

Suddenly in September?

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'What happened on 9/11 is that we didn't have a strategy, we didn't have bipartisan agreement, we didn't have American understanding of it, and we had instead a policy coup in this country – a coup – a policy coup. Some hard-nose people took over the direction of American policy and they never bothered to inform the rest of us.' – US General Wesley Clark 3 October, 2007

When in 2016 I assembled some material on the September 11 attacks in the United States,¹ the 15th anniversary generated very little mainstream interest. Would the investigation of 9/11 go the way of the President John F Kennedy assassination in 1963: anniversary recycling of old stories with its surviving researchers inhabiting the Grassy Knoll cast as 'conspiracy theorists'? It seemed likely when those looking into 9/11 were styled not as sturdy investigators but as obsessive 'truthers' indulging in the 'voodoo history' alleged by one of Rupert Murdoch's columnists.² Some were even described as '9/11 fantasists' and 'morons' by *Guardian* writer George Monbiot.³

But since this summer's US and UK evacuation from Afghanistan, President George Bush's 2001 Operation Enduring Freedom response to 9/11 and the pre-emptive wars that followed are now being much more widely questioned. For despite President Joe Biden seeking to draw down the curtain on two decades of deadly conflict by the US and its allies, the concerning consequences live on.

This is not just in the continuing suffering and suicides of veterans as recently recounted by UK Defence Minister James Heappey,⁴ but in the hundreds of thousands of dead non-combatants and the millions of refugees

¹ <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/free/lobster72/lob72-fifteen-years-9-11.pdf>>

² <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/online/issue57/lob57-46.htm>>

³ <<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2007/feb/06/comment.film>>
<<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2007/feb/20/comment.september11>>

⁴ <<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/afghanistan-uk-veterans-taken-own-070500712.html>>

resulting from 20 years of 'humanitarian intervention'.

Geographically nearer to the 9/11 attacks themselves, thousands are still suffering from the noxious debris generated in the destruction of the three Manhattan skyscrapers that day. ITV reported recently that in the 20 years since 2001 3,900 people have died of conditions they contracted from the toxic dust that included the remains of the many hundreds of Twin Towers victims who were atomised that day.

Of those surviving at least 22,000 have cancer, 47,000 people have respiratory and digestive issues and thousands more have other life-altering or life-ending conditions.⁵ This includes first responders, the people in the area that day and those who returned to Ground Zero having been falsely told by the Bush White House that the air was safe to breathe.⁶ Under legal pressure from the families of 9/11 victims, Biden has now said more FBI material will be opened up.⁷

In the UK there is the demand to reopen the inquest into the death in the North Tower of British citizen Geoff Campbell. Unusually there has been some mainstream media coverage of this campaign with veteran *Daily Mail* reporter Sue Reid taking particular interest in the case.⁸

For those now wanting to learn more, author Ian Henshall, a supporter of the Campbell family's inquest appeal to the Attorney General, has updated his 2007 book *9/11: The New Evidence*.⁹ It will shortly be available as an e-book with an afterword written after the retreat from Afghanistan.¹⁰

In now listing some outstanding questions and identifying newer sources, I will not retrace the ground I explored in 2016.¹¹ So newcomers to

⁵ < <https://www.itv.com/news/2021-09-09/why-911-attacks-still-remain-a-death-sentence-for-those-helping-in-aftermath> >

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Health_effects_arising_from_the_September_11_attacks>

⁶ <<https://www.alternet.org/2021/09/9-11-bush-epa/>>

⁷ <<https://tinyurl.com/49a9ttwa>> or <<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/sep/03/joe-biden-fbi-release-files-september-11-investigation-saudi>>

Relatives' case outlined by their lawyer, James Kreindler, at <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6nnz0YRy6So>>.

⁸ <<https://tinyurl.com/zv55ba7y>> or <<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9928641/Family-Brit-killed-9-11-terror-attacks-demand-new-inquest.html>>

⁹ <<https://tinyurl.com/aehhmeu2>> or <<https://www.hachette.co.uk/titles/ian-henshall/9-11-the-new-evidence/9781845295141/>>

¹⁰ <<https://www.littlebrown.co.uk/>>

¹¹ See note 1.

9/11 and the 'war on terror' might find it helpful to look at that, including its links to the wealth of material that has largely yet to appear in the mainstream media. An audio summary of some of that *Lobster* article is available for those wishing to lighten their reading load.¹²

Graeme MacQueen's *The Anthrax Deception* offers some important clues to understanding 2001 events.¹³ Jon Gold made available as a free print download his broadcast interviews of those caught up in 9/11.¹⁴

Who was who

Other *Lobster* issues have covered the context from which the post-2001 'war on terror' emerged. In 1997 in *Lobster* 31 I identified some young Britons in politics and journalism who, as Fellows of the British American Project (BAP), were to become prominent in agreeing to those 'anti-terrorism' interventions and the reporting of them.¹⁵ I helped Andy Beckett with his subsequent *Guardian* follow-up feature, 'Friends in High Places', that appeared the year after the Iraq invasion.¹⁶ In *Lobster* 47, 'Terrorism, Anti-Semitism and Dissent' set out some of the political background to that part of the 'war' that after 2001 took British troops into Iraq and other parts of the Middle East.¹⁷

