
- Insp. Anthony P. Infante, Jr., 47
- Capt. Kathy Nancy Mazza, 46
- Sgt. Robert M. Kaulfers, 49
- Donald James McIntyre, 38
- Walter Arthur McNeil, 53

⁵⁴⁴ *Ibid.*; “9/11 Victims – Police & Port Authority,” www.Afge171.org

- Joseph Michael Navas, 44
- James Nelson, 40
- Alfonse J. Niedermeyer, 40
- James Wendell Parham, 32
- Dominick A. Pezzulo, 36
- Antonio J. Rodrigues, 35
- Richard Rodriguez, 31
- Bruce Albert Reynolds, 41
- Christopher C. Amoroso, 29
- Maurice V. Barry, 48
- Clinton Davis, Sr., 38
- Donald A. Foreman, 53
- Gregg J. Froehner, 46
- Uhuru Gongu Houston, 32
- George G. Howard, 44
- Thomas E. Gorman
- Stephen Huczko, Jr., 44
- Paul William Jurgens, 47
- Liam Callahan, 44
- Paul Laszczynski, 49
- David Prudencio Lemagne, 27
- John Joseph Lennon, Jr., 44
- John Dennis Levi, 50
- James Francis Lynch, 47
- John P. Skala, 31
- Walwyn W. Stuart, Jr., 28
- Kenneth F. Tietjen, 31
- Nathaniel Webb
- Michael T. Wholey
- Sirius, K-9⁵⁴⁵

PRIVATE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES⁵⁴⁶

Eight emergency medical technicians and paramedics from private emergency medical services lost their lives while responding to the World Trade Center. These names included:^[4]

- Keith Fairben, 24, – a paramedic who worked for the New York Presbyterian Hospital
- Richard Pearlman, 18, – an EMT who worked for the Forest Hills Volunteer Ambulance
- Mario Santoro, 28 – a paramedic who worked for the New York Presbyterian Medical Center
- Yamel Merino, 24 – a single mother of an eight-year-old son who worked as an EMT for Metrocare/Montefiore Medical Center for three years

⁵⁴⁵ Sirius was the only K-9 officer to die in the initial response teams.

⁵⁴⁶ *Ibid.*; “September 11, 2001,” www.nypdangels.com

- Mohammad Salman Hamdani, 23 – a Muslim-American man who worked as a part-time FDNY Certified EMT and also a member of the New York City Police Department Cadet Corps for three years
- Marc Sullins, 30 – an EMT who worked with Cabrini Medical Center
- Mark Schwartz, 50 – an EMT who worked for Hunter Ambulance
- Jeff Simpson, 38 – an EMT who worked for the Dumfries-Triangle Rescue Squad, and also an employee for Oracle Corporation



Figure 47. First responders rest in the wreckage on the morning of September 11
(Image Source: www.aol.com)



Figure 48. In the days immediately following 9/11, first responders raised the flag over Ground Zero. This iconic image, reminiscent of the flag over Iwo Jima in World War II has become, perhaps, the most used image the attack. Image Source: Photography Thomas E. Franklin, *The Record* [Bergen County, New Jersey], archived by Getty Images.

CHAPTER 9

PRESIDENT BUSH

“There are all kinds of plans to keep the president safe, emergency action plans, in the event of nuclear attack. Pretty much any major military attack, I knew exactly what to do with the president and where to take him to keep him safe. This was different. This was an attack from within. We had the president who didn't want to follow our plans for a nuclear attack, which is hide him, keep him safe and allow continuity of government.”

Colonel Mark Tillman, Pilot of Air Force One on 9/11⁵⁴⁷

The weekend before 9/11, President George W. Bush was at the White House. On Sunday, September 9, he looked forward to the beginning of the National Football League season. The President spent part of that Sunday afternoon with a group of children football players from the metropolitan Washington area dressed out in their pads and uniforms, holding their helmets. They were in the Rose Garden, where the President tossed a coin to determine who would kick-off the Monday night game. The coin landed tails up.⁵⁴⁸

On Monday, September 10, First Lady Laura Bush entertained Janette Howard, the wife of Prime Minister John Howard of Australia. After lunch she worked on a briefing to be delivered the next day to the Senate Education Committee. Later, her in-laws, former President George H.W. Bush and his wife, Barbara, came to the White House to spend the night.⁵⁴⁹ Early that afternoon, President Bush boarded Air Force One at Andrews Air Force Base near Camp Springs, Maryland. The presidential aircraft took off at 1:15 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time.⁵⁵⁰ The flight was to be routine – a stop in Jacksonville, Florida, followed by another in Sarasota, Florida. Air Force One would depart Sarasota on the afternoon of September 11, landing at Andrews Air Force Base.⁵⁵¹

The President and his party stayed at the Colony Beach and Tennis Resort on Longboat Key the night of 10th.⁵⁵² He jogged four miles on the property and then met with law enforcement officials from Manatee County.⁵⁵³ He then received his daily intelligence brief from the CIA. There was a heightened threat level, but nothing specific.⁵⁵⁴ The President and his party then left to visit the Emma E. Booker Elementary School

⁵⁴⁷ Michael Shennum, “Air Force One’s pilot’s 9/11 mission: Keep president safe, *The Arizona Republic* for *USA TODAY*, September 7, 2011. <http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/washington/story/2011-08-25/Air-Force-One-pilots-911-mission-Keep-president-safe/50138134/1>

⁵⁴⁸ *Washington Post*, “The lost world of 9/10: The Sept. 11 attacks and the end of American Innocence,” September 10, 2011; See Chapter 1.

⁵⁴⁹ National Public Radio (NPR), “The Day Before America Was Interrupted: Nine People Recall Sept. 10, 2001,” aired September 9, 2014.

⁵⁵⁰ United States Air Force, (Air Force One) Mission No. 3,480 Itinerary.

⁵⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵² *Washington Post*, January 27, 2002.

⁵⁵³ *Washington Times*, October 7, 2002; *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*, September 10, 2001.

⁵⁵⁴ *Daily Telegraph* [London], December 16, 2001.

in Sarasota to push his education agenda. The motorcade was late.⁵⁵⁵ The President's staff was notified of the first plane crashing into the North Tower of the World Trade Center about 8:55 a.m. The motorcade was just arriving at the school, but the President was not notified until the crash was confirmed.⁵⁵⁶ Various aides were informed, but there was no hint that it was a deliberate attack. Shortly afterward, news of the second plane crashing into the other tower of the World Trade Center reached the President's staff.

Chief of Staff Andrew Card told the President about the crash, noting that it probably was an accident.⁵⁵⁷ He quickly had to recant that thought.⁵⁵⁸ President Bush finished his reading lesson, answered questions from the students and then informed the principal that he had to leave and the cause.⁵⁵⁹ The Secret Service told the 9/11 Commission that they did not believe it was imperative to get the President away from the school stating that they were "anxious to move the president to a safer location, but did not think it imperative for him to run out the door."⁵⁶⁰ President Bush remained at the school and, at 9:30, gave a brief speech to 200 students, faculty and press. He stated "Today we've had a national tragedy. Two airplanes have crashed into the World Trade Center in an apparent terrorist attack on our country."⁵⁶¹



Figure 49. Presidential Chief of Staff Andrew Card informs President George W. Bush of the attack on the World Trade Center in New York, while the president was speaking to a class of school children at the Emma E. Booker Elementary School in Sarasota, Florida, on the morning of September 11, 2001 (Image Source: CBS NEWS).

⁵⁵⁵ Dallas Morning News, September 10, 2006.

⁵⁵⁶ *Christian Science Monitor*, September 17, 2001.

⁵⁵⁷ *Daily Telegraph* [London], December 16, 2001.

⁵⁵⁸ *Dayton Daily News*, August 17, 2003.

⁵⁵⁹ *Sarasota Magazine*, September 19, 2001; *Tampa Tribune*, September 1, 2002.

⁵⁶⁰ *9/11 Commission Final Report*, 39.

⁵⁶¹ White House Release, September 11, 2001.