In reviewing 9/11 five years later I repeat my 2016 caution: 9/11 is a large and complex topic. Even the identifiable list of actors is long, many speaking in unfamiliar languages and with histories and involvements often difficult to fathom. Much of the important information about what happened before, during and after September 11 remains formally or informally concealed, just as most of the steel and debris remains of the three New York skyscrapers that came down on September 11 were removed before they could be forensically examined.¹⁸

Many eyewitnesses to 2001 events and their early aftermath are dead, several in suspicious circumstances.¹⁹ Others have chosen to say nothing,

¹² <<https://www.themindrenewed.com/interviews/2016/948-int118>>

¹³ <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/free/lobster69/lob69-anthrax-deception.pdf>>

¹⁴ <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/free/lobster76/lob76-lied-9-11.pdf> >
<<http://wewereliedtoabout911.com/>>

¹⁵ <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/online/issue33/lob33-02.htm>>

¹⁶ <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2004/nov/06/usa.politics1>>

¹⁷ <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/online/issue47/lob47-03.htm>>

¹⁸ <<https://911research.wtc7.net/wtc/groundzero/cleanup.html>>

¹⁹ See appendix.

while some of those who have spoken have proved to be, at best, less than frank. Few elected politicians have talked about 9/11 and of those who have, Donald Trump is not the only one to have been a stranger to the truth.²⁰

The late Labour MP Michael Meacher was one politician who did question the conventional account,²¹ but few other ministers from the Blair 2001 government chose to speak when the British Parliament debated the departure from Afghanistan 20 years after the September 11 attacks led to that country's invasion. Tony Blair himself is not a member of the Commons or Lords, a non-parliamentary status he shares with Gordon Brown and Jack Straw, both senior New Labour colleagues in his government at the time of 9/11.²²

Those from that 2001 administration who were entitled to speak in the Commons and Lords debates on August 18²³ but chose not to do so included Blair's Deputy Prime Minister Lord Prescott, and former ministers Baronesses Liddell and Symons, Lords Mandelson, Murphy, Reid and Smith along with Nick Brown MP, Baroness Jay and Margaret Beckett MP, her fellow member of the British-American Parliamentary Group (B-APG).²⁴ Symons, Mandelson and Smith were early members of the BAP, not to be confused with the B-APG.

I will say more about British politicians who did choose to speak about Afghanistan, but let's first trace some Americans prominent in September 11 events. Her Majesty the Queen honoured two of them for their reportedly 'heroic' work on 9/11: New York mayor Rudy Giuliani and his police commissioner Bernard Kerik, the former receiving an honorary knighthood.²⁵ 'Sir Rudy' became known to a more recent audience as President Trump's lawyer, most dramatically when his hair dye felt the heat of the 2020 campaign.²⁶ The licence of the 9/11 hero to practise law in New York was

²⁰ <<https://tinyurl.com/r3ah3fc2>> or <<https://www.forbes.com/sites/lisettevoytko/2020/09/11/a-timeline-of-trumps-misleading-911-claims/?sh=32cd423f5836>>

²¹ <<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2003/sep/06/september11.iraq>>

²² <<https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/the-911-advice-that-tony-blair-didnt-take/>>

²³ <<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2021-08-18/debates/2A9509A7-E79D-4F2A-AA16-7AED059E7F99/Afghanistan>>
<<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2021-08-18/debates/A86142BD-A204-4BC8-BBC0-ACA7BAD7E9F0/Afghanistan>>

²⁴ <<http://www.bapg.org.uk/>>

²⁵ <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/1817333.stm>>

²⁶ <<https://tinyurl.com/5bnxertr>> or <<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-election-2020/rudy-giuliani-hair-dye-sweat-trump-b1750510.html>>

suspended in 2021 over false Trump election claims.²⁷ His long-standing associate Kerik, who on September 11 said his police had come across the intact passport of a hijacker in the burning Twin Towers wreckage in which the 9/11 Commission said the black boxes of two aircraft were never found, was jailed for fraud nine years later.²⁸ He was presidentially pardoned by Trump in 2020²⁹ after serving Bush as Minister of Interior of Iraq following the 2003 invasion.