Air Force One, piloted by Colonel Mark Tillman, was notified of the need for a prompt departure while the motorcade raced to Sarasota-Bradenton Airport.⁵⁶² The Presidential motorcade raced to the airport and, enroute, it was notified of American Airlines Flight 77 crashing into the Pentagon.⁵⁶³ It was later learned that threats were made against President Bush, Air Force One and the elementary school on 9/11.⁵⁶⁴

Major communications problems began and continued on Air Force One while the aircraft was still on the ground at Sarasota and while in the air.⁵⁶⁵ Adding to the confusion was the fact that staffers and reporters aboard the plane were scattered and did not arrive at once. Baggage was checked and people were scanned with wands and metal detectors due to the perceived, and perhaps real, to the aircraft.⁵⁶⁶ Air Force One took off at 9:56 a.m.⁵⁶⁷ The Secret Service believed there was an active shooter threat at the airport and Colonel Tillman described his take off and ascent:

I start hauling down the runway. Pull back, went up at about 8,000 feet per minute, and just put the plane on its tail, rolled it off towards the Gulf of Mexico, because I didn't want the shooter to get us.⁵⁶⁸

Dan Bartlett, the White House Communications Director, who was aboard Air Force One noted that the plane took off like a rocket and that “for a good 10 minutes, the plane was going almost straight up.”⁵⁶⁹ The original flight plan called for Air Force One to return to Andrews Air Force Base, but an unnamed person in the White House Situation Room called Mark Rozenker, the director of the White House Military Office, who was aboard the plane, and told him to not return to Washington, change course, and divert to an Air Force Base.⁵⁷⁰ Rozenker noted that the person in the Situation Room “indicated that it would be best if we did not come back to Washington, and that we should try to find some escort aircraft for us.”⁵⁷¹ The task of finding fighter escort was placed on Colonel Tillman, commanding Air Force One, not NORAD, not a numbered Air Force, not National Guard units, not the Pentagon. This meant that the most important person in the free world was flying away from a disaster without armed fighter escort when a threat to his plane had been made and portions of lower Manhattan and the Pentagon were in ruins. The President’s plane headed west at 10:10 a.m. and ten minutes later, Air Force One headed for Barksdale Air Force Base in Bossier City, Louisiana. The base was home for the Eighth Air Force and the 2nd Bomb Wing, with the largest number of B-52 heavy bombers in existence. It was also home to the 917th Wing which operated A-10 Thunderbolt II (affectionately known as “Warthogs”) ground attack fighter planes.⁵⁷² Richard Clarke, the head of the White House Counterterrorism Security Group (CSG) wrote later that he was informed that the president has authorized the military to shoot down hostile aircraft.⁵⁷³ Confusion reigned over the next hour as to whether the President or Vice President Dick Cheney made the judgment call. Ultimately the President made the order official.

⁵⁶² *Santa Barbara News-Press*, September 11, 2011.

⁵⁶³ *9/11 Commission Final Report*, 39.

⁵⁶⁴ CBS NEWS, September 11, 2002.

⁵⁶⁵ *Washington Post*, January 27, 2002; NBC NEWS, April 4, 2004; Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, September 10, 2006;

⁵⁶⁶ *St. Petersburg Times*, September 8, 2002.

⁵⁶⁷ *Washington Post*, January 27, 2002.

⁵⁶⁸ United States Air Force Release, February 29, 2012.

⁵⁶⁹ White House Release, August 12, 2002.

⁵⁷⁰ White House Release, August 29, 2002.

⁵⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷² *9/11 Commission Final Report*, 325.

⁵⁷³ Clarke, *Against All Enemies*, 8.



Figure 50. Colonel Mark Tillman in the cockpit of Air Force One
(Image Source: CBS NEWS)

As Air Force One headed due west out over the Gulf of Mexico, NORAD's SEADS (Southeastern Air Defense Sector) headquarters based at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, ordered two alert fighter aircraft, F-16 Cs of the 147th Fighter Wing of the Texas Air National Guard based at Ellington Field outside Houston, Texas to take off and fly east to escort Air Force One.⁵⁷⁴

The two interceptors moved east without knowing exactly where Air Force One was located. Two aircraft were on alert with the pilots in the cockpit. SEADS scrambled the alert aircraft, the pilots quickly got their *Vipers* airborne and flew eastbound in search of Air Force One.⁵⁷⁵ Two others were aloft flying a training mission. They were told to fly east and escort a plane. They were not told it was Air Force One. Only the mission commander knew what was expected. When one of the pilots asked him where they were going, he answered "You'll know when you see it."⁵⁷⁶

Still far to the east, Colonel Tillman received a message that aircraft out over the Gulf of Mexico near the Texas coast were suspicious, with foreign voices. These unidentified aircraft were "fast movers," fighter jets going supersonic. Whoever was listening on that frequency was not from the South or Southwest. The call came from an air traffic controller (TRAFCON) who must have been new or oblivious to his surroundings. The voice recording reveals a strange exchange.

HOUSTON CENTER

Air Force One, you have fast movers coming up at your 7 o'clock.⁵⁷⁷

GOULD TO TILLMAN

⁵⁷⁴ *Code One Magazine*, April, 2002.

⁵⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷⁶ CBS NEWS, September 11, 2002.

⁵⁷⁷ Tillman believes these are fighter interceptors coming to escort Air Force One. Tillman suggested this to Colonel Tomas Gould, one of the military aides on board. *Wichita Eagle*, November 13, 2012.

I haven't asked for fighters yet. We haven't had the chance to do it yet.⁵⁷⁸

TILLMAN to HOUSTON CENTER

Who are they?

HOUSTON CENTER

We don't know. They just popped up on radar. [They have] come somewhere out of Texas, we think, or somewhere out of the Gulf.⁵⁷⁹



Figure 51. F-16 C aircraft of the 147th Fighter Wing
(Image Source: Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Group photo).

⁵⁷⁸ *Ibid.*; Aero-News Network, July 19, 2012. Gould was mistaken after several years intervening. The request had been made and the Texas ANG fighters were screaming east to reach Air Force One. U.S. Department of Defense transcript November 11, 2001. <http://www.oredigger61.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/Air-Threat-Conference-Call-Hyde.pdf>

⁵⁷⁹ US Air Force release, February 29, 2012.

TILLMAN TO GOULD

[There are] foreign nationals in the Gulf of Mexico who are out training in American F-16 fighters that are “heavily armed.”

TILLMAN to HOUSTON CENTER

[How fast are they flying?]

HOUSTON CENTER

They’re supersonic.

UNIDENTIFIED AIRCRAFT TO AIR FORCE ONE

Air Force One, Cowry 4-5, flight of two, we are your cover.... estimated time of arrival with Air Force One is in three minutes.⁵⁸⁰

Colonel Tillman later said in an interview that this communication was the “coolest radio call I’ve ever heard in my life.... The reason is that they are Texans, and they had an accent, it was not a foreign accent. So I knew: good people.”⁵⁸¹

The F-16s from Houston made visual contact with Air Force One at approximately 11:30 a.m.⁵⁸² They formed up tight, one just off each wing. The President, his staff, and the press aboard noticed and one of the staff photographers took a photo of the President and staff looking at the sight.⁵⁸³



Figure 52. President Bush and staff looking at the Texas Air National Guard fighter escort
(Image Source: White House).

⁵⁸⁰ Aero-News Network, July 19, 2012 Air Force Release February 29, 2012.

⁵⁸¹ KFDI interview, December 11, 2012. www.kdfi.com

⁵⁸² USA TODAY, September 11, 2001.

⁵⁸³ White House photo.

Other fighters were scrambled from the Florida Air National Guard from Jacksonville (F-15s from the 125th Fighter Wing) and an AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control Aircraft) was diverted from the East Coast. Two more F-16s of the Minnesota Air National Guard were at battle stations at Tyndall Air Force in Florida and were tasked to fly escort for Air Force One. They were waiting for the Presidential aircraft to fly north. When told Air Force One was heading west, SEADS did not launch them. The determination was that Air Force One was flying so fast, heading west, that the F-16s could not link up without an air-to-air refueling.⁵⁸⁴ It would be the Houston interceptors that accompanied Air Force One to Barksdale, Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska and then to Andrews Air Force Base that day.⁵⁸⁵ Air Force One now had a powerful group of escorts - four F-16s and two F-15s.⁵⁸⁶ Although Air Force Major General Larry Arnold, commander of NORAD's Continental U.S. Region said that only the F-16s from Ellington "chased Air Force One and landed with the president at Barksdale AFB in Louisiana,"⁵⁸⁷ civilian witnesses, including Federal Judge Maurice Hicks, witnessed F-15s in escort as Air Force One approached Barksdale.⁵⁸⁸



Figure 53. U.S. Air Force McDonnell Douglas F-15C-21-MC *Eagle* fighters (s/n 78-487, 78-527, 78-493) from the 159th Fighter Squadron, 125th Fighter Wing, Florida Air National Guard, in flight over Jacksonville, Florida (USA), in 2009.

(Image Source: U.S. Air Force Photo by Tech. Sgt. Shelley Gill - USAF photo 091004-f-0971g-055 from the Florida Air National Guard website)

⁵⁸⁴ *9/11 Commission Final Report*, 38; *St Petersburg Times*, July 4, 2004.

⁵⁸⁵ U.S. Department of Defense Release, September 2001; [London] *Daily Telegraph*, December 16, 2001; *Galveston County Daily News*, July 9, 2005.

⁵⁸⁶ U.S. Department of Defense Release, September, 2001.

⁵⁸⁷ *Code One Magazine*, January 2002.