With Kerik in Iraq at the time was L Paul Bremer. After working as managing director of Kissinger and Associates he became Bush's appointee to run the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq in 2003.³⁰ On 9/11 he would usually have been with his Marsh & McLennan employees in their Twin Tower offices. But as hundreds of his trapped work colleagues were dying Bremer was in a New York TV studio calmly discussing the attack and identifying the likely assailants.³¹

Bremer cheated death just like Larry Silverstein, the property magnate who had jointly acquired the Twin Towers housing Marsh & McLennan just seven weeks before they were destroyed.³² He would normally have been having breakfast with his clients in the Windows on the World restaurant atop the North Tower, but claimed he was saved that day by his wife insisting he attend a medical appointment.³³

While Bremer was quickly framing the 'war on terror' narrative around Osama bin Laden in a New York studio, former Israel Prime Minister Ehud Barak was doing the same from a BBC World one in London.³⁴ His 'the world

²⁷ <<https://tinyurl.com/uxcwryrk>>

²⁸ <<https://abcnews.go.com/Blotter/kerik-sentenced-years-prison/story?id=9875911>>

²⁹ <<https://tinyurl.com/2jkfuu5h>> or <<https://theweek.com/speedreads/896611/trumps-pardon-bernie-kerik-also-apparently-wiped-keriks-103300-debt-taxpayers>>

³⁰ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coalition_Provisional_Authority>

³¹ <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j2pW6WZhZrQ>>

³² <<https://wtc.com/media/news/15-years-after-911-larry-silverstein-finally-recreated-wtc>> <<https://tinyurl.com/4sdpmdn2>> or <<http://www.historycommons.org/searchResults.jsp?searchtext=Larry+Silverstein&events=on&entities=on&articles=on&topics=on&timelines=on&projects=on&tiles=on&descriptions=on&dosearch=on&search=Go>>

³³ <http://historycommons.org/entity.jsp?entity=larry_silverstein> and <<https://tinyurl.com/m7mnwhpp>> or <<https://tinyurl.com/m7mnwhpp>> or <<https://www.forbes.com/sites/giacomotognini/2021/09/10/larry-silverstein-durst-oculus-20-years-and-20-billion-after-911-the-world-trade-center-is-still-a-work-in-progress/?sh=2e161a6961d2>>

³⁴ <<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2pvf54>>

will never be the same' theme was quickly taken up by Bush and Blair, and echoed throughout the mainstream media.

Enter NATO

The following morning NATO Secretary-General Lord Robertson, an important BAP member from its 1985 foundation, invoked the self-defence Article 5 of the organisation's founding treaty. This turned the criminal attacks in the United States into a war on its alleged terrorist or terrorist-supporting enemies. By this means Blair's former Defence Secretary set up NATO members' support for the decades of conflict that have followed.

Robertson was duly rewarded by Bush two years later in the garden of the White House with the Presidential Medal of Freedom.³⁵ He then left NATO for a business career in the arms, energy and finance sectors, working, among others, with former US Defence Secretary William Cohen.³⁶

When those years of international intervention ostensibly ended with the Afghanistan withdrawal, Robertson had little to say in the Lords debate that followed:

'Over two decades, NATO and those who served with ISAF [the International Security Assistance Force] did much to reduce the terrorist threat to the people of this country. Those who served can be justifiably proud. We were always going to eventually leave Afghanistan to the Afghan people, but, instead of a conditions-based, gradual withdrawal, this shambolic, reckless and disorganised retreat will weaken NATO and the West, strengthen our adversaries and betray those Afghans who trusted us, especially girls and women.

But hand wringing in debates such as this is not going to help the future. First, we need to prepare for an increased terrorist threat here, as the noble Baroness, Lady Manningham-Buller, has just warned. Secondly, we need to rebuild the regional coalition to hold the Taliban to account for what it is saying today. Thirdly, we need to learn the lessons of this mission, especially about conducting a distant military operation with an inadequate, half-hearted determination to win it.

When I was NATO Secretary-General, I repeatedly warned the NATO countries and the wider world that we have to go to Afghanistan or Afghanistan will come to us. I greatly fear that that is just what is going to happen.'

³⁵ <<https://2001-2009.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rm/2003/26119.htm>>

³⁶ <<https://www.cohengroup.net/our-people/george-robertson>>

His apparent lack of insight into what happened in the past 20 years of pre-emptive wars in West Asia and the Middle East was reflected in the contribution of Lady Manningham-Buller, the former MI5 deputy chief. She told the Lords that when she and the head of MI6 met the Bush team in Washington shortly after 9/11, 'the decision was about al-Qaeda, its base in Afghanistan and its close relationship with the Taliban. I do not remember any discussion on Iraq.'

Either she has poor recall or was deaf to what Bremer and Barak spelled out within an hour of the attack. The message was reinforced not long afterwards by Bush and Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld: Iraq was to be the real target and enormous efforts were being made in Washington to link its ruler, Saddam Hussein, to Osama Bin Laden.³⁷ Within a week of 9/11 Washington was falsely blaming the Iraq leader for anthrax attacks that killed five innocent Americans and targeted two senior Congressional opponents of Bush.³⁸ Subsequent evidence points to the anthrax being produced in a US military laboratory.