⁵⁸⁸ Personal interview with the Honorable Maurice Hicks by Gary D. Joiner, PhD., August 2016.

Russian President Vladimir Putin called President Bush as Air Force One raced west. The Russian very clearly told his counterpart that he realized that this was an act of terror, that he understood that U.S. Forces were placed at high degree of readiness (DEFCON 3), and that in order for no potential mistakes, all Russian forces were ordered to stand down.⁵⁸⁹ Additionally, Putin sent a telegram to Bush reaffirming his position, stating: “The series of barbaric terrorist acts, directed against innocent people, has evoked our anger and indignation.... The whole international community must rally in the fight against terrorism.”⁵⁹⁰



Figure 54. Colonel Curtis M. Bedke, commander of the 2nd Bomb Wing at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana. In this image, General Bedke is shown wearing the insignia of a brigadier general (Image Source: United States Air Force).

Barksdale Air Force Base was not told specifically that Air Force One was headed there. Senior officers on the base were told that a large plane would be landing there within thirty minutes. They quickly determined that this unexpected visitor was the President’s aircraft.⁵⁹¹ Colonel (later Major General) Curtis M. Bedke) and Colonel Anthony Imondi of the 2nd Bomb Wing.

Barksdale received a call from Air Force One and were given a list of tasks to perform to keep Air Force One ready to stay in the air for an extended period of time.⁵⁹² The list came from the plane’s crew and included needed tasks and enough items for the plane to remain aloft, through air to air refueling, for at least a day or two. The list included 150,000 pounds of fuel, maintenance stands, a working military working bomb dog and handler, a Security Forces Response Team, eight four-man security forces armed with M-16 rifles, two four-man security forces teams with M-60 machine guns, a lavatory services truck, 75 box lunches, 10 gallons of orange juice, 24 bagels, 100 muffins, and 25 pounds of bananas.⁵⁹³

⁵⁸⁹ George W. Bush Presidential Archives. <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010924-4.html>

⁵⁹⁰ Russian Embassy, Washington, D.C., September 17, 2001.

⁵⁹¹ Associated Press release, October 2, 2001.

⁵⁹² 2nd Bomb Wing Release, June 30, 2002.

⁵⁹³ *Ibid.*



Figure 55. Lieutenant General Thomas Keck, commander of the Eight Air Force, headquartered at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana
(Image Source: United States Air Force).

Colonel Tillman contacted Barksdale and told them that the DVs (Distinguished Visitors) included four congressmen and that they were “Code Alpha,” the highest priority. This was a ploy in the event that someone not authorized might understand that the President was near the base. Tillman was still under the assumption that Air Force One was still a target. Lieutenant General Thomas Keck, commander of Eighth Air Force, headquartered at Barksdale, relayed this message with the plane only twenty minutes out from landing.⁵⁹⁴

General Keck then issued orders to all pertinent units on the base. They were told to expect the imminent arrival of a large unexpected aircraft with the highest priority, that the requested supplies be gathered immediately, that the fuel transfer be prepared, that fuel and maintenance crews be ready to service the aircraft if there were a short turnaround time required, and for the military police to be on full security status before the planes came to a halt.⁵⁹⁵

The 2nd Security Forces Squadron was notified as part of the orders from General Keck. Four minutes after receiving the orders, Captain Russell Stilling received a call from the Secret Service informing him the aircraft was Air Force One. Someone along the line, apparently not on Air Force One, told the Secret Service that the plane would be landing at Shreveport Regional Airport, not at Barksdale. This was, of course, incorrect. The voice on the other end of the line requested additional security personnel at Regional. Stilling responded that Air Force was on final approach and was landing at Barksdale.⁵⁹⁶ Fully armed security force surrounded the plane and awaited orders.

⁵⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹⁶ Times-Picayune, September 8, 2002.



Figure 56. 2nd Security Forces Squadron airman guarding Air Force One at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana

(Image Source: Dennis Pinner, 2nd Bomb Wing historian).

Barksdale commanders received several threat notices of unidentified, high speed aircraft approaching the base from several directions, altitudes, and speeds. This was after all commercial and private traffic was ordered to ground.⁵⁹⁷ Later, *American History* magazine reported:

Under Threatcon Delta,⁵⁹⁸ and what Keck's staff already knew of the day's shocking events, there was a low threshold for declaring any incoming plane or object a threat. ["] Therefore, Keck "made sure his staff kept him closely apprised of each questionable target.... If necessary, the commander was ready to give the order to fire on any plane that threatened the base."⁵⁹⁹

No threats materialized.

Local newspaper, television and radio stations set up their equipment just off Barksdale's north gate and reported the arrival of Air Force One. Now the world knew where the President was.

⁵⁹⁷ U.S. Congress House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, September 21, 2001; *9/11 Commission Final Report*, 29.

⁵⁹⁸ Threat Condition Delta.

⁵⁹⁹ *American History*, October, 2006.



Figure 57. 917th Reserve Wing based at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana
(Image Source: Greg Steele, United States Air Force).

Barksdale did have an air defense role. There were no fighter interceptor units based there, but the base was home to the 917th Reserve Wing with A-10 ground attack fighters.⁶⁰⁰ General Keck called Brigadier General Jack Ihle, commander of the 917th Wing and asked if the wing could provide air defense. General Ihle responded in the affirmative. Two A-10 “Warthogs” stood ready at the end of the runway and they were launched immediately. General Keck later told *American History*: “We felt better having them there...”⁶⁰¹



Figure 58. President George W. Bush walks with Lieutenant General Thomas Keck, a staff officer, and a Secret Service agent toward the Dougherty Conference Center at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana
(Image Source: White House).

⁶⁰⁰ <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/agency/usaf/917wg.htm>

⁶⁰¹ *American History*, October, 2006.

The four F-16s split duties while Air Force One was at Barksdale. Two landed and refueled and prepared to relieve the other two still airborne. The other two F-16s flew combat air patrol over Shreveport and Bossier City. The two pairs of interceptors switched periodically to keep the pilots fresh and the “Vipers” topped off with fuel.⁶⁰²

When Air Force One landed, security sweeps were made on all vehicles brought to the ramp to handle the entourage. Upon exiting the aircraft, the President, his staff, and reporters were whisked to the Dougherty Conference Center.⁶⁰³ There, the President met Lt. Gen. Keck and Col. Bedke. The President asked for a secure phone. General Keck told the President that a secure line was in his office in a nearby building.⁶⁰⁴ President Bush and his entourage were driven to Building 5546, the Headquarters of the Eighth Air Force.⁶⁰⁵ As they entered, a sign in large black letters taped to the door read “THREATCON DELTA.” The nation is at war.⁶⁰⁶

The President saw the images of New York and Washington on CNN. He told General Keck “I don’t know who this is, but we’re going to find out and we’re going to go after them, and we’re not just going to slap them on the wrist.”⁶⁰⁷ The President called Vice President Richard Cheney, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, White House Counselor Helen Hughes, and New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani. New York Governor George Pataki, and New York Senator Charles Schumer.⁶⁰⁸ He then, with staff members, wrote a speech to the nation. He read it to General Keck, asking for input.⁶⁰⁹



Figure 59. President George W. Bush speaking to the nation from Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana. (Image Source: White House).

⁶⁰² *The Bombardier* [Barksdale Air Force Base newspaper], September 8, 2006.

⁶⁰³ *USA TODAY*, September 11, 2001.

⁶⁰⁴ 2nd Bomb Wing release, June 30, 2002.

⁶⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰⁶ *USA TODAY*, September 11, 2001.

⁶⁰⁷ *Associate Press*, October 2, 2001.

⁶⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰⁹ *American History*, October, 2006.

Once finalized, General Keck escorted the President to the Eighth Air Force Headquarters conference room. The President recorded the speech at 12:36 p.m.⁶¹⁰ The reporters which had been aboard Air Force One were in attendance during the brief address.

The address was brief but to the point:

Freedom itself was attacked this morning by a faceless coward. And freedom will be defended. I want to reassure the American people that full -- the full resources of the federal government are working to assist local authorities to save lives and to help the victims of these attacks. Make no mistake, the United States will hunt down and punish those responsible for these cowardly acts. I've been in regular contact with the Vice President, Secretary of Defense, the national security team, and my cabinet. We have taken all appropriate -- appropriate security precautions to protect the American people. Our military at home and around the world is on high alert status. And we have taken the necessary security precautions to continue the functions of your government. We have been in touch with leaders of Congress and with world leaders to assure them that we will do what is -- whatever is necessary to protect America and Americans. I ask the American people to join me in saying a "thanks" for all the folks who have been fighting hard to rescue our fellow citizens, and to join me in saying a prayer for the victims and their families.

The resolve of our great nation is being tested, but make no mistake. We will show the world that we will pass this test.

God bless.⁶¹¹

General Keck remained with the President during his time at Barksdale. He briefed the President and his staff as new information came in. During the two hours that Air Force One was on the ground at Barksdale, the plane was replenished and refueled while the escort fighters were refueled and the pilots rested.⁶¹²

The President' senior staff decided to reduce the number of people traveling on Air Force One to essential personnel. The Congressmen, some staffers, and most of the journalists were left behind. Only five remained for the next flight.⁶¹³

As the President and General Keck passed the long line of B-52s on the way to Air Force One, the bombers' crews stood in front of their planes, all giving him a thumbs up. General Keck explained to the President, a former fighter pilot himself, that the crews "are trained, they're ready, and they'll do whatever you want them to." As the motorcade continued, the military police guards saluted the President and Air Force personnel waved and cheered the President, the General, and the entourage.⁶¹⁴

Air Force One took off, climbed to the north and then northwest heading for Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska at 1:30 p.m. Offutt is home to the United States Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM)). Near its wingtips and above the plane were the four F-16s of the Texas Air National Guard.⁶¹⁵ Offutt was chosen as

⁶¹⁰ USA TODAY, September 11, 2001.

⁶¹¹ President George W. Bush address to the nation on September 11, 2001, at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana. <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010911-1.html>

⁶¹² *American History*, October, 2006.

⁶¹³ *Sarasota Magazine*, September 19, 2001.

⁶¹⁴ *American History*, October, 2006.

⁶¹⁵ *Ibid.*

the next destination, according to the President's later memoir, for its "secure housing space and reliable communications."⁶¹⁶ The 9/11 Commission added that the base was chosen "because of its elaborate command and control facilities, and because it could accommodate overnight lodging for 50 persons. The Secret Service wanted a place where the president could spend several days, if necessary."⁶¹⁷ New fighter assets were added to Air Force One's protection detail. F-15 interceptors were placed on alert waiting for the presidential aircraft to depart Barksdale. They were part of the 159th Wing located at Air Station Joint Reserve Base in Belle Chase, suburban New Orleans, Louisiana.⁶¹⁸



Figure 60. Air Force One departing Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana
(Image Source: 2nd Bomb Wing).

Air Force One made an uneventful flight to Offutt. The President and his staff were ushered into the base's underground bunker at 3:06 p.m.

President Bush initiated a video conference with his senior department heads and staff including Vice President Cheney, National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, CIA Director George Tenet, Transportation Secretary Leon Mineta, and counterterrorism "tsar" Richard Clarke⁶¹⁹ He informed the group that he was returning to Washington immediately and not to attempt to convince him otherwise. He also told them that the nation was at war.⁶²⁰ During this conference, an airliner over the Atlantic Ocean whose flight originated from Spain was thought to be a hijacking. The President decided to remain at Offutt while this situation played out. It was a false alarm. President Bush then decided to Leave Offutt and return to Washington.⁶²¹

⁶¹⁶ George W. Bush, *Decision Points* (New York: Crown Publishers, 2010), 133.

⁶¹⁷ *9/11 Commission Final Report*, 325.

⁶¹⁸ www.GlobalSecurity.org January 21, 2006.

⁶¹⁹ *Daily Telegraph* [London], December 16, 2001.

⁶²⁰ Clarke, *Against All Enemies*, 21-22.

⁶²¹ *9/11 Commission Final Report*, 28.



Figure 61. President Bush and his staff entering the underground command bunker at Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska (Image Source: White House).

Air Force One departed Offutt at 4:30 p.m. and gathered other escorts. As all but the Texas Air National Guard fighters were recalled to their home bases, an AWACS aircraft was tasked to watch for threats. District of Columbia Air National Guard F-16s joined up with Air Force One 160 miles west of the capital.⁶²² Air Force One landed at Andrews Air Force Base at 6:42 p.m. He then flew across Washington to the White House in Marine One, the presidential helicopter.⁶²³ The President met his wife in the Presidential Emergence Operations Center (PEOC) and then went to the Oval Office to begin work on his next speech to the nation, delivered that night.⁶²⁴

The President's day was nearly over. America's new age was just beginning.

⁶²² *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, September 9, 2002.

⁶²³ CNN, September 12, 2001.

⁶²⁴ Bush, *Decision Points*, 204-05.

CHAPTER 10

9/11 LEGACY: REORGANIZATION, REFORM, & CURRENT AND FUTURE CHALLENGES⁶²⁵

“The United States Constitution recognizes freedom of expression, even for individuals who espouse unpopular or even hateful views. But when individuals or groups choose to further their grievances or ideologies through violence, by engaging in violence themselves or by recruiting and encouraging others to do so, it becomes the collective responsibility of the U.S. Government and the American people to take a stand.”⁶²⁶

Researchers tend to agree that intelligence failures, such as that to prevent the attacks on September 11, 2001, result primarily from cumbersome bureaucratic structures, fragmented approaches to intelligence gathering, antiquated Information Technology (IT) systems, and a general inability of the government, academe, various private organizations, and the military to “connect the dots” or process disconnected pieces of information.⁶²⁷ More specifically, bureaucratic and organizational problems result from continued reliance on Cold War structures and covert collection methodologies, whereas IT problems result from poor implementation and poor data management practices leading to an absence of methodologies to identify, model, and predict extremist behavior.

BUREAUCRATIC AND ORGANIZATIONAL PROBLEMS

Bureaucratic Structure

Established through the National Security Act of 1947, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) was created to protect U.S. citizens from Cold War enemies such as the Soviet Union.⁶²⁸ Modeled similar to other government organizations of the 1950s, the CIA has been criticized for being a rather cumbersome structure with several bureaucratic layers separating analysts from the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.⁶²⁹ Moreover, burdensome security procedures and ethnocentric biases have resulted in chronic linguistic

⁶²⁵ Parts of the work presented in this chapter have appeared elsewhere: W. Chris Hale, “Extremism on the World Wide Web: A Research Review,” *Criminal Justice Studies: A Critical Journal of Crime, Law & Society* 25, no. 4 (2012): 343 – 356.; W. Chris Hale, “Information vs. Intelligence: Construction and Analysis of a Relational Database of Worldwide Extremist Activity,” *International Journal of Emergency Management* 3, no. 4 (2006): 280 – 297.

⁶²⁶ White House, *White House Terrorism Strategy: Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States* (Washington, DC, 2011), 1.

⁶²⁷ Gary Anthes, “IT to fight terrorism: Will it work, or will it backfire,” *Computer World*, November 25, 2002, <http://www.computerworld.com/article/2578118/security0/it-to-fight-terrorism.html>; Bruce Berkowitz, “Better ways to fix U.S. intelligence,” *Orbis*, 45 (2001): 609-619.; Bruce Dearstyne, “Information and the War on Terrorism: Issues and Opportunities,” *Information Outlook*, 6, no. 3, (2002): 14-18.

⁶²⁸ John Deutch and Jeffrey Smith, “Smarter intelligence,” *Foreign Policy*, 128 (2002): 64.

⁶²⁹ Bill Gertz, *Breakdown: How America's Intelligence Failures Led to September 11* (Washington: Regnery Publishing, 2012).

shortcomings and an over reliance on foreign liaison services.⁶³⁰ Other intelligence agencies, including the National Security Agency (NSA), National Imagery and Mapping Agency (NIMA) and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) suffered from similar bureaucratic shortcomings.⁶³¹

Fragmented Approach to Intelligence Gathering

Similar to the arguments made above regarding bureaucratic impediments to information collection, analysis, and dissemination, pre-9/11 Intelligence Community organization was based on the following distinctions: “domestic versus foreign threats, law enforcement versus national security concerns, and peacetime versus wartime”.⁶³² This fragmented approach to intelligence gathering resulted in a general lack of information sharing among those collecting intelligence⁶³³ and those who would have made the most use of intelligence – the law enforcement community.⁶³⁴

Nevertheless, Carroll argues that clearly defined legal and jurisdictional parameters result from the very nature of what these organizations are attempting to achieve in the war on terrorism.⁶³⁵ For example, law enforcement, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), collect information after a crime has been committed in order to capture and prosecute criminals in a court of law. Covert organizations, on the other hand, collect information before a crime has occurred to warn of impending threats. Consequently, to protect information gathering sources and methods, the CIA is reluctant to share information. In other words, security classification has little to do with the content of the intelligence itself, and more to do with protecting those who gather the intelligence.⁶³⁶ Moreover, Carroll argues that failure to protect sources and methods may result in detection, jail, or even death for those who are directly collecting intelligence. Further, intelligence often remains classified after an informant or agent’s death so as protect their children and other family members. Similar sentiments are felt among those in law enforcement. Carter argues:

A clear distinction is needed between law enforcement intelligence and national security intelligence. While there is information that can support the goals of both forms of intelligence, the competing methodologies and types of information that can be maintained in records mandates that the distinction remains clear and that overlap occurs only for clear purposes of public safety, including the apprehension of offenders and prevention of criminal and/or terrorists’ acts.⁶³⁷

Despite arguments against intelligence openness, Kiernan argues, “the President has made information sharing an obligation, not a choice, nor a luxury to be enjoyed only when convenient”.⁶³⁸ In fact, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) mandates that preventing terrorism requires information sharing or the movement of intelligence between the intelligence community and federal, state, and local law

⁶³⁰ Richard Russell, “Intelligence Failures: The Wrong Model for the War on Terror,” *Policy Review* 123, (2004): 61-72.