If Manningham-Buller's observation was disappointing, then those of other parliamentarians displayed even less critical thinking about 9/11 and what followed. In the Lords debate Blair's New Labour Home Secretary Lord Blunkett, who may be remembered for saying in 2003 that Labour would enjoy a 'Baghdad bounce'³⁹ in that year's local elections as a result of the Iraq invasion, said:

'Some 20 years ago, as Home Secretary, I was being interviewed by Jim Naughtie on the *Today* programme when we went over to John Simpson, who was entering Kabul with the Northern Alliance, supported by our troops. Last Sunday, that was completely reversed and with it went 20 years not just of sacrifice but of an international effort to ensure that the world would be a safer place.

³⁷ <<https://tinyurl.com/3kkmyfy5>> or <<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/rumsfeld-wanted-to-bomb-iraq-after-9-11-65340.html>> and <<https://tinyurl.com/b3u9r7p7>> or <https://sgadaria.expressions.syr.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Iraq-article_Gershkoff_Kushner.pdf>

At the time of George Bush's 2001 inauguration (eight months before 9/11) an old Washington DC friend, concerned by the prominence of so many NeoCon hawks in his new administration, told me there would soon be a war in the Middle East. Her doctor, a military reservist, had been told to be ready to serve there in 2002 or 2003. I was unable to second source this at the time, but abundant confirmation has come since.

³⁸ <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/free/lobster69/lob69-anthrax-deception.pdf>>

³⁹ <<https://tinyurl.com/u96fzxr3>> or <<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/blunkett-says-a-baghdad-bounce-will-boost-labour-117248.html>>

Anyone who read *Charlie Wilson's War* will understand precisely why the Taliban retained the capacity to be able to sweep aside the Afghan forces over recent months. Pakistan has played both a constructive and a very destructive role over the last 20 years. Now is the time to engage with it, but it will take a combined effort across the globe to ensure that we put right the terrible disaster that has befallen the people of Afghanistan over recent days. It could easily be reflected in a resurgence of the jihadists, who have rejoiced at what has happened.

Today is a very sad day for us all, but there is something to learn from and reflect on in terms of our humanitarian commitment and our willingness to re-engage with security.'

Two of the things 'to learn' from Blunkett's references went unremarked by him, and they might just might have punctured some of the high-flown rhetoric from the assembled benches and Zoom screens. One is that interviewer Jim Naughtie had a close working relationship with Paul Wolfowitz who, at the 2001 initiation of the 'war on terror', was Bush's deputy Defence Secretary and a key NeoCon figure in promoting the Iraq War and subsequent conflicts.⁴⁰ The other is that anyone reading George Crile's *Charlie Wilson's War*, as Blunkett suggested, will know that the Texas Congressman's success in obtaining enormous finance and sophisticated weaponry for the Mujahdineen was strongly promoted by the Israeli lobby in Washington to which Wilson was very close.⁴¹ Mujahdineen training by the US, UK and Israel as part of well-funded Operation Cyclone is a matter of record. One assumes that Blunkett, in recommending the Wilson book, would have known this, but chose not to detail any of that in his Lords remarks.

In both houses there was much self-congratulatory avoidance of such detailed realities. Winding up for the Opposition at the end of the peers' debate, newly ennobled former New Labour MP Vernon Coaker said: 'When we read the contributions that have been made, I think it will show that this House has risen to the occasion at a time of great historical significance for our nation and, indeed, the world.'

In the Commons, Chesterfield Labour MP Toby Perkins said: 'It is a day on which we have seen Parliament at its best. We have heard some wonderful speeches and the debate has been illuminated in particular by

⁴⁰ 'The British American Project and the Iraq War' at <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/online/issue45/lob45-13.htm>>.

⁴¹ <<https://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Columnists/Charlie-Wilsons-other-war>>
<http://www.historycommons.org/entity.jsp?entity=zvi_rafiah>
<<https://www.sfasu.edu/heritagecenter/5381.asp>>

those who have served’.

A dissenter

But there was no time to hear one Labour member who had served in the British Army in Afghanistan and might have turned up the Commons lights a tad. He took a very different view of events there to three other former soldier MPs who garnered much of the media coverage for criticising the timing and manner of the withdrawal. That unheard Afghanistan veteran was Clive Lewis, the MP for Norwich South, who had to take to Twitter and then *The Guardian* ⁴² to voice his criticism not only of the UK role in Afghanistan but of its whole ‘war on terror’ intervention since 2001. In his absence, coverage of the Commons debate painted a picture of unquestioning consensus with only the small dissenting voices of Jeremy Corbyn, Diane Abbott and Zarah Sultana asking the big questions about 20 years of pre-emptive military action. Even they did little to question the events of 9/11, a subject to which we now turn.

For the past 20 years 9/11 has been a story of freedom-hating Muslims. The many challenges to that narrative have been largely ignored by the mainstream media. Many of them are well elucidated in *9/11 Unmasked: An international review panel investigation*.⁴³ Published in 2018, it is the result of years of careful work by panellists with diverse expertise and experience. The book constitutes their consensus views on more than 50 points they say illustrate the problematic status of the main claims of the official 9/11 story. These range from examining the destruction of the three New York towers and the many US military exercises on and before 9/11, to reports of insider trading and the role of Osama bin Laden. This important work has received very little media attention. This is partly, I suspect, because joint editors David Ray Griffin and Elizabeth Woodworth have long been styled as ‘truthers’ with their efforts accordingly dismissed. But for anyone open to material that is well sourced and extensively footnoted this provides a good base from which to learn more.