⁶³¹ A. Garfield, “Did September 11 Represent a Failure of the United States Intelligence Services?,” *King’s College London, Department of War Studies*, accessed June 8, 2005, <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/depsta/wsg/sept11/papers/intel.html>.

⁶³² John Deutch and Jeffrey Smith, *Smarter intelligence*, 64.

⁶³³ *9/11 Commission Final Report*, 79.

⁶³⁴ Frank Cilluffo, Ronald Marks, and George Salmoiraghi, “The Use and Limits of U.S. intelligence,” *The Washington Quarterly* 25 (2002): 61-74.

⁶³⁵ Thomas Carroll, “The Case Against Intelligence Openness,” *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence* 14 (2001): 559-574.

⁶³⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶³⁷ David Carter, “Law Enforcement Intelligence: A Guide for State, Local, and Tribal Law Enforcement Agencies,” *COPS website*, November 23, 2004, <http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/default.asp?Item=1404>.

⁶³⁸ Kathleen Kiernan, “Learning to See: Honing Law Enforcement Vision,” *Crime and Justice International* 20 (2005): 33.

enforcement agencies.⁶³⁹ One example of this new-found cooperation includes the development of the Drug Intelligence Fusion Center. Essentially, this center places all intelligence collected by the DHS, FBI, Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and other federal agencies in one centralized location.⁶⁴⁰ Nonetheless, other problems hamper information sharing.

Cold War Collection Methodology

Following the doctrines of Lenin (Soviet Union) and Tse-tung (North Vietnam), Cold War terrorists were well-organized and highly-disciplined.⁶⁴¹ Most had clear political goals and were funded by state sponsors. However, terrorism has changed considerably, with religion rather than politics acting as the primary motivation behind attacks.⁶⁴² Hoffman argues that religiously motivated terrorist groups grew six-fold during the 1980s and continued to rise through the 1990s.⁶⁴³ Similar to changes in motivation, operating structures have changed as well. Today, terrorist groups are unstructured with most members operating independently of each other. They are less command driven, and principles, rather than hierarchy, guide decisions and behavior.⁶⁴⁴ Many utilize a strategy known as leaderless resistance, which “entails a general endorsement of terrorist violence by movement leaders but leaves planning and executing operations to individuals and small groups”.⁶⁴⁵ This strategy encourages individuals to commit autonomous attacks in an uncoordinated but united campaign.⁶⁴⁶ Facilitated by information and communication technologies, decentralized groups are inherently flexible, able to adapt quickly to changing situations and are able to capitalize on the talents of all its members.⁶⁴⁷ Needless to say, advances in information and communication technologies coupled with changes in group organizational structure has inhibited our understanding of extremist networks.

Antiquated Information Technology Systems

Verton argues that antiquated and/or inadequate information technology (IT) also contributed to 9/11 intelligence failures.⁶⁴⁸ In fact, despite billions of dollars at their disposal, Verton reports that National Security Agency (NSA) language analysts conducted a large portion of their work with pencil and paper, making it extremely difficult to share information with other NSA analysts.⁶⁴⁹ Likewise, the FBI had long

⁶³⁹ Larry Greenemeier, “Homeland Security Weighs use of Anti-Terrorism Database,” *Information Week*, December 16, 2004, <http://informationweek.com/story/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=55800554>.

⁶⁴⁰ Larry Greenemeier, “DEA Using IT to Cut Ties between Drugs and Terrorism,” *Information Week*, January 25, 2005, <http://www.informationweek.com/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=57703602>.

⁶⁴¹ Thomas Searle, “Making Airpower Effective Against Guerrillas,” *Air & Space Power Journal* 18 (2004): 13-23.

⁶⁴² Phil Torres, *The End: What Science and Religion Tell Us about the Apocalypse* (Charlottesville: Pitchstone Publishing, 2016), 191.

⁶⁴³ Bruce Hoffman, “Terrorism Trends and Prospects,” in *Countering the New Terrorism*, ed. Ian O. Lesser et al. (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 1999), 7-38.

⁶⁴⁴ John Arquilla, David Ronfeldt, and Michele Zanini, “Networks, Netwar, and Information-Age Terrorism,” in *Countering the New Terrorism*, ed. Ian O. Lesser et al. (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 1999), 39-81.

⁶⁴⁵ Council on Foreign Relations, “American Militant Extremists: United States, Radicals,” *Council on Foreign Relations*, 2004, <http://www.cfrterrorism.org>.

⁶⁴⁶ Federal Bureau of Investigation, “Terrorism 2000/ 2001,” *Federal Bureau of Investigation*, 2001, http://www.fbi.gov/publications/terror/terror2000_2001.htm.

⁶⁴⁷ Michele Zanini and Sean Edwards, “The Networking of Terror in the Information Age,” In *Networks and Netwars: The Future of Terror, Crime, and Militancy*, ed. John Arquilla et al. (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2001) 29-60.

⁶⁴⁸ Dan Verton, “Inadequate IT Contributed to 9/11 Intelligence Failure,” *Computerworld*, July 25, 2003, <http://www.computerworld.com>.

⁶⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

recognized analytical and IT shortcomings, attributing most intelligence problems to a general lack of high-level analysts and opting for more agents on the street rather than upgrading technology.⁶⁵⁰ Similarly, after the 9/11 attacks, the Terrorist Screening Center (TSC) was created to collect, consolidate, and maintain terrorist suspect watch lists from nine federal agencies, including the FBI, DHS, Pentagon, and the State Department. Unfortunately, one study revealed that many of the agencies lacked watch list sharing policies and consequently were not sharing intelligence.⁶⁵¹ The study also reported that those agencies attempting to share intelligence were not able to because of incompatible software and labor-intensive databases.

Clearly, antiquated IT systems resulted in an inability to collect, process, and disseminate valuable intelligence. In fact, in a study of government information systems, Rocheleau (1997) found that failures are common, and most project managers view over-budgeting and late projects to be the norm.⁶⁵² Citing the IRS's twice failed attempt to modernize tax-processing systems, Rocheleau states that most government IT systems are outdated before they are installed. Furthermore, the study found that problems associated with government IT failures included regulation, poor priority-setting, technical and management problems, inadequate training, weak project implementation, and poor organization and categorization of data resulting from information overload.⁶⁵³

Poor Data Methodology and Management

Agreeing with Rocheleau's findings⁶⁵⁴, Dearstyne argues that the attacks on September 11, 2001, resulted in large part from the government's inability to deal with information overload.⁶⁵⁵ Dearstyne further argues that this problem must be overcome due to increased information resulting from the U.S.A. Patriot Act and a fairly new approach to intelligence collection referred to as Network-Centric Warfare.⁶⁵⁶

Fostering a dramatic upsurge in information, the U.S.A. Patriot Act expands the use of wiretaps and other intelligence collection methods. According to Dearstyne, this has resulted in information overload because the government lacks the ability to "connect the dots" or absorb and process this new information. Likewise, the Pentagon's use of Network-Centric Warfare, or the mining of human intelligence, has also resulted in information overload. This type of intelligence collection requires searching through telephone and bank records, visa and immigration databases, and obtaining information from drivers' licenses. Although the goal of Network-Centric Warfare is information superiority and fast responsiveness, current methods of organizing, storing, and processing information are inadequate.⁶⁵⁷

Clearly, the above researchers tend to agree with the findings of the 9/11 Commission Report⁶⁵⁸, which argued that the failure to prevent the attacks on September 11, 2001, resulted primarily from a general lack of trust and cooperation among members of the intelligence community and law enforcement. More specifically, failures are attributed to cumbersome bureaucratic structures, fragmented approaches to intelligence gathering, antiquated Information Technology (IT) systems, and a general inability of the government, academe, various private organizations, and the military to "connect the dots" or process

⁶⁵⁰ Gregory Trevorton, "Intelligence Gathering, Analysis, and Sharing," in *The Department of Homeland Security's First Year: A Report Card*, ed. Donald Kettl. (New York: Century Foundation Press, 2004), 67-90.

⁶⁵¹ United States General Accounting Office, *Homeland Security: Efforts to Improve Information Sharing Need to be Strengthened, Report to the Secretary of Homeland Security*, GAO-03-760 (Washington, DC, 2003), 17.