A different approach was adopted in the same year by John Duffy and Ray Nowosielski in *The Watchdogs Didn’t Bark*.⁴⁴ They interviewed a wide

⁴² <<https://tinyurl.com/nt7svwea>> or <<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/aug/25/afghan-casualties-war-human-cost>>

⁴³ David Ray Griffiths and Elizabeth Woodworth, *9/11 Unmasked: An international review panel investigation* (Northampton, MA: Olive Branch Press, 2018) ISBN-13:978-1-62371-974-6

⁴⁴ John Duffy and Ray Nowosielski, *The Watchdogs Didn’t Bark: The CIA, NSA, and the crimes of the war on terror* (Hot Books, 2018) ISBN 978-1-5107-2136-4

range of senior US intelligence and law enforcement officials whose experience had led them to conclude that the threatened attacks could and should have been stopped long before September 11 2001. The authors dedicate their book 'to everyone harmed by the September 11 tragedy as well as those harmed by the US government's response, the "war on terror", which shows no end in sight. It is also dedicated to all people of conscience who risked something to leak or to blow the whistle in order to provide for us a more complete picture of the world than those in power might have desired.'

They identify key figures in the CIA, the FBI, the National Security Council and the National Security Agency (NSA) with working knowledge of what went on before, during and after 9/11 – and their account makes for truly shocking reading. They show how senior intelligence and White House officials repeatedly failed to respond to the many warnings of impending attacks. They describe ambitious Bush government employees who not only authorised secret torture in black sites, but also choose to use material obtained by it, and with one choosing to cross the Atlantic to observe it.

Duffy and Nowosielski write:

'When we take stock of the fact that several of the same names that come up in the Senate's 2014 report about torture were also highlighted by the CIA inspector general's 2005 report laying fault for 9/11, we see that a failure to hold individuals to account for earlier transgressions had later consequences for the nation, and the world.

We can also track, through these reports, the rise of repeated wrongdoers to very high positions, and we can similarly track through news accounts the fall of those who have the appearance of having tried to expose these wrongdoers.'

Some of those who have spoken out have been jailed. Many others have had their professional careers ended and their reputations trashed. Duffy and Nowosielski ask:

'What is the purpose of a system that that makes those who value truth into enemies of the state and participate in the kinds of actions detailed here? Declarations of justice and freedom are but words. They require nothing of those who bellow them. Actions speak louder. The purpose of a system is what it *does*.' (authors' italics)

Many of those dissenting from these malign priorities and practices of the Bush regime identified by Duffy and Nowosielski are also regularly featured in

the work of journalist Paul Jay in theanalysis.news.⁴⁵ Figures such as Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson, Thomas Drake and Bill Binney, who have held high office in the US state and military apparatus, cannot be readily dismissed as 'truthers' or 'conspiracy theorists' when they challenge the conventional 9/11 story.

Senator Bob Graham co-chaired the Joint Congressional Committee investigating 9/11, and in retirement continues to urge greater transparency. In a series of interviews with Jay he says Bush and Cheney misdirected intelligence prior to 9/11 and 'aggressively deceived' afterwards. He tells Jay:

'Virtually all of the agencies of the federal government were moving in the same direction, from a customs agent at an airport in Orlando who was chastised when he denied entry into the United States to a Saudi, to the president of the United States authorizing large numbers of Saudis to leave the country, possibly denying us forever—important insights and information on what happened. You don't have everybody moving in the same direction without there being a head coach somewhere who was giving them instructions as to where he wants them to move.'⁴⁶

When people ask why no one has come forward to spill the beans on 9/11, I simply ask them to tune into the US state insiders: Drake, Binney and Wilkerson are just three of very many whose years of whistle-blowing have fallen on deaf political and media ears. Graham is one of the few senior US politicians to keep asking questions.

Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth

Other consistent questioners of 9/11 orthodoxy include those whose life's work has been seriously affected by that day's events. Many firefighters and first responders are on record saying there were explosions at the World Trade Centre. BBC correspondent Stephen Evans was one of several journalist eye-witnesses to talk of explosions deep in the Twin Towers.⁴⁷ Some senior New York firefighters are alleging federal crimes were committed, saying their 'petition demonstrates beyond any doubt that pre-planted explosives and/or incendiaries — not just airplanes and the ensuing fires — caused the destruction of the three World Trade Center (sic)

⁴⁵ <<https://theanalysis.news/about/>>

⁴⁶ <<https://theanalysis.news/guests/bob-graham/>>

⁴⁷ <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D17QP2kna1I>> and <<https://tinyurl.com/f5pfbk5z>> or <https://www.nexusnewsfeed.com/article/geopolitics/from-the-reporters-own-mouths-the-twin-towers-explosive-demolition/>>

buildings, killing the vast majority of the victims who perished that day.⁴⁸

Much of the recent campaigning for a proper inquiry into the New York events has come from Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth.⁴⁹ It is now backed by more than 3,400 professionals and, until his recent death, its campaigns were often fronted by Hollywood actor and activist Lou Asner.⁵⁰