⁶⁵² Bruce Rocheleau, "Governmental Information System Problems and Failures: A Preliminary Review," *Public Administration and Management* 2, no. 3 (1997). <http://www.pamij.com/roche.html>.

⁶⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵⁵ Dearstyne, 14.

⁶⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵⁸ 9/11 Commission Final Report, 12-13.

disconnected pieces of information. The following briefly summarizes efforts to remedy these problems and prevent future terrorist attacks.

REORGANIZATION

The Department of Homeland Security

Created through Executive Order 13228⁶⁵⁹, on October 8, 2001, the Office of Homeland Security (OHS), was tasked with developing and implementing a national strategy to secure from and respond to terrorist attacks. Headed by Director Tom Ridge, the OHS was soon and largely considered ineffective, due to a small staff and limited funding. Shortly thereafter, addressing the nation on June 6, 2002, President Bush proposed the creation of a new Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Tasked with uniting essential agencies in protecting the homeland, President Bush began to put into motion what would become the largest bureaucratic restructuring of the federal government since World War II.

Formerly established through the Homeland Security Act of 2002⁶⁶⁰, on November 25, 2002, the Department of Homeland Security, also headed by Secretary Tom Ridge, was tasked with increasing federal inter-agency cooperation. Officially opened on January 24, 2003, the Department of Homeland Security ultimately joined together more than 179,000 employees from 22 existing federal agencies and departments. Charged with a five-fold mission, the Department of Homeland Security was to (1) prevent terrorist attacks within the borders of the United States, (2) reduce terrorism vulnerability, (3) minimize damage and assist in recovery from future terrorist attacks, (4) ensure overall economic security, and (5) monitor and sever connections between illegal drug trafficking and terrorism.⁶⁶¹ Sworn in on December 23, 2013, the current Secretary is Jeh Johnson, who now oversees a workforce of 229,000 employees.⁶⁶²

Agencies responsible for national security, and thus transferred intact into the DHS, included the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), U.S. Secret Service, Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC), and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). Ceasing to exist on March 1, 2003, both U.S. Customs and the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) were absorbed into the DHS and broken into three distinct offices. The offices include U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (UCIS), Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE), and Customs and Border Protection (CBP). The following is a very brief overview of these key agencies.

Name	Headquarters	Main Mission and/or Function
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) ⁶⁶³	Washington, D.C.	Manages federal response and recovery efforts through an all-hazards response.
U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) ⁶⁶⁴	Washington, D.C.	Maritime Safety and Security, Mobility, National Defense, and Protection of Natural Resources.

⁶⁵⁹ Executive Order 13228 of October 8, 2001, *Establishing the Office of Homeland Security and the Homeland Security Council*, Code of Federal Regulations, title 3 (2001): 796-802, <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2002-title3-vol1/pdf/CFR-2002-title3-vol1-eo13228.pdf>.

⁶⁶⁰ Homeland Security Act of 2002, 6 U.S.C. § 101 (2002).

⁶⁶¹ Jane Bullock, George Haddow and Damon Coppola, *Homeland Security: The Essentials* (Waltham: Elsevier, 2013), 17-34.

⁶⁶² <https://www.dhs.gov/person/jeh-johnson>.

⁶⁶³ <http://www.fema.gov/>.

⁶⁶⁴ <https://www.uscg.mil/>.

U.S. Secret Service ⁶⁶⁵	Washington, D.C.	Protection of the President and senior executives. Protect U.S. currency and financial infrastructure. Secure designated national events.
Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) ⁶⁶⁶	Glynco, GA	Principle provider of training and technical assistance for state, local, and international law enforcement entities.
Transportation Security Administration (TSA) ⁶⁶⁷	Pentagon City, Arlington County, VA	Tasked with overall transportation security.
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (UCIS) ⁶⁶⁸	Washington, D.C.	Facilitate legal immigration.
Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE) ⁶⁶⁹	Washington, D.C.	Enforce federal immigration and customs laws.
Customs and Border Protection (CBP) ⁶⁷⁰	Washington, D.C.	Secures all of America's 7,500 miles of land borders and 95,000 miles of maritime border in partnership with the USCG.

The Intelligence Community

Spending nearly \$1 trillion on national security annually, the United States intelligence community is currently comprised of 17 federal agencies with both distinct and overlapping missions. These missions include law enforcement, national defense, foreign relations, and homeland security. Despite each operating and shrouded in secrecy, all connect and share information through a variety of information sharing platforms and portals. These include, but are not limited to, the National Counterterrorism Center, the Joint Counterterrorism Assessment Team, 71 Joint Terrorism Task Forces, 56 Field Intelligence Groups, 78 state and local intelligence fusion centers⁶⁷¹, and the Intelligence Community Information Technology Enterprise program (ICITE).⁶⁷² The following is a very brief overview of each agency.

⁶⁶⁵ <http://www.secretservice.gov/>.

⁶⁶⁶ <https://www.fletc.gov/>.

⁶⁶⁷ <https://www.tsa.gov/>.

⁶⁶⁸ <https://www.uscis.gov/>.

⁶⁶⁹ <https://www.ice.gov/>.

⁶⁷⁰ <https://www.cbp.gov/>.

⁶⁷¹ Michael German, "The US Intelligence Community is Bigger Than Ever, but is it Worth the Cost?," *Defenseone.com*, February 6, 2015, <http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2015/02/us-intelligence-community-bigger-ever-it-worth-it/104799/>.

⁶⁷² Karen Bannan, "The Intelligence Community is Sharing More Data, and Making IT More Secure," *Fedtechmagazine.com*, July 22, 2016, <http://www.fedtechmagazine.com/article/2016/07/intelligence-community-sharing-more-data-and-making-it-more-secure>.

Name	Headquarters	Main Mission and/or Function
Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) ⁶⁷³	Langley, VA	Collect, analyze, and disseminate foreign signals and human intelligence.
National Security Agency (NSA) ⁶⁷⁴	Fort Meade, MD	Intercept and process foreign communications and information assurance.
Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) ⁶⁷⁵	Washington, D.C.	Department of Defense (DOD) lead intelligence agency; Coordinate, collect, and analyze intelligence on foreign militaries.
U.S. Department of State - Bureau of Intelligence & Research (INR) ⁶⁷⁶	Washington, D.C.	State Department's primary advisor on intelligence matters.
U.S. Air Force – Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance (ISR) ⁶⁷⁷	Lackland Air Force Base, TX	Collect and analyze intelligence on foreign nations and/or hostile forces.
Federal Bureau of Investigation - National Security Branch (NSB) ⁶⁷⁸	Washington, D.C.	Integrates national security and criminal threat intelligence from numerous sources.
U.S. Army – Intelligence & Security Command (INSCOM) ⁶⁷⁹	Fort Belvoir, VA	Provide ground commanders with battlefield information, such as, enemy force structure and numbers.
Department of Energy (DOE) - Office of Intelligence & Counterintelligence ⁶⁸⁰	Washington, D.C.	Offers analytical expertise concerning nuclear weapons, nuclear energy, and energy security.
Coast Guard Intelligence (CGI) ⁶⁸¹	Washington, D.C.	Coast Guard investigative arm; maritime and port security, search and rescue, and counter-narcotics.
U.S. Department of the Treasury - Office of Intelligence & Analysis (OIA) ⁶⁸²	Washington, D.C.	Safeguards the U.S. financial system.
Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) ⁶⁸³	El Paso, TX	Collects and provides drug investigation intelligence to other law enforcement agencies.
U.S. Marine Corps – Intelligence Activity (IA) ⁶⁸⁴	Quantico, VA	Provide ground commanders with battlefield information.

⁶⁷³ <https://www.cia.gov/index.html>.

⁶⁷⁴ <https://www.nsa.gov/>.

⁶⁷⁵ <http://www.dia.mil/>.

⁶⁷⁶ <http://www.state.gov/s/inr/>.

⁶⁷⁷ <http://www.af.mil/ISR.aspx>.

⁶⁷⁸ <https://www.fbi.gov/about/leadership-and-structure/national-security-branch>.

⁶⁷⁹ <https://www.army.mil/inscom>.

⁶⁸⁰ <http://energy.gov/office-intelligence-and-counterintelligence>

⁶⁸¹ <http://www.uscg.mil/history/faqs/cgi.asp>

⁶⁸² <https://www.treasury.gov/about/organizational-structure/offices/Pages/Office-of-Intelligence-Analysis.aspx>

⁶⁸³ <https://www.dea.gov/index.shtml>

National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) ⁶⁸⁵	Fort Belvoir, VA	Collect and generate data from satellite information used in navigation, national security, military operations, and humanitarian efforts.
National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) ⁶⁸⁶	Chantilly, VA	Design, build, launch, and maintain spy satellites.
Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) ⁶⁸⁷	Washington, D.C.	Collect, analyze, and disseminate maritime intelligence.
Department of Homeland Security - Office of Intelligence & Analysis ⁶⁸⁸	Washington, D.C.	Collect, analyze, manage, and disseminate intelligence relevant to homeland security.
Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) ⁶⁸⁹	Washington, D.C.	Intelligence integration of the entire U.S. Intelligence Community.