The organisation is supporting the British inquest appeal to the Attorney General by the Campbell family and is continuing to challenge the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) over its efforts to explain the cause of the destruction of the three skyscrapers.⁵¹ In support of that it commissioned an independent study by the University of Alaska into the collapse of WTC7⁵² and produced a film to promote its findings.⁵³

They work alongside the Lawyers' Committee for 9/11 Inquiry.⁵⁴ Both seem to be increasingly vigorous in their legal challenges to US agencies still holding to the standard explanation both of September 11 and the anthrax attacks.

Mainstream media coverage of the Biden withdrawal and the 20th anniversary has posed few serious questions about 9/11 or the 'war on terror'. In both Washington and London there seems to be a shared desire to dispose of awkward history in much the same way that the body of Osama bin Laden was reportedly dropped secretly into the sea. But some things remain clear and continue to pose important questions given the many consequences of the war on terror spelled out graphically by the Lawyers' Committee.⁵⁵

We now know, for example, there were no 'surprise attacks'. Many fairly specific warnings were given to the Bush White House by several foreign intelligence agencies as well as their own. We know that both the CIA and

⁴⁸ <<https://justicefor911heroes.org/>>
<<https://justicefor911heroes.org/franklin-square-munson-fire-department/>>

⁴⁹ <<https://www.ae911truth.org/>>

⁵⁰ <<https://tinyurl.com/xw22dv8e>> or <<https://www.ae911truth.org/news/770-architects-engineers-for-9-11-truth-honors-the-life-and-activism-of-ed-asner>>

⁵¹ <<https://www.ae911truth.org/nist>>

⁵² <<https://ine.uaf.edu/wtc7>>

⁵³ <<https://tinyurl.com/bmypwrk>> or <<https://www.ae911truth.org/news/724-kevin-ryan-s-review-of-seven-a-new-film-by-dylan-avery-and-ae911truth>>

⁵⁴ <<https://www.lawyerscommitteefor9-11inquiry.org/>>

⁵⁵ <<https://www.lawyerscommitteefor9-11inquiry.org/consequences/>>

NSA had been intercepting Al-Qaeda communications long before September 2001 and that the FBI had known about young non-American men, some barely speaking English and with minimal aeronautical skill, seeking flight training for commercial aircraft. Insider trading before 9/11 focussed on specific airlines⁵⁶ and the presence of Israelis in New York with cameras 'to document the event' also point to that foreknowledge existing more widely.⁵⁷

We know too that the US military had drilled repeatedly to respond to the threat of hijacked aircraft targeting prominent US buildings,⁵⁸ but that these air defences proved totally inadequate on September 11. We also know that senior Pentagon staff did not tell the full story about that to Congress or the 9/11 Commission. In several cases those whose testimony was misleading were subsequently promoted. So were members of the Bush administration.

There is overwhelming evidence that the US President and Vice-President tried to prevent any inquiry into the deaths of thousands of US citizens on September 11. When victim families finally shamed the White House into holding one more than a year later, it was set up 'to fail' as the 9/11 Commission joint-chairmen later admitted. This White House behaviour, in any other circumstances, could be seen as guilty demeanour.

We know that the official explanations by NIST and the 9/11 Commission of the destruction of the three Manhattan skyscrapers are not only inadequate but deceptively misleading. For the largely undamaged WTC7 to disappear into its footprint in seconds required expertise and preparation. So why has its long-term owner Larry Silverstein not been interrogated about this? Why did the 9/11 Commission never even mention WTC7?

Where is the questioning of Silverstein and his then business partner Frank Lowy⁵⁹ who acquired the newly privatised, asbestos-filled Twin Towers just seven weeks before 9/11 and then vastly increased the insurance to include compensation should the WTC structures need to be replaced?⁶⁰

⁵⁶ <https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=370741>

⁵⁷ <<https://archive.org/details/DancingIsraelisFBIReport>> and <<https://tinyurl.com/ty8hhhc>> or <<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/12768362.five-israelis-were-seen-filming-as-jet-liners-ploughed-into-the-twin-towers-on-september-11-2001/>>

⁵⁸ <<https://tinyurl.com/6n9479m8>> or <<https://www.visibility911.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/06/16411947-norad-exercises-hijack-summary.pdf>>

⁵⁹ <<https://tinyurl.com/yb3vt7ss>> or <<https://www.smh.com.au/business/frank-lowy-awarded-knighthood-in-uk-queens-birthday-honours-list-20170616-gwsfzh.html>>

⁶⁰ <<https://edition.cnn.com/2004/LAW/04/29/attacks.insurance/index.html>>

An 'inside job'?