As indicated above, post-9/11 attempts have been made to ease cumbersome bureaucratic structures and increase and foster intelligence collection and sharing. Unfortunately, advances in information and communication technologies coupled with changes in group organizational structure has resulted in a number of new challenges.

CURRENT AND FUTURE CHALLENGES

Internet Radicalization - The New Intelligence Gap

Extremists use the Internet for a variety of reasons including easy access, limited or no regulations (i.e. lack of government control), huge audiences, anonymity of communication with like-minded individuals, a multimedia environment (i.e. combination of text, graphics, audio, and video), and the ability to shape traditional mass media coverage. Information placed on the Internet by extremist groups include history and organizational activities, biographies of leaders, founders, and heroes, up-to-date news, training manuals, and fundraising activities.⁶⁹⁰ Weimann also found that numerous terrorist groups use the Internet to plan attacks, such as Hamas using chat rooms to plan violent operations across Gaza, West Bank, and Israel.⁶⁹¹ Conducting similar research, Katz states, “The Internet is perhaps al-Qaeda’s most effective way of communicating and continuing their jihad given the world’s increased vigilance on their activities”.⁶⁹² Although it is difficult to ascertain an accurate number of extremist groups operating on the Internet, a recent report suggests that there are close to 14,000 social networking sites, forums, twitter, blogs, newsgroups, and other on demand video sites supporting just hate-motivated extremist groups alone.⁶⁹³

⁶⁸⁴ <http://www.hqmc.marines.mil/intelligence>

⁶⁸⁵ <https://www.nga.mil/Pages/Default.aspx>

⁶⁸⁶ <http://www.nro.gov/>

⁶⁸⁷ <http://www.oni.navy.mil/>

⁶⁸⁸ <https://www.dhs.gov/office-intelligence-and-analysis>

⁶⁸⁹ <https://www.dni.gov/index.php>

⁶⁹⁰ Gabriel Weimann, “www.terror.net: How Modern Terrorism Uses the Internet,” *United States Institute of Peace, Special Report, 116*, March 2004, <http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/sr116.pdf>.

⁶⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹² Rita Katz, “Tools of the trade: Hunting terrorists,” *Crime and Justice International*, 20, (2005): 19.

⁶⁹³ Simon Wiesenthal Center, “2011 Digital Terrorism & Hate Report,” *Simon Wiesenthal Center*, 2011, <http://www.wiesenthal.com>.

Information Sharing

Prior to the advent of the Internet, extremist groups spread their messages through book distribution, newspapers, magazines, and newsletters.⁶⁹⁴ Although all still utilized today, the Internet has made dissemination of materials quicker and more cost effective. In other words, users can instantly download (and disseminate) fliers, books, magazines and newsletters, as well as, watch and listen to recorded or live streaming audio and video in the privacy of their own homes. Still other sites offer organizational operational manuals, with chapters discussing ideology, organization, propaganda, violence and terror, and activist tips. Finally, other information widely available include numerous tutorials on building bombs, firing weapons, physical fitness training, plotting assassinations, and how to organize and manage an extremist cell.

Fundraising

In general, extremist groups rely heavily on donations.⁶⁹⁵ These donations are either directly solicited via organizational websites or indirectly through front organizations and/or charities. Money is directly solicited through credit card payment options, with many providing bank account numbers as to where money can be deposited. Some groups have even begun to profile site visitors, gathering user demographics, and then contacting those that appear to be potential supporters. Many websites offer online stores, where money is raised through the sale of books, audio and video tapes, flags, and t-shirts.

Social Networking and Recruitment

Similar to tactics used to raise funds, the Internet has also proven to be an effective recruitment tool. One method utilizes recruiters who roam public online chat rooms, post messages on electronic bulletin boards, and track website user demographics in attempt to find supporters.⁶⁹⁶ Once potential recruits are located, members flood them with religious decrees, training manuals, and anti-American propaganda, with much of it being audience and language specific.⁶⁹⁷ Often referred to as Web 2.0, social media sites, including web forums, blogs, wikis, and media-sharing websites, contain massive volumes of user-generated content and have become more popular than ever.⁶⁹⁸ Americans alone spend nearly one-quarter of their time online visiting social networking and blogging websites.⁶⁹⁹ Facebook, a top social media destination, boasts more than one billion users.⁷⁰⁰ Unfortunately, a recent White House terrorism strategy reports that many of these popular social media sites play an important role in “advancing violent extremist narratives”.⁷⁰¹ In fact, with little or no editorial control and an environment where all users are equal participants, social networking sites allow hate and violent rhetoric to flow unchallenged.⁷⁰² Understanding the danger of harmful content,

⁶⁹⁴ Kenneth Stern, *Hate and the Internet* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1999).

⁶⁹⁵ Maura Conway, “Terrorist use of the Internet and Fighting Back,” Paper presented at the *Cybersafety: Safety and Security in a Networked World: Balancing Cyber-Rights and Responsibilities*, 8-10. Oxford University: Oxford Internet Institute, September 2005.

⁶⁹⁶ Weimann, 8.

⁶⁹⁷ Timothy Thomas, “Al Qaeda and the Internet: The Danger of Cyberplanning,” *Parameters* 33, no. 1 (2003): 112-123.; Yilu Zhou et al., “Exploring the Dark Side of the Web: Collection and Analysis of U.S. Extremist Online Forums,” In *ISI 2006, LNCS 3975*, ed. S. Mehrotra. (Verlag Berlin Heidelberg: Springer, 2006), 621-626.

⁶⁹⁸ Junghoo Cho and Andrew Tomkins, “Social Media and Search,” *IEEE Internet Computing*, 11 (2007): 13-15.; Rainie Lee et al., “Social Networking Sites and Our Lives,” *Pew Research Center Publications*, June 16, 2011, <http://www.pewresearch.org>.

⁶⁹⁹ Paul, Ian, “Americans are Drawn to Social Networks, with Facebook Leading the Way,” *PCWorld*, September 13, 2011, <http://www.pcworld.com>.

⁷⁰⁰ Facebook, “Facebook Statistics,” *Facebook*, August 1, 2016, <http://www.facebook.com>.

⁷⁰¹ White House, 6-7.

⁷⁰² Yang, Ming et al., “Social Media Analytics for Radical Opinion Mining in Hate Group Web Forums,” *Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management* 8, no. 1 (2011): 1-17.

Facebook employs a team of professionals that hunt and remove content in violation of their policies. Content removed includes actionable threats, hateful material, and nudity and/or pornography.⁷⁰³ Nevertheless, with more than 900 million objects interacted with daily (pages, groups, events, and community pages) removing extremist content is difficult at best. Understanding the growing use of social media among violent extremist groups, the UK Home Office announced in 2009 that they would begin monitoring all conversations on social networking sites. The sites included Facebook, MySpace, Bebo, Twitter, and Skype.⁷⁰⁴ More recently, former US DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano stated that “fighting homegrown terrorism by monitoring Internet communications is a civil liberties trade off the U.S. government must make to beef up national security”.⁷⁰⁵ Napolitano further argued that “the First Amendment protects radical opinions, but we need the legal tools to do things like monitor the recruitment of terrorists via the Internet”.⁷⁰⁶

In fact, in 2010, the DHS launched the Publicly Available Social Media Monitoring and Situational Awareness Initiative. This program operated by the National Operations Center (NOC) under the Office of Operations Coordination and Planning as part of the DHS, monitors numerous social media services (without any direct interaction), and subsequently, acquiring and storing publicly available information. Moreover, information is being collected

to provide situational awareness and establish a common operating picture for the entire federal government, and for state, local, and tribal governments as appropriate, in the event of a natural disaster, act of terrorism, or other manmade disaster; and ensure that critical terrorism and disaster-related information reaches government decision-makers.⁷⁰⁷

In order to do so, OPS agents are permitted to establish user accounts on various social media sites. When appropriate (i.e. life-threatening situation), the DHS will have the ability to disclose personal social media information with foreign governments, and public and private entities.⁷⁰⁸

Publicity

Extremist websites employ three rhetorical structures when justifying their reliance on violence to affect political, social, or religious change.⁷⁰⁹ First, extremist websites portray their members as underdogs, with no choice but to use violence. Extremist organizations are persecuted by a relentless and oppressive enemy with violence seen as the only response. Extremist groups are portrayed as small, weak, and hunted, while governments are characterized as murderers seeking slaughter and genocide. Second, extremist organizations actively attempt to demonize and dehumanize the enemy. Members are presented as freedom fighters against a ruthless and crushing enemy. Using selected facts, misleading statements, and smear campaigns, extremist organizations effectively shift responsibility of violence from them towards their

⁷⁰³ Paisley Dodds, “Extremist Groups Grow Through Facebook and Other Social Media,” *MercuryNews.com*, September 29, 2011, <http://www.mercurynews.com>.