There are still 39 alleged terrorists held in Guantanamo, the offshore jail President Barack Obama promised – and failed – to close.⁶¹ The much-tortured alleged 9/11 mastermind, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, has been held there without trial for 13 years.⁶² Many others have died in custody. Will those still incarcerated there ever face justice?

Also untouched by any criminal process to date are many Americans in responsible positions on 9/11 who failed to protect their fellow citizens from the attacks and/or contributed to their subsequent misfortunes in one way or another. There were 19 alleged hijackers on the four planes in 2001, most of them Saudis. Author Kevin Ryan, in his 2013 book *Another Nineteen*, identifies 19 'legitimate 9/11 suspects' – all of them American.⁶³

Some would see all this as confirming 9/11 as 'an inside job'. But that oversimplifying, thought-stopping phrase fails to address the complexity not only of the events of September 2001 but of the way the world works.

Does the famous picture of Bush, Cheney, Condoleezza Rice and Saudi Arabia ambassador Prince Bandar happily chatting on the Truman balcony of the White House two days after 9/11 indicate US-Saudi complicity?

Does the closeness of the CIA to Pakistan, with its intelligence service's ties to the Afghanistan 'freedom fighters' dating back at least to the Carter and Reagan years, point in a slightly different direction?

Many Israel-supporting figures around Bush thought only a 'catastrophic and catalysing event – like a new Pearl Harbour' would galvanise Americans to fight more wars.⁶⁴ So does that put Israel in the frame as a contributor to 9/11, perhaps in a joint enterprise with Saudi Arabia with whom it has enjoyed ever-closer ties in the 21st century?

If 'lessons must be learned', as British parliamentarians incanted in their August debates, these questions are just some of many that need to be urgently and thoroughly addressed. I suspect it will take a 'catalysing event' of a different kind to 9/11 to focus political minds on that task. For who could

⁶¹ <<https://tinyurl.com/y74rw2kp>> or <<https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/world/after-911-i-was-sent-to-guantanamo-bay-the-truth-about-the-war-on-terror-is-unrelentingly-grim/ar-AAOiS0n>> and <<https://tinyurl.com/tp9w3rrd>> or <<https://english.alarabiya.net/News/world/2021/09/09/Guantanamo-prison-lingers-an-unresolved-legacy-of-9-11->>

⁶² <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Op9Jo658NRA>>

⁶³ Kevin Robert Ryan, *Another Nineteen: Investigating Legitimate 9/11 Suspects* (Microbloom 2013) ISBN-10: 1489507883 ISBN-13: 978-1489507839

⁶⁴ <<http://www.newamericancentury.org/RebuildingAmericasDefenses.pdf>>

have imagined in 2001 that journalist Julian Assange and former UK ambassador Craig Murray, two who have done so much to illumine these dark matters, would today be in prison, their fate largely unremarked by parliamentarians? Or that a dedicated public servant like weapons inspector Dr David Kelly would die in strange circumstances and his family and fellow citizens still be denied a proper inquest 18 years later?⁶⁵

And the media?

If our democratically elected MPs and unelected peers fail to rise to the challenge, what about the Fourth Estate? Judging by most of the coverage of the 20th anniversary no 'lessons' have been learned despite the best efforts of journalists like Sue Reid (see note 8) to chip at some of the lacquered version of 9/11 events. Most broadcast interviews with 9/11 survivors and observers I heard didn't begin: 'What do you think . . .?' but 'How did you feel . . .?'

Rupert Murdoch's outlets set the pattern for most of the world coverage and all have unquestioningly supported the 'war on terror', its architects and supporters.⁶⁶ In a small irony, Murdoch's columnist David Aaronovitch, who berates purveyors of 'voodoo history', is a company director and former chair of Index on Censorship.⁶⁷ The chief executive of Index – motto 'a voice for the persecuted' – is former Labour MP Ruth Smeeth who led the call for journalist Marc Wadsworth to be expelled from the Labour party for alleged anti-semitism.⁶⁸ In a previous life Smeeth worked for BICOM, the London-based Israel lobby organisation, and was named as a 'strictly protect' source in a US embassy cable revealed by Wikileaks.⁶⁹ Both Aaronovitch and Smeeth have been frequent contributors to the *Jewish Chronicle*, a paper repeatedly found breaking defamation laws and publishing codes as it abused Labour party members, especially during the years of Jeremy Corbyn's leadership.⁷⁰

Aaronovitch's former platform for his thoughts, *The Guardian*,⁷¹ has done

⁶⁵ <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/free/lobster76/lob76-david-kelly-mystery.pdf>>

⁶⁶ <<https://tinyurl.com/2zmacswf>> or <<https://www.lowyinstitute.org/publications/annual-lowy-lecture-2013-address-rupert-murdoch-ac>>

⁶⁷ <<https://www.indexoncensorship.org/trustees-patrons/>>

⁶⁸ <<https://www.indexoncensorship.org/staff/>>
<<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-43920227>>

⁶⁹ <https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09LONDON956_a.html>

⁷⁰ <<https://hackinginquiry.org/ipso-caught-with-its-pants-down/>>

⁷¹ <<https://www.theguardian.com/g2/story/0,3604,945381,00.html>>

very little to interrogate the official version of 9/11. It has remained a strong supporter of Blair and other New Labour figures throughout the 'war on terror' decades. It disappointed many of its readers with its frequent attacks on Labour and Jeremy Corbyn for alleged anti-semitism and for its largely uncritical coverage of his successor, Sir Keir Starmer.