⁷⁰⁴ Tom Espiner, “U.K. to Monitor, Store all Social-Network Traffic?,” *CNET News*, March 18, 2009, <http://www.news.cnet.com>.

⁷⁰⁵ Associated Press, “Napolitano: Internet Monitoring Needed to Fight Homegrown Terrorism,” *Associated Press*. June 18, 2010, <http://www.ap.org>.

⁷⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰⁷ U.S. Department of Homeland Security, *Privacy Impact Assessment for the Office of Operations Coordination and Planning Publicly Available Social Media Monitoring and Situational Awareness Initiative* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Homeland Security (2010), 4-5.

⁷⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰⁹ Weimann, 6.

enemies.⁷¹⁰ Finally, extremist websites are increasingly using nonviolent communication in an attempt to contradict their violent image.

Nevertheless, in order to attract public attention, extremist groups must have the ability to publicize their causes and activities. In the past, the act of securing the attention of the public required and often depended on attracting the attention of traditional television, radio, and print media.⁷¹¹ Today, the Internet has given extremist groups unprecedented control over their message, providing them the ability to directly shape public perception. Chat rooms, websites, and bulletin boards are largely free from government control and censorship, essentially becoming an extremist's private television or radio network.⁷¹²

According to a recent White House Terrorism Strategy:

The United States Constitution recognizes freedom of expression, even for individuals who espouse unpopular or even hateful views. But when individuals or groups choose to further their grievances or ideologies through violence, by engaging in violence themselves or by recruiting and encouraging others to do so, it becomes the collective responsibility of the US Government and the American people to take a stand.⁷¹³

The above quote seems to address the complex problems that arise when balancing societal concerns against constitutional guarantees of free expression. In fact, pushing a community-based educational approach, White House officials plan to educate and assist community members and law enforcement professionals about the dangers of online extremism. In addition to the challenges of Internet radicalization and the very real threat from foreign terrorist organizations since the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, a recent DHS report argues that, "lone wolves and small terrorist cells embracing violent rightwing extremist ideology are the most dangerous domestic terrorism threat in the United States".⁷¹⁴

Domestic Terrorism

Responding to an early 911 call on April 4, 2009, two Pittsburgh police officers were fatally shot in the head by a gunman wearing a bulletproof vest. Lying in wait, Richard Poplawski, then murdered a third officer, igniting a four hour gun battle with Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) teams. Fueled by racism and a fear that the Obama administration was planning to facilitate right-infringing gun legislation, the officers were the first Pittsburgh city officers to die in the line of duty in 18 years.⁷¹⁵ Two months later, on June 10, 2009, James W. Von Brunn, a white supremacist, walked into the crowded U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., and immediately opened fire. Utilizing a .22-caliber rifle, Von Brunn shot and killed Stephen Tyrone Jones, one of the museum security guards. Von Brunn was a known anti-Semitic and Holocaust denier.⁷¹⁶ These events, coupled with the foiled 2008 Obama assassination

⁷¹⁰ Fred Cohen, "Managing Network Security: Terrorism and Cyberspace," *Network Security*, 2002, <http://all.net/journal/netsec/2002-05.html>.

⁷¹¹ Steven Furnell and Matthew Warren, "Computer Hacking and Cyberterrorism: The Real Threats in the New Millennium," *Computers and Security* 18, no. 1 (1999): 28-34.

⁷¹² Thomas, 112.

⁷¹³ White House, 1.

⁷¹⁴ Extremism and Radicalization Branch, Homeland Environment Threat Analysis Division, *Rightwing Extremism: Current Economic and Political Climate Fueling Resurgence in Radicalization and Recruitment*, IA-0257-09 (Washington, DC: DHS/Office of Intelligence and Analysis, 2009), 7.

⁷¹⁵ Ramit Plushnick-Masti and Dan Nephin, "Richard Poplawski, Pittsburgh Gunman, Kills 3 Police Officers," *The Huffington Post*, April 4, 2009, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com>.

⁷¹⁶ Judson Berger, "Holocaust Museum Shooting Shows Difficulties in Tracking Hate Sites, Speech," *Fox News.com*, June 11, 2009, <http://foxnews.com>.

attempt by two neo-Nazi skinheads, point to an escalation of rightwing extremist violence, not seen since the 1990's.⁷¹⁷

According to Gus Martin, extremism “is characterized by intolerance toward opposing interests and divergent opinions and is the primary catalyst and motivation for terrorist behavior”.⁷¹⁸ Further arguing that those who cross the line from extremism to terrorism “always develop noble arguments to rationalize and justify their acts of violence toward nations, people, religions, or other interests”.⁷¹⁹ In other words, extremism should be thought of as a precursor to terrorism, often utilized to motivate and justify acts of terror.

Utilizing the DHS/Office of Intelligence and Analysis definition, “Rightwing extremism in the United States can be broadly divided into those groups, movements, and adherents that are primarily hate-oriented (based on hatred of particular religious, racial or ethnic groups), and those that are mainly antigovernment, rejecting federal authority in favor of state or local authority, or rejecting government authority entirely”.⁷²⁰ Furthermore, most scholars attribute this apparent rise in rightwing extremist violence to several emergent issues. These issues include the current economic downturn, the immigration debate, international conflict resulting in two wars, and the election of the first African American President.⁷²¹ First, by exploiting the economic downturn and loss of jobs, violent rightwing extremist leaders may be recruiting new members by simply giving them someone to blame. Acting as perceived sources of economic competition, hatred and violence against immigrants is touted as the only justifiable response. Similarly, rightwing extremists argue that the perceived rise in the number of illegal immigrants is simply a plot to destroy white America. The National Socialist Movement (NSM) in particular has focused extensively on illegal immigration for recruitment efforts.⁷²² Third, rightwing extremists argue that the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were orchestrated and fought for Jewish interests. Discussions of this issue fill white supremacist social-networking sites⁷²³ and are utilized to recruit U.S. soldiers into the movement.⁷²⁴ Finally, the election of the first African American President has infuriated many rightwing extremists. Many of them see Barak Obama’s election as a forced infusion of nonwhite values and thus a threat to “traditional” American culture. Fueled in large part by the Internet and social-networking technologies, extremists exploit the above issues, spread propaganda, and recruit new members, all of which may be contributing to the pronounced state of radicalization inside the United States.⁷²⁵

In closing, two arguments are discernable from the literature regarding intelligence reform. These include a dramatic restructuring of the intelligence community and better use of Information Technology as a key weapon in the war on terrorism. Yet, despite encouragement (post 9/11) towards better use of information and communication technologies, legacy computer systems, federated databases, and poor data

⁷¹⁷ Pete Simi, “Why Study White Supremacist Terror? A Research Note.” *Deviant Behavior* 31 (2010): 251-273.

⁷¹⁸ Gus Martin, *Terrorism and Homeland Security* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2011), 4.

⁷¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁷²⁰ Extremism and Radicalization Branch, Homeland Environment Threat Analysis Division, 2.

⁷²¹ Philip Jenkins, *Images of Terror: What We Can and Can’t Know About Terrorism* (Edison: Aldine Transaction, 2003), 66.; Simi, 260-266.

⁷²² *Ibid.*, 262.

⁷²³ *Ibid.*, 264.

⁷²⁴ Federal Bureau of Investigation, *White Supremacist Recruitment of Military Personnel since 9/11: Intelligence Assessment* (Washington, DC: FBI Counterterrorism Division, 2008), 2.

⁷²⁵ Federal Bureau of Investigation, Robert S. Mueller, III, Director, *Federal Bureau of Investigation, Statement before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs* (Washington D.C., September 22, 2010), 2, <http://www.hsgac.senate.gov/download/?id=7ab6dc14-f3f9-43e9-aae0-4ea144c89447>.

management continue to plague government computer systems.⁷²⁶ In addition, Internet radicalization and the apparent rise in rightwing violence and extremism has brought further challenges. In closing, it is worth revisiting a quote from a recent White House Terrorism Strategy which argues that “Our threat environment is constantly evolving, which is why we must consistently revisit our priorities and ensure our domestic approach can address multiple types of violent extremism”.⁷²⁷

⁷²⁶ Krysta Dodd, “Federal Government Remains Shockingly Dependent on Legacy IT,” *Homeland Security Today*, August 18, 2016. <http://www.hstoday.us/briefings/industry-news/single-article/federal-government-remains-shockingly-dependent-on-legacy-it/f61f63b53d6425a2a6ad2c12b2827568.html>.

⁷²⁷ White House, 2.

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