When finance is so crucial to our private and public life, especially after the 2008 crash and now the impact of Covid, how come so little attention has been paid to that aspect of 9/11? Just take one example. On September 10 2001 Defence Secretary Rumsfeld drew attention to \$2.3 trillion missing from the Pentagon budget.⁷² Some of those killed at the Pentagon the following day were staff trying to account for it. When they died, so apparently did concern about the missing money in Bush's rush to increase arms spending.

The huge cost of the 'war on terror' remains largely unexplored, while ex-service chiefs and retired politicians on both sides of the Atlantic who could enlighten us tax-paying citizens supplement their pensions by working in the arms and security business.

It's not possible to draw any simple, neat answers to the many questions posed by September 11 2001. Instead, I try to alert readers to the detailed scrutiny some have already brought to those events, either through direct experience or through specialised research – material that has largely gone unreported by mainstream media. I also try to set these events in some familiar context for new, younger audiences.

'Follow the money' is a useful inquiry thread to pursue as in the missing Pentagon trillions I mention above. It's also a useful measure of the later career fortunes of politicians of 2001 vintage.

Learning the history of individual actors and their networks can also carry our research forward. In the case of 9/11 and much that followed in the 21st century the influence of Neoliberals in economics and business, and that of NeoCons in politics and international relations is particularly important.

The global distribution of resources, their ownership, their trade and their consumption is always to be weighed carefully as is the control of information about them.

Sometimes all of these threads come together as I believe they did very potently in the Bush White House. The resulting complexity is hard to untangle: hence the understandable but dangerous demand for simple answers and the creation of black-hatted 'others' embodying threats to our

⁷² <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xU4GdHLUHwU>> and <<https://tinyurl.com/4w6755wd>> or <https://www.city-journal.org/html/americas-missing-money-15725.html?wallit_nosession=1>

lives and beliefs.

Often that resistance to serious 9/11 inquiry is less about interrogating facts than it is about in overcoming challenges to our sense of security and wellbeing at a much deeper level – the way we situate ourselves and our view of others in the world. After recent events in Afghanistan, many are now experiencing some shaking of their belief systems. Let us hope those tremors open the way to rethink 9/11 and the 'war on terror', and perhaps sharpen our critical faculties for future 'world-changing' events.

Appendix

New York Emergency Housing Co-ordinator Barry Jennings died suddenly in 2008, reportedly of a heart attack, in the midst of a furious debate triggered by his 9/11 witness testimony. According to Jennings, explosions had gone off in WTC7 before the attacks on the Twin Towers and there was massive damage and dead bodies in the evacuated building where he was temporarily trapped.

In July 2011 Danny Jowenko, the outspoken Dutch controlled-demolition expert, died in a single car crash into a tree.

US reporter Michael Hastings died in 2013 after driving at high speed into a tree. Hastings had upset General Stanley McChrystal who was fired after a series of articles in *Rolling Stone* magazine.

Phillip Marshall was a veteran pilot. At the time of the attacks he was working for American Airlines and knew two of the pilots on the hijacked planes. Earlier in his career he worked for the CIA's clandestine section. He published *False Flag 911* in 2008 and a second book, *The Big Bamboozle*, in February 2012. His thesis was that the hijackers had training at a network of airbases, some run by Saudi Arabia. Not long after his second book came out, he died horrifically in an alleged suicide. The bodies of him, his children and his dog were found in what looked to many like a professional hit.

Beverly Eckert, widowed on September 11 2001 when her husband died in the South Tower, became a leading campaigner for an investigation into the events of that day. She chose to go to court rather than accept a payoff from the 9/11 victims' compensation fund.

She wrote that her reason for pursuing the legal avenue was 'to know what went so wrong with our intelligence and security systems that a band of religious fanatics was able to turn four US passenger jets into an enemy force, attack our cities and kill 3,000 civilians with terrifying ease. I want to know why two 110-storey skyscrapers collapsed in less than two hours and why escape and rescue options were so limited. I am suing because unlike

other investigative avenues, including congressional hearings and the 9/11 commission, my lawsuit requires all testimony be given under oath and fully uses powers to compel evidence.'

On February 6, 2009 Eckert travelled with fellow 9/11 Family Steering Committee member Carol Ashley to meet President Barak Obama. In her exchange with Obama, Eckert lent her support for closing Guantanamo Bay. A week later she died in a small plane crash near Buffalo.⁷³

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⁷³ <<https://unansweredquestions.ca/family-steering-committee-member-beverly-eckert/>>